

Complex relations in gerund constructions in Spanish

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The Spanish gerund construction (SGC) has been widely studied in the Hispanic Literature. Two main subtypes are traditionally identified:

- (1) a. *Herminia* *lleg-ó* *cant-ando* *a=la=escuela*.
Herminia arrive-3PST sing-GER PREP=ART=school
'Herminia arrived to the school singing'.
- a'. **Cantando* *llegó* *Herminia* *a=la=escuela*.
sing-GER arrive-3PST Herminia PREP=ART=school
'Herminia arrived to the school singing'.
- a''. **Herminia* *llegó* *a=la=escuela* *cantando* *Rafael*.
Herminia arrive-3PST PREP=ART=school sing-GER Rafael
'Herminia arrived to the school Rafael singing'.
- b. *Cantando* *Herminia*, Tolomeo *se=fue*.
Sing-GER Herminia Tolomeo RFX=leave
'Once Herminia sang, Tolomeo left'.

(1a) is an internal gerund construction. (1a') shows that this gerund cannot be preposed and (1a'') exemplifies that the gerund cannot have a different subject, i.e., it is obligatorily controlled by the subject of the matrix verb. Conversely, (1b) is a case of an external (or absolute) gerund construction. In this, the gerund can be, and usually is, preposed, and can have a different subject than that of the matrix verb.

In Ibáñez (2021) the internal gerund construction is treated as a case of a secondary predicate, just as it is considered in Demonte and Masullo (1999) and Palacar and Alarcón (2007), and it is also viewed as an example of core cosubordination (Van Valin & LaPolla, 1997; Van Valin, 2005). Paris (2018) identified various subtypes of the internal gerund construction (the direct motion and the non-direct motion subtypes) but treat them all as cases of subordination (nuclear and core junctures).

In this work, we revisit all subtypes of the internal gerund construction, including such examples as in (2), from Colombian Andean Spanish (CAS):

- (2) a. [*Me=vine*]_{EV2} [*mol-iendo el=maíz*]_{EV1}
1DAT=come.1PST grind-GER ART=corn
'I grinded the corn and came.' (CAS interpretation)
'While I was coming, I was simultaneously grinding the corn.' (Standard Interpretation)

b. *Me=vine comiendo por=la=casa=de=mi=amigo.*

1RFX=came.1PST eat-GER PREP=ART=house=GEN=1POS=friend

I left the place where I was, I went to my friend's house, I ate there, and then I went to where we are and I arrived here

(2a) is formally equivalent to (1a), but while this last one, which is the standard one found in most Spanish varieties, implies two actions being performed simultaneously ('Herminia arrived and at the same time she was singing'), the CAS interpretation implies that the action denoted by the gerund happens immediately before than the action denoted by the matrix verb ('I grinded the corn and came'). (2b) is a very different case, as it implies a very complex scene, where various actions are packed together.

Following Paris (2018), we propose that, effectively, the same formal structure, that of the internal gerund construction, subsumes several subtypes, which can be very different in semantic terms: the standard interpretation of (1a) and (2a) is imperfective, but the CAS interpretation is perfective. Besides this, contrary to Paris (2018), which considers all gerund constructions as cases of subordination, we show that some of them are cases of core cosubordination, basically those in which the gerund is a secondary predicate and denotes an event which is not part of the state of affairs denoted by the matrix verb. Parallely, we also show that some of the internal gerund subtypes are, indeed, cases of subordination (core and nuclear); we are referring to those examples where the event denoted by the gerund adverbially modifies the event implied by the finite verb. So, what comes out clear is that the same syntactic structure, with the same internal syntactic relations, those of dependency between the gerund and the matrix verb, can equally be a sign of subordination or cosubordination. What is crucial, then, in differentiating these nexus is the semantic relation between the gerund and the matrix predicate.

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