

Preface

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Stative Inquiries: Causes, results, experiences, and locations

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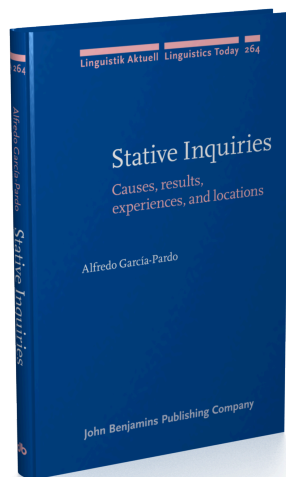
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Preface

Within the literature on event types, there is a well-established distinction between dynamic eventualities, which involve some sort of change, and stative eventualities, which do not. Recent neo-constructionist theories seek to derive event types and the interpretation of event participants – thematic roles – from the syntax of the verb phrase – argument structure. These models uniformly assign a privileged status to dynamic events either in focus or in the theoretical tools they assume, relegating states to a secondary status within the theory and as worthy objects of empirical research.

However, states are not as different from events as it may seem: upon closer inspection, aspectual and thematic notions generally assumed to be exclusive to dynamic events, like agentivity, causativity and resultativity, can apply to states as well. More strikingly, a rich variety of thematic roles can be found within stative predicates (*Experiencer/ Stimulus, Figure/ Ground, Initiator/ Resultee...*), which raises the non-trivial question of how this diversity can be derived from an impoverished structure.

This monograph addresses stative predicates within a general theory of event types from a neo-constructionist prism. I analyze a set of Spanish verbs, the *governar* ‘govern’-type and argue that they are derived by a bi-phrasal structure that is unambiguously interpreted as a *stative causative* eventuality, i.e. two states related causally. In so doing, I enrich the typology of event types taxonomically and theoretically, the latter by integrating stative causatives within a comprehensive syntactic model of event structure.

I also explore adjectival passives as a case study of derived statives. I show how these constructions are truly stative – and not perfective or resultative, as is often argued. The underlying participle is fed by different kinds of stative structures – unaccusative or causative. The former is lexicalized by typical telic verbs – i.e. verbs of change with an endpoint, e.g. *break* – whereas the latter is lexicalized by stative causative verbs – the *governar*-type. This explains many properties of adjectival passives crosslinguistically, and reinforces the idea that states also come in different types crosscategorially.

Finally, I uncover a series of crosslinguistic grammatical parallelisms between stative object-experiencer psychological verbs (e.g. *worry, amaze...*) and locative

verbs (e.g. *surround*, *cover*...). I argue that they share a uniform structure, articulated by a birrelational preposition. This structure denotes an abstract relation between two entities that can be understood as locative or psychological depending on the lexical type of verb that lexicalizes it. I argue that the thematic interpretation of the arguments of these stative predicates arises as an entailment from their event structure, in the spirit of the neo-constructionist program.