

(AND YET) ANOTHER PROPOSAL FOR SER/ESTAR

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ABSTRACT

This paper puts forward an l-syntactic account of non-trivially alternating copulas *ser/estar* building on incorporation of a prepositional head (p*). I propose that p* is to be seen a locus of encoding and variation of the relevant properties whereby *ser/estar* diverge, but also as the element constraining selection and interpretation of the predicate.

First, I use the distinction between telicity and boundedness as starting point for developing a reformulation of the Hale-and-Keyserian analysis of *ser/estar* that supports a new typology of p heads within the Central Coincidence domain. This is important to capture wider sets of corpus and analytic data, but also in order to reflect an adequate division of work between verbal (Aktionsart) and constructional aspect. Then, I propose a novel implementation based on p-conflation and Hyponym Argument Relations. If correct, the analysis handles different facts, at the same time that it brings *ser/estar* into a much ampler frame.

Keywords: COPULA, ALTERNATION, AKTIONSART, STATE, TELICITY, PREPOSITION, BOUNDARY

1. INTRODUCTION

One of the most interesting facts about Spanish copulas *ser/estar* is that they diverge from the basic definition of *copula*—basically, a semantically trivial verb—by bearing specific semantic content. Such distinctive properties motivate, on the one hand, a non-trivial alternation in shared contexts, including minimal pairs, as shown in (1), as well as a well-known complementary distribution, exemplified by (2), on the other hand, when selectional patterns diverge. Even if this empirical circumstance has been extensively addressed in the literature, the question remains as to what the correct account ultimately is.

For instance, different approaches have alternatively placed the burden of the explanation in the predicate (e.g. Bosque 1999 *i.a.*), in discourse anchor (e.g. Maienborn 2005) or else in reinterpretation phenomena (e.g., *coercion*, cf. Escandell & Leonetti 2002 *i.a.*), among other options. These proposals offer interesting insights; they are not, however, a compelling analytical frame if the goal is to provide a systematic correlation between the meaning of a verb (the copula) and the selectional restrictions placed by it, insofar as we agree that a nontrivial verbal alternation is a problem of a (lexico)grammatical nature, but especially since major contrasts arise in minimal pairs defined by copula choice. In addition, such approaches may not seem convenient if we want to explain how the relevant semantic properties are encoded in the copula. For instance, an account based on a lexical alternation between two semantically null verbs (cf. Maienborn 2005) may not offer a convincing explanation for a nontrivial verbal alternation. Another potential empirical problem, especially for those accounts that concentrate on the relevance of the copular predicate, is that neither the distribution nor the semantic consequences of the alternation are straightforwardly predicted from the semantic and/or morphosyntactic properties of the predicate. In fact, the distribution is very difficult to pin down. Predicates bearing similar features appear with both copulas, while others, predicted to pattern with one copula, are either eligible only for the unexpected alternate or equally compatible with both. For instance, various APs with perfective morphology, which is generally predicted to pattern with *estar*, take only *ser* (*admirado* ‘admired’ and *leído* ‘[well-]read’ in (2)b) while others freely alternate (*calmado* ‘calmed’ in (1)). Similarly, present perfect morphology (*-nte*), which in principle patterns with *ser*, is also found in APs that only combine with *estar* (cf. *pendiente* ‘pending’, *vigente* ‘valid’ etc., in (2)a). More importantly, a significant set of predicates lacking the relevant morphology are crosscut by the exclusive distribution (e.g. *simple* ‘simple’ in (2)b), while others freely alternate, though not trivially (e.g. *feliz* ‘happy’ in (1)).

- (1) {Ser/ Estar} feliz, carriñoso, oscuro, apacible, fresco, gris, calmado, potable, insistente.
be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} happy, loving, dark, quiet, fresh, grey, calmed, drinkable, insistent
- (2) a. {#Ser/Estar} contento, descalzo, lleno, vivo, muerto, disponible, pendiente, vigente, expectante, presente
be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} happy, barefoot, full, alive, dead, available, pending, valid expectant present
- b. {Ser/#Estar} simple, capaz, idóneo, válido, probable, posible, importante, leído, admirado.
be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} simple, (cap)able, apt, valid, probable, possible, important, well-read, admired

Moreover, it is not the case that all occurrences of each copula produce the predicted aspectual specification (e.g. *estar* not always conveys a perfective or telic predicate); and, on the other hand, the meaning of the whole predicate does not depend solely on the complement. Namely, aspectually underspecified or neuter adjectives like *feliz* ‘happy’ yield

semantically distinct predicates depending on the copula they appear with. Quite apart from this question, even if we assume standardly that the distribution bears on an aspectual contrast between *ser/estar* (e.g. temporally unlimited vs. limited properties; stable vs. changing qualities, properties vs. states, etc.), the general situation proves much more complex. For example, accounts building on the well-known Individual vs. Stage-Level dichotomy (cf. Gallego & Uriagereka 2009, Husband 2010, Marín 2009 *i.a.*) must deal with the fact that the opposition does not reflect the *ser/estar* cut. In reality, both copulas succeed in delivering the two types of predicates (3), at the same time that they preserve the capacity to determine a distinct, consistent semantic flavor and relevant restrictions. Again, the specific properties of *ser/estar* are strong enough to prevail over the aspectual burden contributed by the lexical head of the SC predicate—which should be the one prevailing over a copula, at least under standard assumptions (that is, under the definition of copula as a semantically trivial verb)—as (4) shows. In addition, the distribution also involves interesting patterns in contexts in principle unexpected for stative verbs, exemplified by (5). Finally, the problem exceeds mere semantics, especially to the extent that the distribution is category-sensitive (6).

- (3) Individual-Level Predicates [ILP]
 a. Esta cartera {_{ILP}es/_{ILP/SLP}está} muy bonita. (cf. La cartera {es/*está} triangular)
 this wallet be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} very nice ‘This wallet is very nice’ The wallet be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} triangular
 b. Brasil {*es / está} en Sudamérica.
 Brazil be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} in South America ‘Brazil is in South America’
 Stage-Level Predicates [SLP]
 c. Rafael {_{ILP/SLP}fue/_{SLP}estuvo} grosero con sus alumnos.
 Rafael be_{SER,PRF} be_{ESTAR,PRF} rude with his students ‘Rafael was rude to his students’
- (4) a. Ser [_{-perf/ILP}] {enfermo /despierto/ borracho} [_{+perf/SLP}] > ILP
 be_{SER} sick awake drunk ‘To be a sick person, a wide-awake person, a drunk’
 b. Estar [_{+perf/SLP}] {sensible/ deseante/ inteligente} [_{-perf/ILP}] > SLP
 be_{ESTAR} sensitive willing intelligent ‘To be touchy, eager, brainy (at a given moment)’
- (5) a. La habitación terminará de {estar/*ser} limpia en 20 minutos.
 the room finish._{FUT} of be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} clean in 20 minutes
 ‘The room will be finally clean in 20 minutes’ [The room will finish being clean in 20 minutes]
 b. El editor estaba {*estando / siendo} grosero cuando llegamos.
 the editor was being_{SER} being_{ESTAR} rude when arrived. > ILP
 ‘The editor was being rude when we arrived’
 c. Amy vio al editor {siendo / *estando} amable con su empleada. > SLP
 Amy saw the editor being_{SER} being_{ESTAR} kind with his employee
 ‘Amy saw the editor being kind to her employee’.
 d. Los pasajes {#son/están} baratos {lunes y jueves / a cada rato / nuevamente}.
 the tickets be_{SER} be_{ESTAR} cheap Mondays and Thursdays at every while again
 ‘The tickets are cheap {(on) Mondays and (on) Thursdays/every once in a while/again}’
- (6) Ser {PP/AP/NP/*AdvP} Estar {PP/AP/AdvP/*NP}

In this paper, I would like to argue that these facts can be accommodated by an l-syntactic account building on incorporation of a prepositional head (p*), which is to be seen as a crucial locus of encoding for the relevant properties whereby *ser/estar* diverge but also as the main determiner of the interpretation and selection of the copular predicate. The initial idea is not new. The notion that *ser/estar* can receive a natural explanation from p-incorporation has been around for some time in the literature (e.g. Uriagereka 2001, Zagona 2011, 2014 *i.a.*). Yet, even if considerable progress has been made, at least two issues remain to be settled. One bears on the semantic ontology of the incorporated p. This concerns, namely, the definition of Central [CC] and Terminal Coincidence [TC] relations, together with its implications for the aspectual domain, in particular for copulas. This is a basic opposition in Hale & Keyser’s model, and one that has figured importantly in previous accounts of *ser/estar* (e.g. Gallego & Uriagereka 2009, Brucart 2012). The other question concerns the syntactic ontology of p and some specific problems raised by its implementation. The goal of the paper is, therefore, twofold. First, I put forward a reformulation of the basic l-syntactic analysis of *ser/estar*. The proposal builds on the distinction between telicity and boundedness to support a specific typology of p heads as locus of encoding of the relevant properties. The general idea behind this attempt is that the semantic contrast at work needs to be properly constrained to the correct domain; most crucially, *estar* needs to be redefined independent of *telicity* and TC in order to correctly capture corpus and analytic data, but especially to reflect an adequate division of work between the aspectual properties of the copula *per se*, motivating the non-trivial alternation, and those ensuing from a composition, which nonetheless involves visible contrasts with *ser*. Then, I propose a finer grained implementation of a novel theoretical approach that builds on p-incorporation (conflation) à la Hale & Keyser [HK] (1993, 2002, 2005) combined with hyponym selection (Hyponym Argument Relations [HAR], HK 2002:70; 2005:18) as a way to solve some specific problems. If correct, the analysis will correctly handle the facts in (1)-(6) at once, at

the same time that it will place *ser/estar* within a much ampler frame provided by verbs arguably produced by similar processes.

2. THE SEMANTIC (ASPECTUAL) PROBLEM

This section presents an overview of the TC/CC ontology and its implications for the analysis of Aktionsart, as a common theoretical device used in l-syntactic accounts. The focus is on the relation between TC, as originally defined, and telicity. The specific problem at hand is that a characterization of *ser/estar* building on TC leads to generalizations that seem too strong when confronted with larger sets of data, besides posing a problem for the essential stativity of these copulas. In order to reflect the aspectual properties of *ser/estar* as closely as possible, I will consider the idea that these semantically contentful copulas result from conflation of a verbal head and an abstract locative birelational element: a non-eventive dyadic head (p^*) yielding a stative (CC) relation and encoding the specific semantic nuance whereby *ser/estar* diverge. Under the assumption that a contrast between two CC ps (p_{AT}/p_{HAVE}) would be a better choice to handle divisions internal to the stative type, I build on Hale's (1986) and HK's (1993, 2002, 2005) aspectual definition of CC/TC. As discussed above, this opposition has been used to account for different properties of the semantic structure of relational lexical items (HK 2002) and has been used before to account for Spanish copulas. Note that I keep placing this opposition as the source of telicity and atelicity, respectively, in line with the original formulation and only to preserve the distinction between lexical (verbal) and constructional aspect.

2.1 TC and telicity

On Hale's (1986) original account, spatiotemporal relations are defined by two Figure/Ground relations: central (CC) and non-central (TC) coincidence. Essentially, CC designates those cases where the location of the Figure and the Ground coincide centrally. By contrast, in the TC the location of the Figure corresponds to a *trajectory* (if moving) or to a *linear arrangement* (if stationary) *ending/beginning at the designated Ground*. In HK (2002, 2005)—i.e., the framework adopted by previous attempts on *ser/estar*—this fundamental opposition is seen as reflecting the contrast between *stasis* and *change* (HK 2002:2018). Specifically, while CC is argued to “consistently correspond to stativity”, TC is related to change and therefore, to “the various active, dynamic, and otherwise *non-stative* event types”. However, TC is not constrained to *change*, so to speak. Leaving aside the fact that a proper distinction between eventive type (i.e., stasis/change) and an aspectual parameter (*telicity*) is, in our view, in order, TC is further defined as “a property which corresponds to the *endpoint* of a change undergone by the entity denoted by the subject” and accordingly assigned to *telic* verbs (HK 2002:221). Even if an attested correlation holds between TC and Telicity in some cases (cf. Mateu 2008), the former is crucially defined as the “source” of the latter (HK 2005:36). If we apply this to Spanish copulas, an account of *ser/estar* based on a CC/TC opposition would involve, at least in principle, the analysis of *estar* in terms of telicity. This idea figures prominently in early accounts of *ser/estar*.

2.1.1 *Estar* as a telic copula

An analysis of *estar* based on telicity (explored in Schmitt 1993, Zagona 2011, Camacho 2012, Luján 1981 *i.a.*) has the advantage of building on parameters that are central to the analysis of lexical aspect. Besides, it allows a direct relation with a notion (TC) which is central to the theoretical framework followed here. However, these advantages are rapidly outweighed by empirical and technical problems logically affecting a TC account of *estar* as well.

In principle, *telicity* should not be expected in *estar*—not less than in *ser*—, at least under the assumption that these copulas (if not copulas in general) are stative. In theory, this proviso holds not only given HK's definition, outlined above, but essentially as states, as eventive type, are basically defined by not featuring an *endpoint* (much less, progression towards one). Nonetheless, *estar*—unlike *ser*—seems to pass standard tests for telicity (further discussed later), as (7)-(12) suggest.

(7) Endpoint adverbials (Dowty 1991)

a. Los resultados estuvieron {disponibles/abiertos/en la recepción} en 10 minutos.

‘The results were {available/open/at the reception desk} in 10 minutes’

b. La sopa estará {caliente/lista} en un minuto

‘The soup was {hot/ready} in a minute’

c. Les tomó diez minutos estar {conscientes/listos/disponibles/libres}.

‘It took them ten minutes to be {conscious/ready/available/free}’

(8) Conjoined intervals (Verkuy1 1993)

Los resultados estuvieron {disponibles/abiertos/en la recepción} (el) lunes y (el) martes.

‘The results were {available/open/at the reception desk} (on) Monday and (on) Tuesday’

(9) Pause (Landman & Rothstein 2010)

Los resultados estuvieron {disponibles/abiertos/en la recepción} (el) lunes y (el) jueves.

- ‘The results were {available/open/at the reception desk} (on) Monday and (on) Thursday’
- (10) Embedding under culminative verbs such as *stop, finish* (Verkuyl 1993).
 - a. Los resultados dejaron de estar {disponibles/abiertos/en la recepción} #(hace poco).
‘The results stopped being {available/open/at the reception desk} #(a while ago)’
 - b. La sopa terminará de estar {caliente/lista} *(en un minuto)
‘The soup will finish being {hot/ready} *(in a minute) [‘*The soup will be finally {hot/ready} un a minute*’]
 - c. Las entradas {terminaron/acabaron} de estar disponibles *(el viernes).
‘The tickets {finished/ended being available} *(on Friday) [‘*The tickets were finally available on Friday*’]
 - (11) Ambiguity of negation and almost (Bennet & Partee 1972)
 - a. La sopa (casi) estuvo (casi) {lista/caliente}.
‘The soup (almost) was (almost) {ready/hot}’.
-> Event scope: the process of preparation was *almost* initiated.
-> Result State scope: the process of preparation was initiated, but the result state was almost reached (the soup was almost {ready/hot}).
 - b. La sopa no estuvo {lista/caliente} [finalmente]
‘The soup was not {ready/hot} [finally]’
-> Counterfactual reading: the process of preparation did not even begin (was about to, but didn’t).
-> Incompletive reading: The process begun but was not completed (the soup was heated halfway).
 - (12) Ambiguity between restitutive and repetitive reading (Dowty 1979)
La sopa estuvo nuevamente {caliente/lista}
‘The soup was {ready/hot} (once) again’
 - a. Repetitive reading: the same person prepared/heated the same soup twice
 - b. Restitutive reading: the soup had already been ready/hot before.

However, although this may be true, a less often noted fact is that *estar* happens to pass common atelicity tests just as easily, as shown by (0)-(15). The important point here is that the absence of endpoint adverbials, as in ((15)b), or else the combination with durative ones, as in ((15)a), produces homogeneous (hence, atelic) predicates, in contrast to the potentially telic predicate (or telic entailment) yielded with an endpoint adverbial. Clearly, *estar* is not amenable to other semicopulas such as *resultar* ‘turn out’ or *quedar* ‘become’ (16), which can be ultimately seen as bearing lexical semantics properties related to telicity. This, added to the fact that the durative adjunct is irrelevant to the delivery of an atelic/homogeneous predicate, can be seen as an indication that *estar* is not, in and of itself, telic. Instead, these patterns encourage the idea that *estar* produces homogeneous (atelic) predicates by default and that the telic entailment is, instead, epiphenomenal (i.e., a side-effect of the construction). In fact, also *ser* can yield telic entailments and even trivially alternate with a semicopula more closely akin to telicity if combined with relevant adjuncts, as in (17).

- (13) Framing [for X time] (Dowty 1991)
Las entradas estuvieron disponibles por días.
‘The tickets were available for days’
- (14) Durative adjuncts (Dowty 1991)
Las entradas estuvieron disponibles durante toda la semana.
‘The tickets were available the whole week’
- (15) Homogeneity (Bennett and Partee 1972 i.a.)
 - a. La mitad de ‘estuvieron disponibles (por diez minutos)’ es ‘estar disponible’
Half of ‘to be_{ESTAR} available (for ten minutes)’ is ‘to be_{ESTAR} available’
 - b. La mitad de ‘estuvieron disponibles #(en diez minutos)’ no es ‘estar disponible’
Half of ‘to be_{ESTAR} available in ten minutes’ is not ‘to be_{ESTAR} available’
- (16) {Terminó/Quedó} cansado cf. Estuvo cansado.
finished/ remained tired ‘He ended up tired’ be_{ESTAR,PERF} tired ‘He has been tired’
- (17) Las condiciones { fueron/ resultaron} {diferentes/insufribles/imposibles} en poco tiempo.
‘The conditions {were_{SER}/became} {different/unbearable/impossible} in a short time’

Of course, the idea that telicity is compositionally achieved by copulas is not germane to *ser/estar*. In truth, even ‘pure’ copulas yield telic/inchoative entailments if combined with specific adjuncts and/or predicates (e.g. English ‘*be AP in x time*’). With this in mind, and to the extent that *homogeneity* (e.g. (15)) is indeed a more reliable sign of atelicity than incompatibility with endpoint (in-x-time) adverbials (Dowty 1979), it is not unreasonable to assume that Spanish *estar* is not itself telic, but rather, that the construction (‘*be_{ESTAR} X in Y time*’) is—or at least allows—such an entailment. In truth, what is particular about Spanish copulas is that they are not freely interchangeable and, although *estar* does not necessarily yield telicity, it does feature certain properties that make it somehow more adequate to this effect than *ser* (recall (5) above).

2.1.2 *Estar as a TC*

According to the considerations just introduced, the primary assumption at work here is that TC may apply to a considerable number of constructions with *estar*, but it does not define the copula's Aktionsart properties nor generalize to all its occurrences. Therefore, we may keep this notion, but only under the premise that *estar* shall ultimately *appear in* TC constructions—in the sense that it may be compatible (sometimes) with telic entailments or endpoint interpretations—but it does not, in and of itself, encode a TC. There are good reasons for this. First, we do not need to appeal to specific cases like *La cartera está bonita* 'The bag is cute' in ((3)a) to argue that *estar* does not designate by definition "a property which corresponds to the *endpoint* of a change undergone by the entity denoted by the subject", which is HK's definition of TC, cited above. Second, these copulas being essentially stative (and atelic), they are expected to square with CCs in the present framework, particularly if we recall that TC corresponds to change "and therefore to the various active, dynamic, and otherwise *non-stative* event types" (HK 2005:36 [emphasis added]). Another important observation is that HK's prototypical example of a CC (see (18)a) yields an SL-predicate; and, quite crucially, its Spanish equivalent would take *estar* rather than *ser*, as in (19). In this respect, *estar* seems an adequate choice as Spanish paraphrase of the standard CC (i.e., (18)a), even over *ser*. Setting aside the fact that HK's prototypical TC, exemplified by ((18)b), would not be expressed in Spanish using *estar*, the relevant semantic component in question (the telic event) is not easily amenable to *estar*'s lexical meaning either.

(18) a. [DP₁ [P_C (in) [DP₂]]] CC: "with the baby in bed, we can relax" (HK 2002:222)

b. [DP₁ [P_T (to) [P_C (in) [DP₂]]]] TC: "getting the baby into bed"

(19) { *siendo/ estando } el bebé en la cama, podemos relajarnos.

being_{SER} being_{ESTAR} the baby in the bed, can._{1PL} relax 'Being the baby in bed, we can relax'

Quite apart from this question, trying to avoid using a TC/CC opposition to define the point of divergence between *ser/estar* does not imply assuming that these copulas are aspectually neuter or unspecified, but rather that there are finer and equally crucial differences at work; namely, those motivating the well-known distributional patterns and non-trivial alternation in shared contexts summarized at the beginning. Along these lines, I will propose instead that the formal differences behind the *ser/estar* alternation are to be dealt within the realm of CCs.

This solution is compelling at different levels. For instance, if the CC (i.e., the stative Figure/Ground-relation) can be eventually interpreted as overlapping with the end of a trajectory—i.e., in those predicates involving a telic/resultative flavor—is precisely because TCs are more complex structures fundamentally comprising (simpler) CCs relations like ((18)a) in their base (cf. HK 2002:221). Interestingly, this structural complexity fits well with our claim about telicity being epiphenomenal (i.e., the result of a construction). Further, there are specific properties in *estar* that can be argued to account, quite naturally, for the embedding of this CC predicate in the more complex (TC) structure, and which are to be crucially differentiated from *telicity*. If on track, such an account would be more in line with analytic patterns indicating that telic entailments are not a constant feature of *estar*, as well as with the theoretical notion that *telicity* is not part of verbal semantics, but rather a property of constructions (going back at least to Dowty 1979). In consequence, the observation about the *relative* structural complexity of TCs in contrast to the simplicity of CCs would crucially coincide with the contrast between constructional aspect and lexical aspect defended here. In turn, the alternative distinction between CC prepositions would account for the relevant contrast between *ser/estar*, while the evidence for this sort of lexical difference is, in general, straightforward. Moreover, the basic claim remains highly compatible with the definition of these copulas as statives, especially if we are open to the idea that states can be seen as basic *building blocks* from which more complex predicates are formed (cf. Rothmayr 2009 *i.a.*).

At this point, a relevant question arises. It concerns the observation, advanced above, that although copulas are in general allowed in more complex (e.g., TC) constructions, *ser/estar* are visibly constrained to this effect. Arguably, such restrictions follow from the same semantic/aspectual burden that motivates the alternation. The question now is which feature or property best accounts for the behavioral patterns noted and makes *estar* more suitable for telic entailments.

3. A WAY OUT: BOUNDEDNESS VS. TELICITY

Various analyses based on *perfectivity*, *telicity*, and *inchoativity* (Bosque 1990, Zagona 2011, Camacho 2012, respectively) share intuitions about the presence of a boundary in *estar*. Such an agreement is not accidental. Crucially, it has been pointed out that one of the reasons why *telicity* and *perfectivity* are commonly mistaken is that they both involve *boundedness* (cf. Borik & Reinhart 2004, Guéron 2007). I want to propose that this is the key to the problem of *estar*, as primary explanation for (7)-(17), and in particular because boundedness is not incompatible with atelicity. Simplifying somewhat, telicity is basically defined by involving an endpoint—in theory, the event counts as complete if it reaches this point beyond which it cannot continue (Depraetere 1995: 2). However, this is a necessary but not a

sufficient condition; in turn, non-homogeneity is. Put simply, the idea (going back to Bennett & Partee 1972, Dowty 1979 *i.m.a.*) is that atelic predicates describe each subinterval comprised in the event denoted, while telic predicates do not describe all the subparts of the time interval but only the one that overlaps the endpoint. *Boundedness* (Depraetere 1995:3), on the other hand, also refers to the existence of a relevant boundary for the eventivity described, although in this case the event can still be described by the subparts comprised in the time interval for which it holds, and it is not necessarily linked to culmination. Hence, *boundedness* may be functional to *telicity*, but it may also concur with *homogeneity* and apply to atelic predicates, to the extent that they can handle, namely, a temporal frame (i.e., time stops, to which (8) and (9) above are crucial). Importantly, unlike telic predicates, for bounded predicates progress or extension are possible beyond the temporal boundary in question.¹

At first sight, *estar* fits well with the general circumstance just described. Note that the different examples provided in the Introduction, as well as those in (20), all have in common that the eventivity (i.e., the state) can be resumed even after a temporal boundary, in this case set by adjuncts defining non-conjoined intervals. Further, the introduction of a determiner, which normally draws an important difference for telic verbs (cf. Verkuyl 1993), is irrelevant here. Moreover, in the case of *estar*, and unlike telic verbs, the addition of a temporal boundary, as in (21), amounts to the instantiation of the atelic eventuality (state). The important point being that, while telicity bears on right boundaries, boundedness can involve either left or right boundaries (or both). In addition, *boundedness* is consistent with the fact that the basic predicate with *estar* (take, for instance, (20) below) allows (at least) three readings, represented in (22): (a) the reading where the (atelic) state yields an extensive eventivity (state) with temporal stops; (b) the reading where the state is resumed after the relevant endpoint (a possibility which is in principle not available for telic verbs, as discussed above); and (c) the ‘telic’ reading, where the state comes through as the result of a process that is not entailed by the verb (inasmuch as it is not featured by basic occurrences of *estar*, and is not included in the lexical semantics of the copula), but is somehow implied or entailed as a preparatory phase (cf. Bruccart 2012) leading to the onset of the state instantiated by *estar*.² Crucially, with non-spatial uses of *estar* the nature of the situation is such that it is generally interpreted as taking up a limited amount of time, irrespective of whether it ultimately combines temporal stop adverbials or not. Finally, note that this is independent of the telic, resultative or perfective burden of the predicate: (22) shows that APs with no relevant morphological features, such as *libre* ‘free’, are not less successful than perfective/participial forms (namely, *estará liberada* ‘it will be_{ESTAR} freed’) in producing predicates that bear the much-discussed resultative flavor.

- (20) La sala estará libre (el) lunes y (el) martes.
 ‘The room will be free [available] (on) Monday and (on) Tuesday’.
- (21) Las habitaciones {estuvieron/están} libres desde las ocho. [Left boundary]
 ‘The rooms {were/are} free [available] since eight o’clock.’
- (22) a. La sala estará libre de forma continua en el término comprendido por *lunes y martes*. [Extensive]
 ‘The room will be free [available] uninterruptedly from Monday to Tuesday’
 b. La sala estará libre el lunes y volverá a estarlo el martes. [Repetitive/Restitutive]
 ‘The room will be free [available] on Monday and will be free again on Tuesday’
 c. La sala llegará a librarse de ocupantes en un punto comprendido entre *lunes y martes*. [Resultative]
 ‘The room will be free of visitors at any given point comprised between Monday and Tuesday’

Therefore, boundedness provides a welcome explanation for the occurrence of *estar* (over *ser*) in contexts that involve temporal stops but which nonetheless remain atelic/homogeneous (cf.(23)). Bounded atelicity also fits well with the fact that measure phrases such as *un poco* ‘a little’ allow for a relevant ambiguity between temporal and scalar scope (see (24)a), in contrast to unbounded atelic verbs (*ser* in (24)b) and telic verbs ((24)c). Finally, frequentative readings with an adjunct indicating a point in time, as in (25), are also expected for bounded atelic verbs (Depraetere 1995:4).

- (23) Los niños {*fueron/estuvieron} libres {desde las ocho/entre las ocho y las nueve}.
- (24) a. Amy estuvo un poco feliz → time frame (eventless) reading
 (=Amy was happy for a few days)
 Amy be_{ESTAR-PERF} a little happy → scalar reading

¹ The concept of *boundedness* is implemented here in a non-standard manner on which, for reasons of space I cannot elaborate in detail. For present purposes, I will assume that this semantic property is part of *estar*’s lexical semantics, arguably determined by the abstract boundary preposition that combines with the empty v head (p_{AT}). Importantly, while *estar* fits well with the semantic and empirical description of *boundedness* offered above, *ser* is commonly characterized by representing a situation with no inherent temporal boundaries, which is the precise definition of *unboundedness* (Depraetere 1995:4). Ultimately, this is not incompatible with the interpretation of TC/CC in terms of contact/inclusion, among other analytical alternatives. For a specific analysis of *at* as boundary P and in particular in combination with *estar*, see Mangialavori & Marín (2015).

² For more details on the general aspectual description pursued here, see Mangialavori Rasia (2013a).

- (=Amy was not completely happy)
- b. Amy fue un poco feliz →*time frame (eventless) reading
 (=Amy was happy for a few days)
 Amy *be*_{SER.PERF} a little happy →scalar reading
 (=Amy was happy but not completely)
- c. Amy terminó un poco feliz →*time frame reading
 (=Amy was happy for a few days)
 Amy ended [up] a little happy →scalar reading
 (=Amy was happy but not completely)
- (25) a. Las entradas estarán disponibles {todos los / cada} martes y viernes.
 ‘The tickets will be available {every / each} Tuesday and Friday’
 b. Las habitaciones están libres a las 8:00. [≈frequentative]
 ‘The rooms are available at 8:00’

Summarizing, *boundedness* fares better with the range of predicates under consideration, avoiding potential overgeneralizations (e.g. sweeping telicity), at the same time it allows us to remain within the frame of atelic and stative predicates if needed. Again, this holds insofar as *boundedness* is seen as a distinct property, logically separable from telicity and perfectivity. In turn, boundedness in conjunction with resultativity can be proposed to account for the eventual denotation of a state ‘resulting from a change’. This resultative flavor, reported in the literature on *estar* in specific constructions (cf. Bosque 1999 *i.a.*) and consistent with HK’s basic definition of TC, follows naturally inasmuch as *estar* would be eventually able to produce richer descriptive content under the adequate conditions by virtue of boundedness. Accordingly, the state can sometimes be interpreted as a specification of the final situation/location of the Figure (Terminal Ground) overlapping with the end of a trajectory or linear arrange, as a natural consequence of *estar*’s bounded nature. In this way, *boundedness* captures the intuition that *estar* is (sometimes) compatible with a telic entailment while remaining basically stative. The difference can be seen by considering the role of adverbials. Namely, while adverbs in ((26)a) can be argued to describe the manner in which a result state is brought about or achieved, note that there is a clear contrast with ((26)b) on the one hand, where the adjuncts refer to the attribution of the property/state to the subject, involving no process whatsoever (i.e., so-called evaluative predicates³); and ((26)c) on the other hand, where the adverb underscores the restitutive reading allowed by bounded atelic, homogeneous predicates—that is, a state that has been resumed after a relevant boundary is crossed, but which does not necessarily involve a process or transition. Thus, *boundedness* would account for the compatibility with (rather than circumscription to) telicity and perfective morphology, correctly accommodating the aspectual profile outlined by (20)-(26), but also the various situations presented by (1)-(6).

- (26) a. La puerta está {herméticamente/firmente/perfectamente/ sublimemente} cerrada.
 ‘The door is {hermetically/firmly/perfectly/brilliantly} closed’
 b. La puerta está {claramente/decididamente/técnicamente/impressionantemente} cerrada.
 ‘The door is {clearly/decidedly/technically/impressively} closed’
 c. La puerta está {nuevamente/frecuentemente/raramente/excepcionalmente} cerrada.
 ‘The door is {again/frequently/rarely/exceptionally} closed’

4. IMPLEMENTATION

4.1.1 Staying within CCs

The facts introduced above are a good indication that a careful aspectual analysis is needed in bringing Spanish copulas into the frame of HK’s account, in particular if the TC/CC opposition is used to reflect their Aktionsart properties. Now, in view of the patterns and the considerations presented in the previous section, there are specific problems that we may want to avoid. For instance, we do not want to argue that *estar* is related by definition to a TC or to a Terminal preposition [P_T]⁴. First, because in that case a path⁵ and, importantly, change would be involved by definition, at least

³ For an argumentation on the bounded flavor of *estar* and its compatibility with evaluative uses, see Mangialavori Rasia (2013b).

⁴ Some examples of these analytical alternatives are briefly outlined in fn. 11 below.

⁵ Some works on CCs realized as lexical prepositions argue that a line/path/trajectory (e.g. *The horse ran along the river*) and linear arrangement (*Reeds grow along the river*) is found in CCs yielding atelic predicates, assuming that “the relation between Figure and Place remains constant: hence, central coincidence” (Rapoport 2012:2). However, I do not agree that Path, as defined above (where trajectory is directly linked to motion) can be found in stative verbs, namely as this involves a debatable identification of *path* and *scale*, but mainly because the problem under consideration involves a relevant difference with *path* as seen in eventive verbs. I rather assume, in line with works on Vector Space Semantics, that the notion of *atemporal path*, as an order-preserving function, is central to this effect, and that temporal and spatial stretches (paths), as well as directionality and dynamicity, should

according to the original formulation of TC cited above and the manner in which the relevant endpoint is established. Second, this situation would probably also involve a consequent non-homogeneity, which does not fit well with *estar*, especially if held as a sweeping generalization (recall (20)-(26)). On the other hand, it would be specifically difficult to argue that a stative verb (a copula) comprises the relative structural complexity required by TCs, namely to the extent that this would determine a structural asymmetry in relation to *ser* that is not easy to justify. Further, if *ser* contrasted by instantiating a P_C, in opposition to the P_T allegedly producing *estar*, it follows that *ser*, rather than *estar*, would be the one allowed to alternate between atelic and telic environments, at least provided the structural complexity of TCs and the necessary embedding of the CC in its base (recall HK's 2002:221 definition). However, this is not the case: as noted above, the member of the pair that seems more likely to occur in telic and atelic contexts is *estar*. In principle, this situation requires *estar* to embody a CC, arguably a bounded one, as discussed above. Finally, we do not want to assume that *ser* contrasts with *estar* simply by being unmarked with respect to the coincidence relation, not only because this is technically problematic (more next), but also because this assumption seems empirically inaccurate, to the extent that *ser* also shows significant combinatorial restrictions and imposes a specific aspectual flavor. In any event, if *ser* were aspectually unspecified, the delivery of Individual-Level predicates even if combined with Stage-Level and perfective APs (recall (4) above)—as well as their interpretation as properties which are somehow temporally unbounded, inherent, *owned* by the individual⁶—would remain unaccounted for.

Therefore, I want to propose that *ser/estar* are better analyzed not as expressing a contrast between CC and TC, but rather in relation to a minimal pair, so to speak, of two CC prepositions producing two distinct stative relations contrasting minimally in aspectual type. The idea builds on two observations. On the one hand, CCs are not conceived as a homogenous class in the theory; and, empirically, languages with aspectually-driven alternating copular systems, like Iberian Romance languages, stress the need to consider that copulas may encode (at least two) aspectually distinct types of predication. Nonetheless, this does not place one of the alternatives outside the stative frame—that is, the only alternative cannot be telicity. On the other hand, remaining within the stative domain would be more in line with the manner in which copulas are categorized in HK's framework. Crucially, this is done by contrasting “minimally with the non-stative, terminal coincidence *become* [copula]” (HK 2005:37). In this connection, I take up the observation that Spanish verbs such as *resultar* ‘become’, *terminar* ‘end up’ or *quedar* ‘remain’ provide a more adequate TC counterpart to *ser* than *estar*. Further, an alternative within CCs has not been considered so far and seems a worthwhile undertaking, given the facts just discussed.

In of track, a new—or at least a different—typology of P heads is needed to account for *ser/estar*. Within an l-syntactic framework like the one pursued here, and given the facts presented above, a more natural solution would be to look for a differential ontology internal to the CC realm compatible with boundedness. I will propose that the reason why *estar*, and not *ser*, is the one allowed to take part in the composition of a TC also justifies this decision: in essence, for a state to be conceived of as overlapping with the end of a trajectory, boundedness is essential. From a more general, theoretical, perspective, the proposal is consistent with previous insights on boundary prepositions being expected to allow directional or telic readings in certain contexts (cf. Levin & Rappaport 2015:24 for summary; but see Mangialavori & Marín 2018 for a specific analysis on *estar*+boundary P) and is broadly compatible with the potential involvement of a trajectory (see Brucart 2012) in, namely, resultative constructions—or, rather, with *estar* being open to resultative or telic entailments in relevant contexts. More importantly, this potential solution fits well with the assumption that stativity is determined lexically (l-syntactically), whereas telicity is only achieved as a result of a construction. In HK's words, to the extent that stativity is identified with CCs, “then it is very probable that this identification is the only way in which stativity is attributable to a head, as opposed to a construction” (2002:218).

4.1.2 On the semantics of *p**: *p_{AT}* and *p_{HAVE}*

I will preserve the basic insight that two stative verbs (copulas) are produced by incorporating or conflating⁷ a distinct abstract prepositional element (*p**) determining consequent contrasts in Aktionsart properties and restrictions.

be carefully differentiated for a successful account of *estar* on these terms. See Mangialavori & Marín (2015) for a more detailed argumentation and also for discussion on the potential incompatibility of paths and states applied to boundary Ps and *estar*.

⁶ This is in reference to certain intuitions, commonly found in the literature, about a difference between “state-descriptive” properties and “property properties”; or “accidental” vs. “essential” properties in relation to Carlson's (1977) labels of stage- and individual-level (see Husband 2010:8 for discussion).

⁷ This does not involve an analytic choice, and both terms are kept here only in reflecting the fact that HK remain undecided as to what is the ultimately correct formulation (see HK 2002:90). For present purposes, I use the term *conflation* following HK's original analysis, but also because this is crucial for HARs (see Section 5), which are in principle not possible in verbs produced by Incorporation (see HK 2002:101). For reasons of space, I must set aside this problem and the detailed discussion for another paper.

However, in order to account for *ser/estar*'s divergent semantic characteristics without having to force the distinction to a CC/TC opposition, a different set of Ps is needed. Here, I argue that the p_{CS} at work can be related to p_{AT} and p_{HAVE} .

Importantly, these abstract Ps have been proposed as the source of relevant semantic properties encoded in the verb, especially in (l)-syntactic accounts (cf. Harley 2002 for summary). They have also been argued to crucially alternate in the formation of other verbs pairs—e.g. locatum/location verbs (Kiparsky 1997, Harley 2004 *i.a.*), ditransitive verbs and dative alternation (Harley 2004), possessive SCs (Stowell 1995:281). And, interestingly enough, p_{HAVE} , which I relate to *ser*, is particularly defined as the counterpart of a spatial (abstract) preposition (Harley & Jung 2015:714)⁸. This is central to the problem under consideration here given the much-discussed locative nature of *estar* in contrast to *ser* and the consequent distribution, but also in order to integrate into the analysis the fact that *estar* is equally productive in spatial predications. Therefore, in the case of p_{AT} , an abstract preposition encoding boundary location (cf. Tortora 2008) would offer a compelling alternative in view of both *estar*'s aspectual profile (i.e., bounded stative) and its basic locative flavor, which is relevant in many respects, even for the distinctive quirk and restrictions in its Individual-Level capacity (3) (see Mangialavori Rasia 2013b). In addition, a locative preposition—and particularly a boundary P—is expected to favor interpretations overlapping with motion/change, thus allowing the state to be potentially interpreted as a ‘following’ eventuality (Rizzi 1988:522, Tortora 2005:312). p_{AT} can be also argued to encode the abstract Ground component commonly analyzed in attributive relations corresponding to *estar* in Spanish (cf. (27) gloss), thus subsuming the progress made by localist accounts as well as by analysis building on a locative feature ascribed to this copula as formalization of its aspectual burden (e.g. Zagona 2015) and, moreover, in agreement with HK's definition of CCs ((18)-(19) above). This provides a welcome simplification, since p_{AT} shall readily handle the two basic guises in which *estar* predicates come: predicative and locative, traditionally analyzed as the result of two different lexical verbs (see Bosque 2001).

- (27) [_{State}BE [_{Thing}AMY], [_{Place}AT [_{Property}HAPPY]]] Gruber (1965), Jackendoff (1990) *i.a.*
 Amy is happy (English)
 Amy {está/*es} feliz (Spanish)

By contrast, p_{HAVE} (Harley 2004, Richards 2001 and references therein) is to be related to a contiguity CC relation whereby an entity is in unbounded (stative) coincidence with another entity or property (Rapoport 2014, Rigau 2005). This has the advantage of presenting an alternative to the non-eventive dyadic component determining *estar*'s distinctive properties (e.g., p_{AT}) without leaving the CC territory and, more importantly, presenting a close semantic match to the possessive, (in)alienable flavor pointed out for *ser* across specific studies, grammars, and general reference works⁹. In addition, a possessive-like p^* flavor heading the SC (cf. Harley 2012:17, Stowell 1995:281 on possessive SCs produced by p_{HAVE}) would fare better with NP predicates (DP- p_{HAVE} -NP), characteristically selected by *ser* (Pustet 2003:27 *i.a.*). This is important in order to accommodate the categorial distribution noted ((6) above). Finally, insofar as p_{AT} and p_{HAVE} are both defined as CCs, and so are copulas, the alternative correctly reflects a distinction between two aspectually different stative—i.e., non-dynamic, non-eventive, homogeneous—denotations.¹⁰

4.1.3 On the syntax of p^*

Starting from Hale (1986), it became clear that the TC/CC opposition does not involve a unanimous lexical-syntactic realization across languages. The case of *ser/estar* is not an exception: an issue that remains unsettled concerns the syntactic nature of the P encoding the relevant coincidence relation. Here I present some reasons to consider a structural definition of P over a featural one. Nonetheless, the analysis of p^* as a head carries both important advantages and a potential problem. As for the advantages, it logically stays clear of specific limitations affecting the analysis of P as a feature¹¹. As for the problem, it is precisely this what motivates the reformulation proposed next.

⁸ Other authors argue that p_{AT} and p_{HAVE} both correspond to abstract locations (Cf. Stiebels 1998:288). This would apply more generally, namely in relation to the long-held liaison between copular predicates (states/properties) and (abstract) space.

⁹ For example, *ser* is commonly defined by conveying properties that *belong to* or are *possessed by* the individual (Bosque 1990), holding for an unlimited amount of time, or *inherent* qualities (Pustet 2003:28, Bosque & Gutiérrez-Rexach 2009:314), etc.

¹⁰ As a part of a proposal in progress, and for reasons of space, I leave open the question of how widely these Ps are present in other languages with comparable multicopular systems and whether single-copula languages leave this distinction to the conceptual domain.

¹¹ For reasons of space, I cannot offer a detailed overview and discussion of each alternative and its potential limitations. In essence, featural accounts of P tend to assume that *estar* incorporates a *Terminal P feature* [uPT] (Gallego & Uriagereka 2009, Zagona 2014). Regardless of being conceived semantically or morphologically, this analysis faces problems apart from those lying on the aspectual implications of P_T (proposals diverge as to perfective/telic/inchoative features), which ultimately add up to those pointed out by Gallego & Uriagereka (2009). Namely, as seen in the Introduction, the distribution is not always predicted by the presence

Namely, the conception of p^* as a head with specific flavor allows us to preserve a uniform derivation and structural symmetry for *ser/estar* within SC configurations, in contrast to other proposals in which the syntactic ontology is either unclear or leads to categorially different outcomes, or even to major configurational asymmetries in order to account for the relevant semantic content. Further, it allows a compelling analysis of the way in which variable Aktionsart is produced, with p^* as a key locus of variation.

Admittedly, a p_C , understood as a meaningful non-eventive dyadic element, in its capacity as SC head, produces the expected argument structure configuration. Inasmuch as the relevant point of divergence is non-configurational (p^* flavor), the structural symmetry between *ser/estar*, together with the local relation between the subject and the predicate, are preserved. At the same time, p^* , as locus of encoding of the specific stative birelation—with contrasting p^* flavors corresponding to distinct CC types—, accommodates the non-trivial semantic contribution made by each copula.

On the other hand, and importantly enough, a p_C in the complement position of V^0 would naturally explain the relative insensitivity of the copula with respect to the aspectual burden of the SC predicate, to the extent that it would be p^* and not the AP/PP predicate the one determining the aspectual profile of the verb and the resulting construction, alternation being sometimes possible though never trivial. This consideration is compatible with previous works on measure-out positions internal to VP, especially for V heads complemented by an SC structure (Harley 2005 *i.a.*). Put simply, given that p^* would be in the relevant measure-out (sister-to-V) position, it is consequently expected to determine the aspectual contour (i.e. the Aktionsart) of the verb. If p^* is furnished with a boundary (p_{AT}), then it is logical to expect an aspectual type featuring a default boundary, as part of the verb's basic denotation. In this sense, the analysis seems to make the correct prediction, to the extent that incorporation (conflation) of a locative boundary p^* would produce a verb with consequent properties and, crucially, *estar* is commonly characterized by situations that make crucial use of a bound (see Mangialavori 2013a for detailed analysis also accounting for cases in which p_{AT} is not instantiated as a temporal bound, nonetheless remaining equally crucial to the denotation). In fact, an important property of this copula is that it is highly compatible with time stops, inchoative, repetitive, restitutive and even culminative and resultative entailments, as seen above (e.g., (5), (9), (12)). Conversely, the presence of a p_C^* with possessive-like properties (p_{HAVE}) is expected to produce a verb reflecting these characteristics, but also lacking the bounded flavor yielded by a boundary locative p^* of the sort of p_{AT} . The semantic burden of the P^* in *ser* is not trivial, at least since it contrasts with *pure* copulas like *be* by introducing a distinct flavor and restrictions. Accordingly, *estar* yields states with consistent aspectual properties, regardless of being combined with aspectually neuter, imperfective, Individual-Level or perfective predicates as in (28), or even with predicates with specific (e.g., present participle) morphology like *-ble*, while *ser* yields a predicate with consistently different Aktionsart properties in similar contexts (29)—a fact that is not easily explained by accounts that analyze *ser* as “inert with respect to aspect” (e.g. Fernández Leborans 1999), aspectually neutral, unmarked, or even as a mere carrier of \varnothing -features.

- | | |
|---|------------------------------|
| (28) a. <i>estar</i> { feliz/ cariñoso/ nervioso / disponible/ claro } | [underspecified predicate] |
| be_{ESTAR} happy loving nervous available clear | → bounded/punctual state |
| b. <i>estar</i> { inteligente/ alto/ redondo/ cortés/ impresionable } | [imperfective/ILP predicate] |
| be_{ESTAR} intelligent tall round polite impresionable | → bounded/punctual state |
| c. <i>estar</i> { lleno/ suelto/ limpio /descalzo/ abierto /aquietado } | [perfective/SLP predicate] |
| be_{ESTAR} full loose clean barefoot open quiet(ened) | → bounded/punctual state |
| (29) a. <i>ser</i> { feliz/cariñoso/ nervioso / #disponible/ claro } | [underspecified] |
| be_{SER} happy loving nervous available clear | → possessed property |
| b. <i>ser</i> { inteligente/ alto/ redondo/ cortés / impresionable } | [imperfective/ILP predicate] |

of perfective features in the predicate (recall (1)-(2)), and, in those cases where it does, a duplication problem arises (see Fábregas 2012). Semantically, the [uPT] analysis is problematic given the standard definition of TC and the stativity of the copula, discussed above.

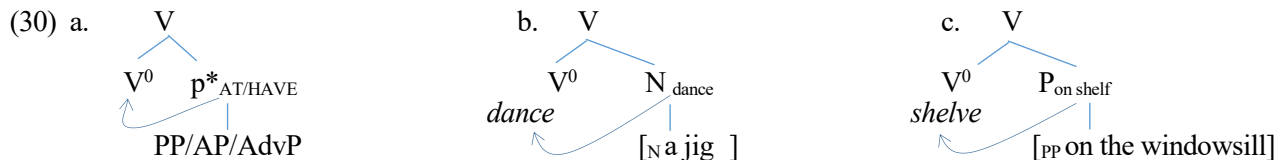
Other proposals instead analyze *estar* as a marked element valuing a TC feature [R_T] in opposition to a *neutral copula* (*ser*) (e.g. Brucart 2012:120). Yet, this alternative may also require a non-standard definition of TC, at least in the sense that *estar* does not necessarily express “the goal of the path, as happens in movement verbs” (Brucart 2012:22) nor “a path that is interpreted as a preparatory phase” but rather a bounded situation, the main difference being that the latter applies also to stative predicates, as argued above. Further, it seems that on this type of account locative nondirectional occurrences shall involve a TC, which may be problematic for reasons discussed above. Another potential problem that may need to be solved is that combinations allegedly involving successful valuation of [uRT] in the attributive relation do not seem to always yield a TC, while *estar* occurs in contexts not requiring valuation of a [R_T] (cf. (1)). On the face of it, the considerably large set of predicates shared with *ser* presents a problem for a distribution determined by valuing requisites. In any case, and much more importantly, the analysis of P as a value is not extendable to CCs—and, hence, to *ser*, according to the typology assumed—, insofar as [$\pm CC$] “makes no sense” (HK 2002:221).

b _{SER}	intelligent	tall	round	polite	impressionable	→ possessed property	
c. ser	{#lleno/	suelto/	limpio/#descalzo/	abierto/	quietado}	[perfective/SLP predicate]	
b _{SER}	full	loose	clean	barefoot	open	quiet(ened)	→ possessed property

The restrictions noted also fall out from the proposed analysis, as I will show next, to the extent that *estar* is expected to combine with predicates allowing a boundary reading amenable to p_{AT} (applicable to SL, perfective and even IL predicates yielded by *estar*). *Ser*, on the other hand, shall take predicates that can be interpreted as centrally coinciding with the subject in a temporally unbounded relation, with a *possessive* or *inherent* entailment matching the descriptions generally offered in the literature. However, before we proceed, there is a problem that must eventually be addressed.

5. A HALE-AND-KEYSERIAN SOLUTION

As matters stand, if we maintain that *ser/estar* are produced by conflation of a semantically relevant p*, but at the same time a lexical predicate (namely, a PP) is necessarily selected by the copula, then a potential duplication problem arises, inasmuch as the prepositional element would be present both in the verb and in its complement. If we adopt the original derivation proposed by HK (2002:15(27)), as in ((30)a)—and under the standard assumption that lexical insertion cannot take place into a position already occupied by a syntactic object—, a comparable problem obtains: conflation needs to be preempted, or the copy of p*'s signature be deleted or overwritten, before vocabulary insertion. As HK (2002:83) note, insertion cannot preempt conflation here. Therefore, some other solution must be implemented to accommodate the additional constituent in question. The problem is already considered by HK in their classical example of verb formation ((30)b), where the verb produced by conflation¹² of a nominal source (e.g., *dance*) selects another noun (*jig*) in its complement position (*dance a jig*, HK 2002:89). Importantly, the proposed analysis also holds for verbs produced by merge of a PP. In particular, HK observe that location/locatum verbs like *shelve* ((30)c), which are argued to result from P conflation, select a PP in its complement as well (*shelve on a windowsill*).



A related question that remains concerning *ser/estar* is what prevents verbs allegedly already comprising a p* from occurring without an overt (lexical) complement, which is precisely the requirement motivating the light-verb approach proposed by Bosque (2001)¹³. Nonetheless, note that the PP, AP or AdvP complement is not only required by *estar*, but crucially subject to specific restrictions. This is not a problem for the analysis pursued, however. Rather, the parallel with typical instances of verbs produced by P-conflation arguably extends to our data: on the one hand, null complements are not licensed HK's prototypic cases either ((31)a). On the other hand, verbs yielded by the derivation in ((30)c), unlike their phrasal counterparts in ((31)b), also impose visible restrictions on the PP (cf. (31)c).¹⁴

- (31) a. *They put the books [_p∅]. (HK 2005:18(21); 2002:91)
 b. Put books on the {shelf/windowsill/tray/floor}
 c. Shelve books on the {windowsill/*tray/*floor} (HK 2002:93(83))

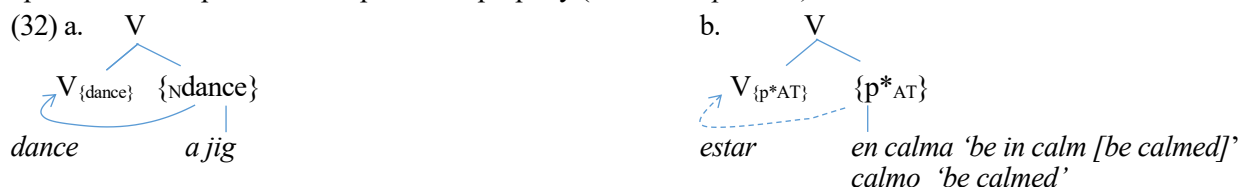
To explain this, HK (2005) focus on the restrictive relation between the conflated element and the full-fledged lexical category surfacing in complement position. They propose the notion of “hyponymous argument relations” [HAR], which has been fruitfully applied in subsequent works on Romance and English verbs (e.g. Mateu 2010, Mateu & Rigau 2010, Harley 2005, Haugen 2009 *i.a.*). According to HK, the verbs at issue here productively enter into this restrictive relation, notated with braces in ((32)a). This is a classical semantic Selection—a “classificatory selectional relation”—that licenses the overt complement “above and beyond the purely structural relation expressed by the verb-complement configuration alone” (HK 2002:92). In this way, the “verb itself”—i.e., the result of conflation—determines the interpretation of the overt complement as a hyponym of the conflated constituent by *Identification*. This means that, for instance, the conflated N *dance* would determine that *jig* in ((32)a)) is interpreted as a kind of *dance*, in contrast to, namely, *whistle a jig*, where a different conflated N would guide the interpretation of *jig* as kind

¹² Again, I am not unaware of the difference between Incorporation and Conflation. Cf. fn. 7.

¹³ In certain respects, it could be argued that copulas are more like P than (light) verbs, to the extent that they instantiate a birelational structure between the predicate and its subject in a non-eventive relation. In any event, selection of a predicate instead of an internal argument remains as a major difference between copulas and light verbs—and one which the proposed (p*) merge captures. Further, HK (2005:34) emphasize that the impossibility of passivization follows exactly from this point, while statives like *cost* or *weight* are analyzed as copulas.

¹⁴ Uriagereka (2010:413) also notes this semantic restriction by comparing *put water on a shelf* with the infelicitous **shelve water*.

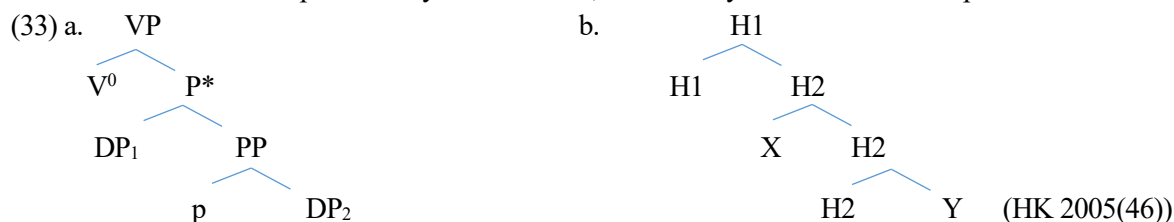
of tune instead, according to a restrictive part-whole relation (see Uriagereka 2008) which is now semantically shaped by *whistle*. It follows that p^* conflation in ((32)b), admittedly producing *estar* in our case, is not expected to preclude the selection of a (lexical) PP as complement; rather, it is crucially predicted to guarantee and systematically constrain the interpretation of the overt PP (e.g. *en calma*)—or else the AP (*calmo*)¹⁵—accordingly. In consequence, *calmo* in ((32)b) is interpreted as a temporally bounded situation in which the subject is found (i.e., a finer instantiation of p_{AT}), in contrast to *ser calmo*, where the copula produced by conflation of an unbounded p_C (say, p_{HAVE}) would guide the interpretation of the predicate as a possessed property (*‘be a calm person’*) instead.



In short, there are good semantic and syntactic reasons to consider the proposed analysis. In principle, both cases in (32) involve two constituents crucially related: a non-overt relational element giving semantic constituency to a defective V, and a lexically-realized complement which is interpreted accordingly. They both involve also relevant selectional restrictions, allowing only predicates which are compatible with the classificatory semantic relation drawn by the element merged in each case, which in turn supplies the specific semantic properties motivating non-trivial alternations with other verbs. Therefore, there are various reasons to adopt HK’s general proposal. First, in all cases the relevant ingredients at issue are the symmetric relations expressed in the argument structure configuration of VP. Second, conflation is specifically intended to leave the configuration intact. Third, the crucial restrictive semantic relation between the conflated p^* , and those of the designated (overt) complement, crucially conform to HK’s account outlined above¹⁶. Moreover, in *ser/estar*, as well as in standard verbs of the type central to the question of conflation, the verb itself gives information relevant to the interpretation of the verb in conjunction with its overt complement.

From here, further advantages follow. Being p^* the key locus of variation between *ser/estar*, the restrictive relation in question would explain the unambiguous interpretation of aspectually neuter predicates according to the type of p_C involved: as bounded states or locations with the locative boundary p producing *estar* (say, p_{AT}); or as inherent or *possessed* properties with the unbounded central coincidence p^* yielding *ser* (recall (1) and (28)-(29) above). p^* would also account for the non-trivial alternation, particularly in those cases in which the copula remains the sole variable ((4) above). The need for multiple lexical entries for predicates combined with either copula (see Camacho 2012) also goes away, to the extent that the restrictive (selectional) relation holding between p^* and the PP/AP/AdvP predicate guarantees the proper interpretation of the latter as a specific instantiation of the former, as discussed above. Finally, comparable cases found crosslinguistically can be argued to provide additional support, as shown below.

There are, however, specific structural conditions that must be met first. Namely, the operation involved in such a verbal derivation must be *strictly local*, relating a head (H1) in ((33)b) and the head of its complement (H2). Further, the conflated element yielding the HAR (H2) is required to head a predicate and be c-subjacent to a head setting the τ -value (admittedly, T itself; HK 2005:16). Assuming that ((33)a) is correct, it meets the desired characteristics: the inner head (p^*) projects a specifier (DP), is locally c-commanded by the upper head (V), and heads its own predicate. Accordingly, p^* , as (non-eventive) birelational head, would define the basic argument structure (SC) and the relevant selectional restrictions on the predicate by Identification, in what may be described as a copula-based version of HARs.



If correct, the general situation offers a further advantage, as it allows the distinction of two important local relations in HK’s frame: Conflation and Selection. Strict locality holds in both cases; the difference is, basically, that in the former the governing head (V) *conflates* with its complement (i.e., the birelational non-eventive head contributing the

¹⁵ Arguably, under the present theoretical framework, the adjectival variant would obtain from the same structure (PP predicate) by virtue of conflation of P and N (suggested by Hale & Keyser 2002, but specifically analysed in Jayaseelan 2007, Mateu 2008 *i.a.*).

¹⁶ I also assume late insertion for the PP, after the verb has been formed (“out of the loop”, HK 2002:23, see also Mateu 2008b); that is, not necessarily as proposed by Haugen (2009), but rather in relation to the idea that conflation is ordered before insertion.

specific stative relation and introducing the external argument). This is important not only to guarantee locality and to preclude conflation with the specifier of p^* , which bears no structural relation with the governing head, but also because this rules out a potential semantic restrictive relation between the subject and a null V^0 . Selection, on the other hand, is expected to hold between the conflated head and its target. Thus, it would be Selection that relates p^* to its predicate, producing the observed restrictions. Hence, p^* is governed by V^0 ; but neither the SC subject nor the predicate are selected by V^0 , but rather by p^* , which is the element providing the specific semantic burden and the relevant locus of variation. In turn, *Selection* is not expected between V and p^* . Crucially, V is not rich enough in semantic features: recall that the verb *per se* does not succeed in licensing null complements, neither in HK's verbs produced by p-conflation, recall ((31)a), nor in the case of Spanish *ser/estar*¹⁷. Finally, if it is true that the conflated p^* introduces the external argument, the general analysis also captures the fact that the specifier of the inner projection (SC) bears no direct argumental relation to the defective V^0 , at the same time that it remains in a local relation with the lexical predicate, thus being open to account for the specific relation established between the DP and the predicate. To recap, according to these considerations, non-trivial copulas like *ser/estar* would result from conflation of an abstract but meaningful p^* . Arguably, p^* first provides a locus of encoding for the non-eventive relation whereby *ser* and *estar* diverge; second, it handles selectional restrictions noted; third, it occupies a relevant measuring-out position, determining the Aktionsart properties of the predicate; fourth, it introduces the external argument in a local relation with its predicate, heading the SC-like configuration where the specific stative relation between them is established. Finally, from this perspective, a natural explanation for the significant semantic and syntactic restrictions noted is not only provided within the same framework but further supported by an important corpus of verbs with comparable characteristics. For instance, a relevant extension is encouraged by the idea that semantically contentful copulas like *ser/estar* may be part of more general phenomena, corresponding to better-known cases where a spatial preposition is both conflated into the verb and realized as a lexical PP/AdvP. The general circumstance is not germane to Spanish—nor to (Iberian) Romance languages also featuring a comparable copular alternation, such as Catalan or Portuguese. Rather, it has been shown to be productive in Romance languages generally, including Spanish (*entrar en* 'enter in') and Italian (*entrare dentro* 'enter into'; see Mateu & Rigau 2009:135) but also in non-Romance languages (e.g. Dutch *op*, cf. den Dikken 2006). If the parallelism holds, the different verbs resulting from such processes¹⁸ would be all directly provided with hyperonymic semantic features corresponding to a specific type of coincidence relation involved—in principle, the one encoded by the conflated p head. Crucially, such *superordinate features* (see Mateu 2008b:6) consequently assigned to V , could impose important semantic restrictions on the overt complement, which would be in turn endowed with more specific (i.e., hyponymic) content. This means that, in the case of *ser/estar*, it would presumably be the incorporated p^* that introduces the SC subject in accordance with Strict Complementation (HK 2002:59) at the same time that it selects a grammatically-realized complement, its predicate. The selected complement, which is alternatively instantiated by a PP, an AP, a DP (only with p_{HAVE}) or else by an Adv (with p_{AT}), receives an interpretation that is reliably restricted by Identification along the parameters drawn by the type of p^* merged, according to the type of non-eventive (CC) relation involved in each case. In this way, we can retain the p-conflation account of the syntactic and semantic properties of *ser/estar* by assuming that some sort of HAR accounts for the crucial restrictions on the predicate, as argued for (30), while we avoid the potential duplication¹⁹ problem. Eventually, if correct, these considerations would indicate that the p component widely discussed in *estar* is not only real but central to the selection and interpretation of the predicate.

6. IN SUM

The basic idea advanced here would be that Iberian Romance copulas—specifically, Spanish *ser/estar*—are semantically rich enough to license a specific set of predicates, but also to prevail over the aspectual determination of the lexical AP or PP predicate, by virtue of a meaningful non-eventive relational head (p^*) which, combined with a defective V , produces the relevant semantic burden and restrictions. If the analysis is correct, this p^* would define a crucial locus of encoding of the distinctive semantic and syntactic properties—and, thus, the relevant locus of variation—that motivate the non-trivial alternation between *ser/estar*. In this way, the aspectual implications of a

¹⁷ As it stands, another reason to assume, at least in principle, Conflation is that, in contrast to Incorporation, it is allegedly restricted by Selection. Still, the case of *ser/estar* differs from the narrow conception of Conflation as a morphophonological problem, as the general process is not about a phonological matrix being transferred to V^0 . We leave this problem for future research.

¹⁸ Cf. Haugen (2009) for a DM-like implementation of hyponym objects; Mateu & Rigau (2010) for a cognate/hyponym analysis of Romance verb-particle constructions, and, in particular, Mateu (2010) on the differences between conflation and incorporation.

¹⁹ Although P-doubling (Gallego 2012:107) seems indeed more convenient on technical grounds as it avoids overwriting, it may not contribute the adequate semantic and/or syntactic (i.e., restrictive, classificatory) relation between p^* and the (overt) predicate.

specific p* flavor—recall that I take p_{AT/HAVE} only by way of formalization of an essential opposition between bounded and unbounded stasis (i.e., p_C)—emerge as the key variable from which the contrasting semantic entailments and distribution follow naturally. Moreover, on this account p* reliably constrains both the interpretation of the predicate, thus explaining the semantic contrast in minimal pairs, as well as the aspectual entailments sanctioned by the resulting verb. This is important to explain the fact that the aspectual makeup of the entire predicate is not freely determined by the AP/PP, as with pure copulas (e.g. English *be*), but also in order to capture the consistent restrictions noted. Another advantage is that semantics would not be acting freely nor would be directly determined externally²⁰; rather, it would be reliably determined and contained at an (l-)syntactic level. Finally, the analysis proposed would allow the distinction of two important local relations in HK's frame, Conflation and Selection, which are important to guarantee the semantic restrictive relation at work and to preserve relevant configurational aspects of the account. In this way, the proposal offers an alternative to handle the principal points of data and theory at hand.

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²⁰ Note, however, that Mateu (2008b) correctly points out that the (hyponymic) semantic compatibility at issue is in part established outside the computational system, at least in the sense that encyclopedic meaning is anyhow involved.

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