

## Between states and events

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**Problem.** In this paper we will explore the class of Spanish predicates illustrated in (1), and we will argue that they aspectually pattern with so-called D(avidsonian) states (Maienborn, 2005, Rothmayr, 2009) because they are instances of Process heads that take central coincidence prepositions as their complements.

- (1) *gobernar* ‘govern’, *dirigir* ‘direct’, *presidir* ‘head’, *habitar* ‘inhabit’, *coordinar* ‘coordinate’, *controlar* ‘control’, *supervisar* ‘supervise’, *mantener* ‘maintain’

As in the case of the D-states studied by Maienborn (*lie, stand, glow, wait, sleep*), it is not easy to assign an aspectual value to the group of verbs we have identified in (1), given that they also show a behavior placing them halfway between events and states.

**Data.** Like other D-states, *gobernar* verbs, (1), exhibit several state-like properties. First, they are strictly homogeneous predicates, i.e., they strictly fulfil the subinterval property (Rothstein, 2004). Thus, reusing Maienborn’s formulation, if for a certain time interval *I* it is true that, for example, Fertuosa is ruling Spain, this is also true for every subinterval of *I*, down to instants. Second, *gobernar* verbs are not compatible with *parar* ‘to stop’: \**Fertuosa ha parado de dirigir/ presidir la empresa* ‘Fertuosa has stopped ruling/ heading the company’. Third, they do not accept modification by *lentamente* ‘slowly’ or *poco a poco* ‘gradually’: \**Fertuosa ha dirigido/ presidido esta empresa lentamente* ‘Fertuosa has ruled/ headed this company slowly’. Fourth, they do not receive a habitual reading in the present tense: *Fertuosa dirige/ preside esta empresa* ‘Fertuosa rules/ heads this company (now)’.

On the other hand, *gobernar* verbs also show some eventive-like properties, like other D-states. First, they are compatible with manner adverbials (*Gerineldo gobierna España ordenadamente* ‘Gerineldo rules Spain orderly’) and locative adverbials (*Gerineldo dirige la empresa desde su casa* ‘Gerineldo directs the company from his house’). Second, the modification of these verbs by *un poco* ‘a little’ is ambiguous between a time-span or a degree reading: *Gerineldo dirigió un poco las obras* ‘Gerineldo supervised a little the working’. Third, *gobernar* verbs, although not so easily than other D-states, also show up as infinitival complements of perception verbs: *Lo vi dirigir las obras* ‘I saw him supervising the working’. Fourth, unlike prototypical states, these verbs accept the progressive: *Gerineldo está dirigiendo las obras* ‘Gerineldo is supervising the working’.

Finally, this class of verbs shows a final surprising property that singles them out in the set of atelic predicates: not being pure statives, they accept the construction *estar* ‘to be’ + participle, which is restricted to participles of telic verbs (Luján, 1981): *Este país está gobernado por un loco* ‘This country is ruled by a madman’.

**General proposal.** According to the standard description, there is a strong tendency to claim that eventivity implies dynamicity and the other way around. Under this view, states are considered to be non eventive and non dynamic, while the rest of aspectual classes are considered to be eventive and dynamic. However, the data presented indicate that this is an oversimplification; under this view, it is not possible to satisfactorily account for predicates like *gobernar*.

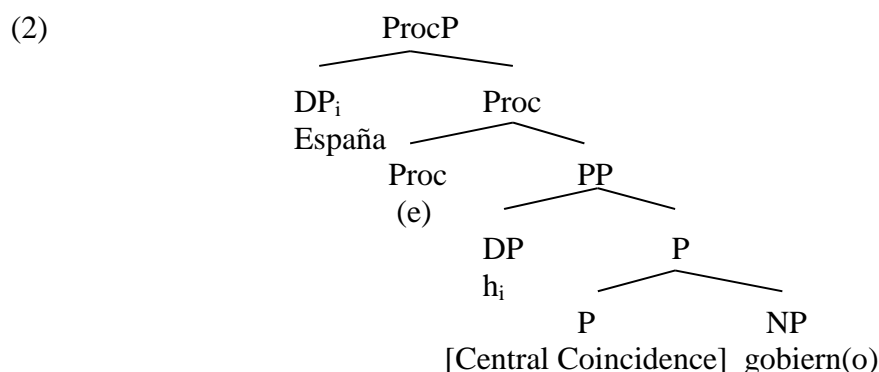
In order to overcome this problem, we will propose a theory where eventivity is independent of dynamicity. More concretely, we will argue for a syntactic representation, adapting Ramchand’s (2008) framework so as to treat eventivity and dynamicity as coming from different sources, with eventivity being possible to appear in the absence of dynamicity.

We will also argue that eventivity is dependent on the presence of a head Proc(ess) that provides the syntax with an event argument that can be taken by the progressive periphrasis and by time, manner and place modifiers, as it is usually the case in a Neo-Davidsonian approach.

Dynamicity is not introduced by any head: it is obtained (or not) from properties of the syntactic configuration, and more in particular of the kind of complement that the head denoting the event takes once the structure has been built. Three main possibilities can be distinguished: (i) if the complement of Proc is a Path, then the event is dynamic (and durative); (ii) if the complement of Proc is a Res(ult), then the event is also dynamic (but not durative); (iii) if the complement of Proc is any other element, then the event is not dynamic.

We will then argue that D-states correspond to trees with the Process head that, however, fail to define dynamicity because of the nature of the complement of that head, which is neither a Path nor a Result.

**Analysis.** Within this general proposal, we will provide an analysis for *gobernar* verbs, (2), by arguing that the absence of dynamicity is due to the presence of a prepositional structure as complement of Proc (the event head). In this structure we are profiting from Hale & Keyser's (2002) distinction between central coincidence and terminal coincidence prepositions; we do not represent that agentive head in (2), as its presence is not crucial for our analysis.



What our decomposition of *Juan gobierna España* expresses is that there is an event –Proc– that affects Spain –the specifier of ProcP–. The event is one of keeping Spain in a steady relation with government, that is, keeping Spain under government. This structure, as we see, compositionally accounts for the intuitive meaning of the verb *gobernar*.

This analysis also captures the absence of dynamicity. The complement of Proc, the event denoting head, denotes a stative relation between a figure (*Spain*) and a ground (*government*). There is no change involved because the relation is of inclusion; the event purely consists on keeping the two entities in that relationship. As a result of that, the event is not interpreted as dynamic, because there is no change. Proc, here, is interpreted in a form similar to the verb ‘maintain’ or ‘keep’ (see also Jackendoff 1983), but this does not need to be expressed by positing a different head from the one present with verbs that denote dynamic changes: it is obtained from the semantic contribution of its complement.

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