Analysing morphosyntactic complexity: the case of Old Romance Complex Predicates

The facts. Complex Predicates are usually believed to be a case of mismatch between morphological and syntactic complexity in one side and semantic unity in the other. Romance languages have lexically complex predicates (1, 3) together with simple ones (2, 4). In Old Romance Iberian texts (Spanish and Catalan), however, there is a remarkable great deal of analytic complex predicates (5, 6, 7, 8) which do not exist in the modern language, which uses the simplex one (9); only a small group of (semi)idiomatic complex predicates with semi- or non-compositional meaning have survived (10, 11). As usually indicated, the verb bears some *Aktionsart* properties of the predicate and the dev-N is responsible of the TH-grid and the encyclopaedic semantic content.

The question. We will face the following questions: (i) which properties of the old analytic structures in Old Romance can explain why are they so widespread; (ii) why did analytic structures disappear as syntactically free constructions; (iii) did the grammaticalization of verbs have or not a determining role in the evolution towards synthetic structures.

A proposal. Our analysis will focus both on the lexical and the syntactic properties of complex predicates and on the morphological and functional properties of deverbal nouns. As for the lexical properties, following ideas stemming from Hale & Keyser (1997, 2002), Mateu (2002), Mateu & Rigau (2002), together with current minimalist assumptions, we propose that both in OR and in CR an agentive (DO) or stative (HAVE / BE) light verb selects for the deverbal noun or for a PP which itself includes the deverbal N. The difference between Old and Modern Romance lies in the lexical vs. abstract nature of the V selecting the dev-N or PP. In the ancient structure, the V is lexical and selects the dev-N or PP according to its lexical-aspectual properties (13, 14, and 15). In the modern structure, the V is an abstract one. The difference between the two is only partially due to a grammaticalization process (van Gelderen, 2004; Roberts, 2007; Roberts & Roussou, 2003) by which some main verbs like Sp. *hacer,* Cat. *haver, ser* loose their selecting and lexical properties and grammaticalize as functional verbs merged directly into a functional node, *v*P and subsequently AspP. When the conditions for the insertion of an aspectual auxiliary are not met, no functional V is licensed in this position and the eventive nominal root is fused into the light verb (16). The other factor responsible for the lost of analytic structures comes from the twofold evolution of denominal verbs: the introduction of the determiner system and the lost of internal morphological transparency. Against Goldberg (2003), we will argue that OR ComPreds are free syntactic constructions.

Related properties. We will show that the changes we analyze are to be related to other well known changes in Iberian Romance Languages: (a) the restructuring of the *ser / estar/ haber* system and the nearly extinction of passive in Catalan; (c) the restructuring of the auxiliary system in Catalan; (d) the evolution of the D system; (d) the lexicalisation of complex deverbal eventive nouns.

Examples and simplified structures

(1)   French: elle **a   fait   la connaissance** de son amoureux
              she have.3.PRS make.PP the knowledge   of her boy friend
                   'she has met her boy friend'
       [*www.cafebabel.com/.../generation-80-en-bisbille-avec-paris.html -*]

(2)   French: un ami qu' on **a   connu**   au   Puerto
              a friend that one have.3.PRS know.PP at+the Puerto
                   'a friend who we met at Puerto'
       [*lidia46.skyrock.com/445183239-Lurdes-Luzma-et-notre-ami.html -*]

(3)   Italian: una coppia di due autostoppiste tedesche con cui **avevano   fatto**
              a couple   of two auto stoppers German with who have.3.PST make.PP
              conoscenza.
              knowledge
                   'a couple of German auto stoppers who they had met'
       [*http://it.wikipedia.org/wiki/Che_fine_ha_fatto_Tot%C3%B2_Baby%3F*]

(4)   Italian**: abbiamo   conosciuto** due ragazzi

have.4.PRS know.PP   two boys
'We have met two boys'
[*www.vitadimerda.it/vari/1261*

(5)   Old Spanish, (CORDE, Anon.,1251): et **ovieron   temor** que
                                                and have.6.PST fear   that

(6)   Old Spanish **(**CORDE, Anónimo, *Memorial dirigido al Cardenal Cisneros* **,**1516)
      Haga   su   señoria Reverendisima muy **grand estima** de mosyur de Xebres
      Make.IMP your *señoria Reverndísima* very big   respect of sir of Xebres
      'You, sir, would have to respect sir of Xebres"

(7)   Old Spanish (CORDE, Fernández de Heredia, Juan, *Gran crónica de España*, 1385):
      ellos **fizieron   mandamiento** alos iouenes   que
      they make.6.PST order   to+the young.PLUR that
      'They ordered to the young people that ...'

(8)   Old.Catalan (Eiximenis, Terç del Crestuià, CDLXXIX):
      un noble cavaller que ella **havia   en gran coneixença**
      a noble Knight   who she have.3.PST in great knowing
      'a knight that she knew very well'

(9)   Mod.Catalan: un cavaller que ella **coneixia**   molt
                        a Knight   that she know.3.PST very much
                        'a knight that she knew well'

(10) Mod. Spanish: **Tiene   conocimientos** de inglés
                        Have.3.PRES knowledges   of English
                        'He/she knows a little bit of English'

(11) Mod.Catalan: Em   **fa   pena**
                        To.me   make.3.Pres pity
                        '(She) grieves me'

(12) Old Spanish (CORDE: Anón., *Fuero General de Navarra* 1250 – 1300):
      non se   deue   (...) ni **meter** (...) **en barayla ni en desafiamiento**
      not SE.refl have.to.3.PRS nor put.INF   in fight   nor in duel
      'He should'nt fight'

(13) [VP [ovieron [NP [AP gran [nP temor]]]]]

(14) [vP [v HAVE [VP [ovieron [NP [nP tem-or]]]]]

(15) [VP [havia [PP [DP el cavaller [P' [P en [NP gran coneixença]]]]]]]

(16) [vP [v HAVE [VP [HAVE   [NP [[nP [n √tem]]]]]

(17) [vP [v HAVE [VP [HAVE [CCPP [DP el cavaller [CCP' [CCP (EN) [NP [nP √coneix]]]]]]]]

(18) [n –ença [√ CONEIX]]

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