

## COMPLEX LOCATIVE PREPOSITIONS. GENITIVE / DATIVE ALTERNATION IN SPANISH

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In this paper, we analyze the genitive~dative alternation found with certain locative prepositional constructions in Spanish, exemplified in (1a) vs (1b):

- (1) a. Se sentó encima de Juan  
SE sat<sub>3p</sub> on top of Juan  
b. Se le sentó encima (a Juan)  
SE CL<sub>DT</sub> sat<sub>3p</sub> on top (to Juan)  
Prepositional constructions that allow this alternation have the following properties:

- They are complex and usually have the structure of P+X — (det)+N / P—for instance *en+cima* ‘on top’, *en+frente* ‘in front’, *de+trás* ‘of back (behind)’. There are also non-transparent cases as *alrededor* ‘around’ and *lejos* ‘far’, *cerca* ‘near’.
- The complements of these prepositional constructions are always headed by the genitive preposition *de*.
- They all involve locatives. Temporal meanings like *después de* ‘after’, *antes de* ‘before’ are not accepted in the dative version. *A favor* ‘in favor’, *en contra* ‘against’ are the only non-locative exceptions.
- The alternation does not obtain with directional verbs (\**Se le dirige al lado*, lit. him/her directs to the side)

A similar alternation is obtained in Italian (with complex elements involving the preposition *a* (Rizzi 1998)) and Catalan, both of which have clitics for genitive PP’s. Traditional grammars (e.g., RAE/ASALE) have considered these complex phrases either as adverbs, since they allow a non-explicit object (*Está detrás* ‘S/he is behind’) or as nouns because they take possessive pronouns in spoken varieties (*Detrás mío* ‘in my behind’); allow diminutive suffixes like *-ito* (*delant-ito*, *al lad-ito*), and may even have plural markers (*los adentros*, lit. ‘the insides’, *los alrededores*, lit. ‘the arounds’). Following Larson & Samian’s (2018) [L&S] classification of prepositional elements in Farsi, we take the constructions under study to be equivalent to *De-prepositional* Ns and *Nominalized* P’s. The main reason for this is that they can be preceded and followed by a (genitive) preposition, as nouns are:

- (2) El árbol **de** delante **de** la casa  
the tree of in front of the house

Our main purpose here is to determine why dative clitics are allowed with these locative prepositions. We claim that the basic structure is the one in which the DP starts as a complement of the de-prepositional N in (1a). In this configuration, the complement of the de-prepositional N can show up as a genitive PP as in (3). However, in an alternative to this configuration, the complement can move to the edge of the de-prepositional phrase as in (4), from where it will be visible to the verb and be assigned dative as in (5). We show that this dative “extraction” is licensed by the V, which is able to “see” inside the complex P-N phrase (and accounts for dative case assignment). In current terms we could say that the DP moves to the edge of the P/N phase in order to be visible to V.

- (3) Se sentó [NP [de P/N detrás] [PP de [ N ] ]]  
REF sat<sub>3PSG</sub> behind of N  
(4) Se sento [NP [N]<sub>i</sub> [de P/N detrás] t<sub>i</sub>]  
REF sat<sub>3PSG</sub> behind  
(5) Se le<sub>i</sub> sentó [NP t<sub>i</sub> [de P/N detrás] t<sub>i</sub>]

REF Cl<sub>dat</sub> sat<sub>3PSG</sub> behind

We compare our data with those studied by Acedo-Matellán (2017) for Latin, where, under certain circumstances a (locative non-directional) preposition incorporates into the verb and it licenses a DP which surfaces with dative case.

(7) Tibi ad-duxi hominem. (From Acedo-Matellán 2017)  
you.dat at-lead.prf.1sg person.acc ‘I have brought the man to your presence.’

It is this process of incorporation that licenses movement of the complement of the (complex) preposition. A prediction of this claim is that no complement, including the dative DP, can appear between the preposition and the verb. This prediction is borne out:

(8) a. \*Se le sentó a Juan detrás b. Se le sentó detrás a Juan  
SE Cl<sub>dat</sub> sat<sub>3PSG</sub> to Juan behind SE Cl<sub>dat</sub> sat behind of Juan

There are other facts which support this raising analysis for datives. First, the extraction of the dative with these constructions shows *me lui* restrictions (9). More important is the fact that the dative version yields an affected interpretation, as can be seen in (10b):

(9) \*Me le pusieron delante  
Cl<sub>ACCIP</sub> Cl<sub>Dat3P</sub> put in front ‘They put me in front of him/her’

(10) a. Escupe delante de Juan b. Le escupe delante (a Juan)  
‘S/he spits in Juan’s presence’ ‘S/He spits on Juan’

In fact, the dative construction also gives rise to inalienable possession interpretation, as can be seen in the contrast in (11). Importantly, the *distributivity effect* described by Vergnaud and Zubizarreta (1992) is obtained, as can be seen in (12b):

(11) a. Pintó algo detrás de Juan b. Le pintó algo detrás (a Juan)  
S/he painted something behind Juan S/he painted something on Juan’s back

(12) a. Pusieron algo al lado de los niños b. Les pusieron algo al lado (a los niños)  
They put something next to the kids They put something next to each kid

We will see that, as expected, idioms are only obtained from the dative version: *Ponerle la mano encima (a alguien)* ‘To beat someone vs. *Poner la mano encima de alguien* ‘put a hand on someone’ (only literal interpretation), *Echarle la vista encima (a alguien)* ‘To catch someone’ vs. #*Echar la vista encima de alguien* lit. ‘to throw the sight on someone’. This idiom possibility indicates that the PP is part of the main vP.

Doubling data will also be presented: different varieties of Spanish have different doubling possibilities for these structures, which suggests that different domains for doubling are computed depending on the dialect.

**References:** Acedo-Matellán, V. (2017): Latin datives with prefixed verbs and beyond: A view from the theory of applicatives, *Catalan Journal of Linguistics* 16, 19-49. Bosque, I. & Demonte, V. (dirs.) (1999): Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española. Madrid: Espasa Calpe. Cuervo, M.C. (2003): *Datives at Large*, PhD Thesis, MIT. Larson, R. & Samian, V. (2018): *Ezafe*, PP and the Nature of Nominalization. Paper presented at Stony Brook. Jackendoff, R. (1973): The Base Rules for Prepositional Phrases, in Anderson, S. & Kiparsky, P. (eds.), *A Festschrift for Morris Halle*, New York, Holt. RAE/ASALE (2009-2011): Nueva gramática de la lengua española. Madrid: Espasa Calpe. Rizzi, L. (1998): Il sintagma preposizionale, in Renzi, L. Salvi, P., Cardinaletti, A. (eds.) *Grande grammatica italiana di consultazione*, Bologna: Il Mulino. Vergnaud, J.R & M.L. Zubizarreta (1992): The Definite Determiner and the Inalienable Constructions in French and in English, *LI*, 23:4.