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A feature that makes the difference:
aspectual concord in Romance copular clauses[*]

1. Introduction

1.1. Focus of the paper:

- Copular constructions (CopPs) in Romance under a cross-linguistic perspective.
  More in particular: the analogy between *ser*/*estar* languages (e.g., Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan) and mono-copular languages (namely, Italian and French) with respect to the Individual-Level / Stage-Level distinction.

- The role of aspectual features in the derivation of IL and SL-CopPs.

1.2. Why?

- *Ser*/*estar* languages (1): the copular alternation has largely been studied, and in the last decades it has commonly been related to the Individual-Level (IL) / Stage-Level (SL) distinction (Arche, 2006, 2012; Brucart, 2005; Cunha, 2011, 2013; Escandell & Leonetti, 2002; Fábregas, 2012; Fernández Leborans & Sánchez López, 2015; Fernández Leborans, 1999; Leonetti, 1994, 2015; RAE & ASALE, 2009; Ramos, 2002; Raposo, 2013; a.o.).

  (1)   a. Ana es estudiante / está enfadada.   (Italian)
        b. A Ana es estudante / está chateada.   (French)
        c. L'Anna és estudiant / està enfadada.   (Catalan)
           'Ana is$_{ser}$ a student / is$_{estar}$ angry'

- Mono-copular languages (i.e., lack of a SL-copula) (2): the IL/SL contrast has not been deeply investigated.

  (2)   a. Anna è {studentessa / arrabbiata}.   (Italian)
        b. Anne est {étudiante / en colère}.   (French)
           'Ana is a student / angry'

1.3. Claims

- Mono-copular languages show the IL/SL distinction despite the lack of copular alternation.

- A single formal feature [Stage] drives the derivation of SL-CopPs, and it is thus implicated in the IL/SL distinction across languages.

- An agreement operation between an Asp head and the predicate is at play in the derivation of event structure in SL-CopPs: aspectual agreement.

1.4. Outline

§ 2. On the *ser*-IL / *estar*-SL distinction

§ 3. The case of mono-copular languages: Italian and French

§ 4. Toward a unified analysis

§ 5. Conclusions

1

2. On the *ser*-IL / *estar*-SL distinction

- Spanish, Portuguese, Catalan: *ser*Ps = ILPs (3) / *estar*Ps = SLPs (4)[1]

  (3) Individual-level (*ser*):
      a. Ana es {estudiante / inteligente}.   (Spanish)
      b. A Ana é {estudante / inteligente}.   (Portuguese)
      c. L'Anna és {estudiant / intel·ligent}.   (Catalan)
       'Ana is$_{ser}$ a student / intelligent'

  (4) Stage-Level (*estar*):
      a. Ana está {harta / de pie}.   (Spanish)
      b. A Ana está {farta / deitada}.   (Portuguese)
      c. L'Anna està {farta de... / dreta}.   (Catalan)
       'Ana is$_{estar}$ fed up / standing'

- Syntactic and semantic evidence of the IL/SL contrast:

  — Eventive modifiers (Chierchia, 1995; Kratzer, 1988, 1995)

  (5) a. *Ana es estudiante {en la biblioteca / con sus libros}.   (Spanish)
      b. *A Ana é estudante {na biblioteca / com os seus libros}. (Portuguese)
      c. *L'Anna és estudiant {a la biblioteca / amb els seus llibres}. (Catalan)
       'Ana is$_{ser}$ a student in the library / with her books'

  (6) a. Ana está tumbada {en su habitación / con su peluche}.   (Spanish)
      b. A Ana está deitada {no seu quarto / com seu urso de pelúcia}. (Portuguese)
      c. L'Anna està estirada {a la seva habitació / amb el seu peluix}. (Catalan)
       'Ana is$_{estar}$ lying in her room / with her teddy bear'

  — Depictives (Demonte & Masullo, 1999; Hernanz, 1988; Rapoport, 1991)

  (7) a. *Ana es estudiante contenta.   (Spanish)
      b. *A Ana é estudante contente.   (Portuguese)
      c. *L'Anna és estudiant contenta.   (Catalan)
       'Ana is a student happy'

  (8) a. Ana está con sus amigos de vacaciones.   (Spanish)
      b. A Ana está com seus amigos de férias.   (Portuguese)
      c. L'Anna està amb els seus amics de vacances.   (Catalan)
       'Anna is with her friends on holidays'

  — Quantification (Chierchia, 1995; De Hoop & De Swart, 1989; Farkas & Sugioka, 1983; Kratzer, 1988, 1995)

  (9) a. *Cada vez que Ana es francesa...   (Spanish)
      b. *De cada vez que a Ana é francesa...   (Portuguese)
      c. *Cada vegada que l'Anna és francesa...   (Catalan)
       'Whenever Ana is French...'

  (10) a. Cada vez que Ana está enfadada, llora.   (Spanish)
      b. De cada vez que a Ana está chateada, chora.   (Portuguese)
      c. Cada vegada que l'Anna està enfadada, plora.   (Catalan)
       'Whenever Ana is angry, she cries'

  — Eventive reading: "here and now" in the present

  (11) a. Ana es estudiante. [≠ Aquí y ahora]   (Spanish)
      b. A Ana é estudante. [≠ Aqui e agora]   (Portuguese)
      c. L'Anna és estudiant. [≠ Aquí i ara]   (Catalan)
       'Ana is a student. [≠ Here and now]'

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[1] The *ser*/*estar* distinction in Catalan is not so clear-cut as in Spanish and Portuguese, depending on the dialect (see Ramos, 2002). Nevertheless, for the cases we are discussing here, Catalan can be taken into account.

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(12) a. Ana está {tumbada / cansada / enfadada}. [Aquí y ahora]   (Spanish)
    b. A Ana está {deitada / cansada / chateada}. [Aqui e agora]   (Portuguese)
    c. L'Anna està {estirada / cansada / enfadada}. [Aquí i ara]   (Catalan)
      'Ana is lying / tired / hungry. [Here and now]'

— Eventive reading: "once" or "several times" in the past (or the future)

(13) a. En su juventud, Ana fue estudiante (#solo una vez / #varias veces).   (Spanish)
    b. Na sua juventude, a Ana foi estudante (#só uma vez / #várias vezes).   (Portuguese)
    c. Durant la seva joventut, l'Anna va ser estudiant (#una única vegada /
      #diverses vegades).   (Catalan)
      'In her youth, Ana was a student (only once / several times)'

(14) a. Durante nuestro último viaje, Ana ha estado {triste / enferma / sentada}   (Spanish)
      (solo una vez / varias veces).
    b. Durante a nossa última viagem, a Ana esteve {triste / doente / sentada}   (Portuguese)
      (só uma vez / várias vezes)
    c. Durant el nostre últim viatge, l'Anna ha estat {trista / malalta / asseguda}   (Catalan)
      (una única vegada / diverses vegades)
      'During our last trip, Ana was sad / sick / sitting (only once / several times)'

3.   The case of mono-copular languages: Italian and French

- No overt difference between ILPs and SLPs (15).[2]

(15) a. Anna è {studentessa / intelligente / stufa / in piedi}.   (Italian)
    b. Anne est {étudiante / intelligente / fatiguée / debout}.   (French)
      'Ana is a student / intelligent / tired / standing'

- **i. Do mono-copular languages lack the IL/SL distinction?**
  ii. If not, how is the distinction instantiated in these languages?

- Syntactic and semantic evidence of the IL/SL contrast:

  — Eventive modifiers

(16) a. *Anna è studentessa {in biblioteca / con i suoi libri}.   (Italian)
    b. *Anne est étudiante {à la biblioteque / avec ses livres}.   (French)
      'Ana is a student in the library / with her books'

(17) a. Anna è stesa {nel suo letto / con il suo peluche}.   (Italian)
    b. Anne est allongée {dans son lit / avec son ours en peluche}.   (French)
      'Ana is lying on her bed / with her teddy bear'

  — Depictives

(18) a. *Anna è studentessa contenta.   (Italian)
    b. *Anne est étudiante heureuse.   (French)
      'Ana is a student happy'

(19) a. Anna è nel suo letto in lacrime.   (Italian)
    b. Anne est dans son lit en pleurs.   (French)
      'Ana is in her bed in tears'

  — Quantification

(20) a. *Ogni volta che Anna è studentessa...   (Italian)
    b. *À chaque fois qu'Anne est étudiante...   (French)
      'Whenever Ana is a student...'

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[2] This is the case of standard Italian and northern Italian dialects. Oppositely, in a number of southern Italian dialects *essere* and *stare* alternate in accordance with the Individual/Stage distinction (see Bentley, 2015; Cruschina, 2015 and references therein).

(21) a. Ogni volta che Anna è arrabbiata, piange.   (Italian)
    b. À chaque fois qu'Anne est en colère, elle pleure.   (French)
      'Whenever Ana is angry, she cries'

— Eventive reading: "here and now" in the present

(22) a. *Anna è studentessa. [≠ Qui e ora]   (Italian)
    b. *Anne est étudiante. [≠ Ici et maintenant]   (French)
      'Ana is a student. [≠ Here and now]'

(23) a. Anna è {stesa / stanca / arrabbiata}. [Qui e ora]   (Italian)
    b. Anne est {allongée / fatiguée / en colère}. [Ici et maintenant]   (French)
      'Ana is lying / tired / hungry. [Here and now]'

— Eventive reading: "once" or "several times" in the past (or the future)

(24) a. Da giovane, Anna è stata studentessa (#solo una volta / #varie volte).   (Italian)
    b. Dans sa jeunesse, Anne a été étudiante (#une seule fois / #plusieurs fois).   (French)
      'In her youth, Ana was a student (only once / several times)'

(25) a. Durante il nostro ultimo viaggio, Anna è stata {triste / da sola / seduta}   (Italian)
    (solo una volta / varie volte).
    b. Pendant notre dernier voyage, Anne a été {triste / seule / assise}   (French)
    (une seule fois / plusieurs fois).
      'During our last trip, Ana was sad / alone / sitting (only once / several times)'

- **The lack of copular alternation (i.e., a specific SL-copula) does not prevent the IL/SL distinction: CopPs in Italian and French also show the IL/SL distinction.**

4. Toward a unified analysis

4.1. Analytical foundations

- No common understanding of the IL/SL distinction (see Fábregas, 2012; Fernald, 2000)

- Here:

    i. ILPs: property-descriptive
      SLPs: happening-descriptive
      (Carlson, 1977; Milsark, 1974)

    ii. IL/SL contrast as an aspectual distinction (common view: Arche, 2012; Chierchia, 1995; Diesing, 1992; Kratzer, 1988, 1995; a.o.).
      More specifically, IL/SL as the first parameter of inner aspect (Hoekstra, 1992; Silvagni, 2015): lack (ILPs) / presence (SLPs) of inner aspect

    iii. Syntactically: SL-structures = AspPs (Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach, 2009; Fábregas, 2012; Hernanz, 1991; Silvagni, 2015)

    iv. Semantically: Asp introduces the e-role in LF (Hernanz, 1991), which is responsible for the grammatical effects in (3)-(12) (Diesing, 1992; Kratzer, 1988, 1995; Rapoport, 1991; a.o.).

- 'Stage' is taken as the primitive feature of eventivity (SL-ness).
  'Stage': space-time point, i.e., an intersection of space and time (Silvagni, 2015, 2016)[3]

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[3] The concept is taken from modern (post-Einsteinian/Minkowskian) physics and philosophy, which take reality as a 4D continuum (3 Space + 1 Time dimensions) (Einstein, 1905, 1915, 1916; Minkowski, 1909; Sider, 2001).

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- Doubling phenomenon with respect to SL-ness (Silvagni, 2015):

  (26) a. *Ana es   harta.
              [S]

       b. Ana   está   harta.
           [S]   [S]

- (*Flexible Formal Feature Hypothesis*, Zeijlstra, 2008) >>> SL-structures (i.e., *estar*Ps) are derived by syntactic agreement.[4]

  (27) Ana   está   harta.
        [iS]   [uS]

  (28) Spanish aspectual elements:
       Asp (*estar*)   [iS][5]
       SLPs   [uS]

  (29) *estar*Ps:
       [AspP [Asp estar$_{[iS]}$] [AP ... [A harta$_{[uS]}$]]]

- Oppositely, IL-CopPs (i.e., *ser*Ps):[6]

  (30) *ser*Ps:
       [VP [V ser] [AP ... [A inteligente]]]

4.2. Proposal

4.2.1. Hypothesis

The same formal feature [i/uS] is at play in the derivation of SL-CopPs in mono-copular languages (e.g., Italian and French).

4.2.2. Evidence

- (16)-(25): evidence for IL and SL-structures in mono-copular languages.

  (31) a. Anna VP[è studentessa / intelligente].   (Italian)
       b. Anne VP[est étudiante / intelligente].   (French)
          'Ana is a student / intelligent'

  (32) a. Anna AspP[è stanca / seduta].   (Italian)
       b. Anne AspP[est fatiguée/ assise].   (French)
          'Ana is tired / sitting'

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[4] I follow Zeijlstra's version of Agree (i). Oppositely to the Chomskian version, in this model (un)interpretability is not taken as a semantic property of the feature, but as a mere syntactic requirement (ii).
(i) Agree:
     α can agree with β iff:
     a. α carries at least one uninterpretable feature and β carries a matching interpretable feature.
     b. β c-commands α.
     c. β is the closest goal to α.

                                                                   (Zeijlstra, 2012: 514)
(ii) [uF] encodes a need to stand in a proper Agree configuration with [iF].
     [iF] encodes the ability to satisfy [uF]s configurational needs.

                                                                   (Zeijlstra, 2014: 112)
[5] Studying *estar* as Asp is motivated by independent facts: (i) *estar* is grammaticalized as an aspectual verb; (ii) *estar* is higher than *ser* and lexical verbs: *estar siendo* vs. **ser estando*; (iii) any SL-VP (i.e., AspP) allows the progressive <*estar + -ndo*>; (iv) *estar* is latent in secondary SL-predication (i.e., AspPs): *Ayudó a su padre (estando) muy enfadada* ('She helped her father while being very angry').
[6] Different syntax-oriented approaches to the *ser*/*estar* alternation can be found in (Brucart, 2012; Camacho, 2012; Gallego & Uriagereka, 2009, 2012, 2016; Pérez-Jiménez, Leonetti, & Gumiel-Molina, 2015; Zagona, 2012; a.o.)

- SL-ness is rooted in predicates:

  — ILPs can only be complements of N, while SLPs can serve as NP adjuncts (33) (see Leonetti & Escandell, 1991 for Spanish):

  (33) a. Il ritratto di Anna {*studentessa / furiosa}. (Italian)
       b. Le portrait d'Anne {*étudiante / furieuse}. (French)
         'The picture of Ana student / furious'

  — SLPs, but not ILPs, can function as depictives (34) (Demonte & Masullo, 1999; Hernanz, 1988; Rapoport, 1991):

  (34) a. Anna è andata al lavoro {*intelligente / ammalata}. (Italian)
       b. Anne est allée au travail {*intelligente / malade}. (French)
         'Ana went to work intelligent / sick'

  — Only SLPs, but not ILPs, can serve as complements of perception verbs (35):

  (35) a. Ho visto Anna {*studentessa / triste}. (Italian)
       b. J'ai vu Anne {*étudiante / triste}. (French)
         'I saw Anna student/sick'

- Despite the lack of an overt doubling phenomenon in SL-CopPs, SLPs show a formal requirement to stand in a proper syntactic relation with a [Stage] feature:
  SLPs can appear exclusively post-nominally (36) (Contreras & Zagona, 2014; Demonte, 1999a, 1999b; Picallo, 2012 for Spanish)

  (36) a. la (*ammalata) bambina (ammalata) (Italian)
       b. l' (*malade) enfant (malade) (French)

       c. la (*enferma) niña (enferma) (Spanish)
       d. a (*doente) menina (doente) (Portuguese)
       e. la (*malalta) nena (malalta) (Catalan)
         'The sick child'

  (Cinque, 2010: post-nominal SL-adjectives are merged via a reduced relative clause) >>> need of establishing a relation with a c-commanding element (37).

  (37) a. la bambina (che è)$_{[iS]}$ ammalata$_{[uS]}$ (Italian)
       b. l'enfant (qui est)$_{[iS]}$ malade$_{[uS]}$ (French)

  (38) a. la niña (que está) enferma (Spanish)
       b. a menina (que está) doente (Portuguese)
       c. la nena (que està) malalta (Catalan)

4.2.3. Analysis

- Despite the lack of a SL-Cop, the [i/uS] feature is at play in the derivation of SL-CopPs.

  (39) Aspectual elements in mono-copular languages (e.g., Italian and French):
       Asp   [iS]
       SLPs   [uS]

- SL-CopPs: SLPs exhibit an agreement relationship with a covert Asp head (40).[7]

  (40) SL-CopPs:
       [AspP [Asp$_{[iS]}$] [VP [V essere/être] [AP ... [A enfermo/malad$_{[uS]}$]]]]

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[7] This conclusion is compatible with Zeijlstra (2014)'s acquisition algorithm for formal features: "Assign [iF] to all morphosyntactic elements that introduce the semantic context that is manifested by [uF]. If no overt morphosyntactic element is responsible, assume some covert element to be present that carries the semantics of F and that therefore should be assigned [iF]" (Zeijlstra, 2014: 125).

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- Cf. (40) and (29): mono-copular languages do not have a SL-copula, i.e., an overt realization of Asp.

- IL-CopPs: no feature, no agreement (31)

  (41) IL-CopPs:
       [VP [V essere/être] [AP ... [A intelligente]]]

5. Conclusions

5.1. Summary

- The lack of a copular alternation does not block the IL/SL distinction in mono-copular languages: CopPs in Romance are split into the IL and SL classes.

- The same formal feature [i/uS] drives the derivation of SL-CopPs across languages.

- The difference between copular alternation languages (*ser*/*estar*) and mono-copular languages is reduced to a lexical accident: the presence or the lack of a SL-Cop (*estar*).

- Overt aspectual agreement in copular alternation languages (i.e., Spanish, Catalan, Portuguese) / Covert aspectual agreement in mono-copular languages (i.e., Italian, French).

5.2. Implications for feature theory

- Aspectual concord phenomenon in the derivation of event-structure. Not related to the expression of resultativity (Arsenijević, 2011) or telicity (MacDonald, 2008). Similar to negative and modal concord phenomena (Biberauer & Zeijlstra, 2012; Dekker & Zeijlstra, 2012; Espinal & Tubau, 2016; Geurts & Huitink, 2006; Zeijlstra, 2004, 2008; a.o.).

- Upward agreement is at play in aspectual concord.[8] >>> (Zeijlstra, 2012, 2014)

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[8] Some previous proposals account for copular alternation by means of a downward agreement operation, which involves an [uF] on *estar* and an [iF] on the SL-predicate (Camacho, 2012; Zagona, 2012, 2015). These proposals yield two main wrong predictions: contrary to evidence, they predict (i) that SLPs can appear with *ser* and (ii) that *estar*Ps with an ILP are ungrammatical (i.e., they cannot account for coercion phenomena). Upward agreement solves all these shortcomings.

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