



Object Experiencer Verbs in Pluricentric Spanish

Activity Contrast and Morphosyntactic Marking

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- **bore' ~ delight'**
- En otra clara diferencia con Cardoso, un intelectual con ideas propias y publicadas, **a Lula lo_{acc} aburren los libros y le_{dat} encanta la TV**, en especial las novelas, en las que, según confiesa, suele llorar copiosamente. (CREA, Argentina, Prensa)
 - **Al Diablo le_{dat} aburre la estupidez**, y detesta la monotonía, dos características que la Inquisición poseyó en grado sumo. (CREA, Argentina, Literatura)
 - Luego, Rufino arremetió con **la misteriosa sobriedad de la pampa** y Cristiana también la halló soberbia y **Daniel dijo -con timidez- que lo_{acc} encantaba**. (CREA, Argentina, Literatura)

- a Lula lo_{acc} aburren los libros y le_{dat} encanta la TV
- Al Diablo le_{dat} aburre la estupidez
- la misteriosa sobriedad de la pampa ... Daniel dijo ... que lo_{acc} encantaba

- Case variation
- in stative contexts / in OVS-constructions (often excluded, see Cifuentes 2015; Fabregás et al. 2017).

- Against Di Tullio (1997), Cifuentes (2015)
 - The dative is not excluded in non stative contexts
 - Al no obedecerle el mencionado cliente, **le_{dat}** **intimidó con su pistola**. (CREA, Prensa, España)

- No uniform relation between specific semantic settings (e.g. presence or absence of agentivity, episodic versus generic contexts, etc.) and case marking.
- All Standard varieties allow for the dative and the accusative in all contexts.
- However, the variation seems to follow general rules: agentive contexts increase the probability of choosing the accusative, a topical EXPERIENCER increases the probability of choosing the dative.

- Dative is more frequent with *encantar* than with *aburrir*
 - Dative is more frequent in European Spanish than in American Spanish
 - Dative is more frequent than accusative (?)*
- *Is this true for every OE-verb in every American Standard variety?

- How to deal with intrasystematic variation?
- How to deal with polycentric variation?
- Does ‘causativity’, as a scalar property, play a central role in case marking of Spanish OE-verbs?

- Hypothesis
 - The more causative a verb is, the higher the probability that the experiencer will be realized as an accusative.
 - This applies to all varieties, regardless of how often the accusative is used.

- **Zoe** cambia de canal, aprovechando la publicidad esporádica que insertan en las noticias, aunque no puede hacerlo sin pedirle el mando a distancia a su esposo. Antes le irritaba que él se aferrara en mantener bajo su dominio el pequeño aparato negro para cambiar los canales de televisión, pero ahora se ha resignado a ser una espectadora pasiva. Cuando **se aburre de las noticias**, sale de la cama y camina a una habitación contigua, donde enciende la computadora... (CREA, literatura Peru)
- El trayecto en un tren de lujo que por primera vez veíamos, despertó en **mi esposa** gran entusiasmo y como una niña **se encantaba con la visión fugaz de la campiña inglesa**, gris y fría, a través de las ventanillas de nuestro bien equipado vagón (CREA, literatura Panamá)

- Zoe ... se aburre de las noticias
- Mi esposa ... se encantaba con la visión fugaz de la campaña inglesa

- Shall we consider the pronominal construction an anticausative?
- Does the pronominal construction correspond to the causativity of the OE-construction in a systematic way?
- Are there anticausative and non anticausative pronominal constructions (Alexiadou & lordăchioaia 2014)?
 - *aburrise de* = causative ~ *encantarse con* = non causative?

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Paths to a solution: $OE_{acc} < \text{causativity?}$

- Grimshaw (1990), Pesetsky (1995), Van Valin & LaPolla (1997)

(1) a Lula lo_{acc} aburren los libros

(2) Mary's poor health worried John.

... CAUSE [**feel'**(x, y)]

[**be-in'**(poor health, Mary)] [= Actor]CAUSE [**feel'**(John = EXPERIENCER => Undergoer),
[**troubled.about'** ([**be-in'**(poor health, Mary))] = SENSATION]

Paths to a solution: $OE_{acc} < \text{causativity?}$

- Alexiadou & Iordăchioaia (2014)
 - *Worry* not causative
 - because it is not eventive (not an accomplishment ~ Grimshaw 1990)
- Van Valin & LaPolla (1997)
 - *Worry* is a causative state
 - There are non causative accomplishments (i. *The ice melted*)
 - Causativity is independent from aktionsart
- Acedo & Mateu (2015), Royo (2020)
 - Stative accusative construction in Spanish are not causative.

Classe Vendler-Dowty / Bertinetto	Costruzione non causativa	Costruzione causativa
State/ stativo	<i>Il postino teme il cane</i>	<i>Il cane impaurisce il postino</i>
Achievement / trasformativo	<i>Il piatto si è rotto</i>	<i>Il ragazzo ha rotto un piatto</i>
Accomplishment / risultativo	<i>La neve si è sciolta</i>	<i>Il sole ha sciolto la neve</i>
Activity / continuativo	<i>Il sasso rotola sul pendio</i>	<i>Sisifo rotola un sasso</i>

Paths to a solution: $OE_{acc} < \text{causativity?}$

■ Criteria for causativity?

- No distribution tests
- By the way: most OE verbs are not telic (in x time-test has very odd results).
- Left boundary verbs (Marín / McNelly 2011); complex aktionsart (achievement + state components) (Kailuweit 2005, 2015).

■ Kailuweit (2005)

- Psych verbs do not denote a prototypical causative relation.
- Prototypical experiences of causality are the intentional control of causing a change of state (Little children switching the light on and off) (Searle 1983).

=> agentive OE-Verbs are considered causative by analogy and non agentive are not causative.

■ Syntactic evidence for non causative OE-verbs

- Je suivais Robert, il m'intéressait à ce qui l'intéressait, je me rappelais ses souvenirs (FRANTEXT: BEAUVOIR, S. de)
- Three-place (agentive) *intéresser* is the causativation of non causative (non agentive) two-place *intéresser*.
- French two-place *intéresser* is still accusative, Spanish two-place *interesar* shows a strong tendency towards the dative.

Paths to a solution: OE_{acc} < causativity?

- Exceptional dative marking of Italian accusative OE-verbs (*scomodare, disturbare, soddisfare, interessare*)
 - Se **a** **te**_{dat} **non scomoda**a, dovresti restituirmi il libro (DISC)
 - **Le**_{dat} **disturba**a se fumo? (BR)
- The experiencer seems to be less affected.
- If returning the book or smoking is bothersome, the cause lies in an unexpected specific disposition of the experiencer.
- The subject-argument is not a causer, the experiencer is a an “internal cause” (Vermandere 2001).

- Agentive and non-agentive OE-Verbs (Primus 1999, Kailuweit 2005, Marín 2015, Fritz-Huechante et al. 2020)
- Tests
 - Verbal passive
 - Tough construction
 - Adverbs of intentionality
 - Imperative
- Scalar? (Kailuweit 2005, Miglio et al. 2013, Fritz-Huechante et al. 2020)

High acceptability in agentive constructions

- ✓ a. María fue escandalizada / intimidada por Juan
- ✓ b. Se deja fácilmente escandalizar / intimidar
- ✓ c. Juan escandalizó / intimidó a María de propósito
- ✓ d. ¡No me escandalices / intimides!

Low acceptability in agentive constructions

- a. *?Juan fue preocupado / interesado por María
- b. *Se deja fácilmente preocupar / interesar
- c. *Juan preocupó / interesó María de propósito
- d. *?¡No me preocupes! *¡Interésame!

- How to deal with non-intentional subjects of agentive OE-verbs?
 - NP_{hum}-subjects acting without intention to cause the emotion of the experiencer
 - NP_{-hum}-subjects
 - Clausal subjects
- Kailuweit (2005)
 - Intentional acting subjects of agentive OE-verbs are agentive causers, other subjects are causers.
 - Ad-hoc solution?
 - Alternative: Agentive OE-verbs allow for a causative construction (with a agentive subject), and a non causative construction (with non agentive subjects).

Verb Implicit Causality

■ Test

- *Mary_{NP1} fears/frightens/hits Luisa_{NP2} because she_{NP1 or NP2} is a wax*

■ State of the art in 2005

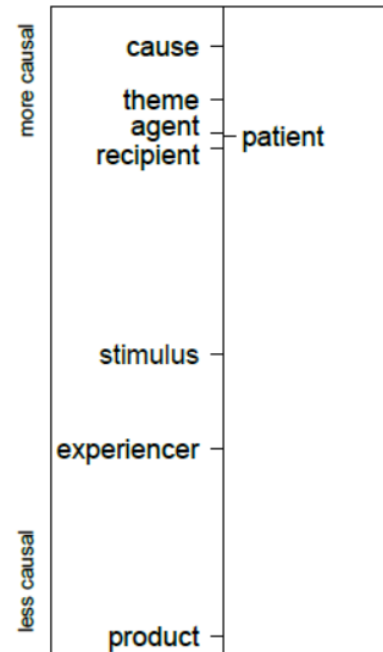
- OE/Ag_Pat => NP1 bias, SE => NP2 bias

■ Recent research

- OE => strong NP1 bias, SE => NP2 bias, Ag_Pat => no bias

(Hartshorne & Snedeker 2012)

Observed Thematic Hierarchy



- In 2005 VIC research seemed to confirm a causative interpretation of agentive OE-verbs/constructions.
- Recent VIC research (Hartshorne & Snedeker 2012; Bott & Solstad 2014; Van den Hoven & Ferstl 2017) hint at separating agentivity and causativity.
 - Non agentive OE-verbs show a NP1 bias, agentive OE-verbs no bias or even a NP2 bias.
- However, does VIC research really check the causal bringing about of a state of affairs or does it just check reasons that motivate an action?

Paths to a solution: $OE_{acc} < \text{causativity}$?

- Following Hartshorne & Snedeker (2012) a cause is more causal than an agent.
- {Paul_{agent/-agent} + {Paul's grimacing + Paul's old-fashioned hat + Paul's stuttering + Paul's dance style + That Paul did not know the answer} _{-agent}} amused Mary
- If $OE_{acc} < \text{causativity}$, are OE-verbs with _{-agent} subjects more accusative?
- Spanish data contradict this: Accusative marking is favoured with NP_{hum} subjects. (Miglio et al. 2013).

- It seems that causativity cannot be determined as a pertinent factor for OE_{acc}
- The variation in the distribution of accusative and dative depends on the following factors (at least)
 - Agentivity / Np_{hum} ~ NP_{-hum}
 - Word order
 - Standard variety
 - Verb

- How to maintain the causative claim?
- Are verbs appearing more often in the anticausative construction less causative (in their OE-construction)?
- Is there a correlation between the frequency of the pronominal construction and agentivity?
- Is there a correlation between the frequency of the pronominal construction and case distribution in the corresponding OE-construction?

■ Wiskandt (2020)

- A higher degree of agentivity corresponds to a lower frequency of the pronominal construction
- ⇒ Pronominal constructions seem to be more frequent with verbs tending to the a dative experiencer in their OE-construction.

- Wiskandt (2020)
 - Anticausativity implies causativity
 - Scalar concept of causativity
 - The rarer a verb appears in the anticausative construction, the more causative it is.
- In line with our Hypothesis
 - The more causative a verb is, the higher the probability that the experiencer will be realized as an accusative.
 - This applies to all varieties, regardless of how often the accusative is used.

- Alexiadou & Iordăchioaia (2014): Only pronominal construction of eventive OE-Verbs allow for anticausative constructions.
 - ⇒ Pronominal constructions of non agentive Spanish OE-verbs are not anticausative constructions (~Kailiweit 2005).
- Hence, the frequency of the pronominal construction does not say anything about the causativity of the corresponding OE-construction.

- The causative hypothesis depends on the status of the pronominal construction.
- It can only be maintained if
 - i. Pronominal constructions of (rather) non-agentive verbs are still anticausatives.
 - ii. A higher frequency of anticausative constructions of a given verb implies a lower degree of causativity of this verb.
- Open questions
 - Does agentivity in OE-verbs (left boundary verbs) imply causativity despite recent findings in IVC-studies?
 - Does causativity have an impact on the frequency of the SV(O) word order? The more causal a verb, the more often it appears in the SV(O) construction?

- If (a part of) the pronominal constructions are not anticausatives
 - Are they passives?
 - No, because the experiencer is semantically promoted (more active: subjective judgement)
 - **El juez fue intimidado por el ejército.** (CREA, México, Literatura)
 - **Marta se intimidó ante la posibilidad de no satisfacer las expectativas de la maestra.** (CREA, España, Prosa especializada)
 - Are they antipassives?
 - Kailuweit (2005): Yes, because the syntactically and semantically promoted experiencer is the most active argument.

Thank you