

An RRG Approach to Pronominal Constructions of Object-Experiencer Verbs – Anticausatives or Antipassives?

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Abstract In a large number of studies, pronominal constructions of object-experiencer verbs in Romance languages are classified as anticausatives. However, this analysis is not convincing: the experiencer argument is more likely to be the most active argument than the most passive argument. According to the common criteria for determining antipassives, there is a strong argument for considering pronominal constructions of OE-verbs in Romance languages as instances of antipassives. As an alternative, we propose deriving these constructions by a lexical rule because the presumed antipassive construction in Romance languages is only productive in the semantic domain of episodic psych-verbs.

Keywords Object-Experiencer verbs. Anticausatives. Antipassives. Romance Languages. Role-and-Reference Grammar.

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LiVVal 8

e-ISSN 2974-6574 | ISSN 2974-6981

ISBN [ebook] 978-88-6969-962-7 | ISBN [print] 979-12-5742-059-8

Peer review | Open access

Submitted 2025-03-14 | Accepted 2025-10-06 | Published 2026-04-29

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DOI 10.30687/978-88-6969-962-7/005

1 Introduction

Psych-verbs, or more precisely verbs of emotion such as English ‘fear’, ‘frighten’, ‘like’, ‘appeal to’, ‘worry’ etc., have been a central topic of linguistic discussion since Belletti and Rizzi’s (1988) seminal work. While some predicates link the experiencer argument to the subject function (subject-experiencer verbs = SE-verbs), others code it as the object (object-experiencer verbs = OE-verbs). Additionally, many Standard European Languages exhibit an OE/SE-alternation (see Rozwadowska, Bondaruk 2019; Bondaruk, Rozwadowska 2024 for an overview). As illustrated in (1) with French examples from the Frantext corpus, a morphologically simpler basic OE-construction alters with a morphologically more complex SE-construction which is marked by a pronoun derived from the Latin reflexive pronoun *sē*.

- (1) a. *Cela irritait papa* (Frantext)
This irritate-IPFV.3SG dad
‘That irritated dad.’
- b. *Son père s’irritait*
Poss father REFL upset-IPFV.3SG
‘His/her father was irritated.’

Pronominal constructions of OE-verbs are not easy to classify. Clearly, these constructions are not, or at least are not prototypically, reflexive,¹ as in the French example in (2), in which the most active argument – actor in Role and Reference Grammar (RRG) (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997; Van Valin 2005; Kailuweit 2023) – and the most passive argument – undergoer in RRG – of the corresponding transitive construction denote the same person or object:

- (2) a. *Paul_i rase Pierre_j*
Paul shave-PRS.3SG Peter
‘Paul shaves Peter.’
- b. *Paul_i se_i rase*
Paul_i REFL_i shave-PRS.3SG
‘Paul shaves himself.’

Some works explicitly refrain from classifying the pronominal constructions as illustrated in (1b) (e.g. Sonnenhauser 2010; Pijpops,

1 As far as I can see, only Härtl (2001a) holds a different opinion. He sees the experiencer in these constructions as the intrinsic originator of his or her feeling and therefore considers the construction to be reflexive in a broader sense.

Speelman 2017). In others, the construction is labelled anticausative (Acedo-Matellán, Mateu 2015; Hirsch 2018 among others), inchoative,² medium (Kutscher 2009; Bedkowska-Kopczyk 2014), reflexive (Härtl 2001), passive (Gross 1971; 1975; 2000), or antipassive.³ These are partly terminological differences (anticausative ~ inchoative), but partly also fundamentally different analyses as far as the degree of activity of the subject experiencer of the construction is concerned. If the construction is described as reflexive or antipassive, the experiencer is considered the actor. Conversely, if the construction is viewed as anticausative/inchoative or passive the experiencer is categorised as the undergoer. These contrasting semantic analyses highlight the need for further research in this area.

The aim of this paper is to examine whether the pronominal constructions of transitive OE-verbs are more similar to antipassive constructions or to passive constructions in the broader sense (including anticausative constructions). There is a widespread consensus in the literature that an anticausative construction describes an event that affects its subject, typically expressing a change of state, but without indicating or specifying the external cause or agent of the event. In anticausatives, the subject is a passive argument which is often labelled patient or theme. It denotes the entity undergoing the change, while the cause remains unexpressed and cannot be referenced directly (Haspelmath 1993; Schäfer 2008). Conversely, there is less consensus regarding antipassives (Polinsky 2017; Heaton 2020). Some approaches, including standard RRG, restrict these constructions to ergative languages. Therefore, some scholars may be surprised to learn that pronominal constructions of psychological verbs in accusative languages could be considered antipassives. For now, we will leave open the question of whether it makes sense, from a typological point of view, to term some constructions of accusative languages as antipassives.

Our argument is based on the following working definition of an antipassive construction: An antipassive construction is a derived, detransitivised clause in which the most passive argument is demoted – either made oblique or omitted – and the most active argument becomes the syntactic subject. Therefore, our main question is whether the subject of pronominal psych-verb constructions is more akin to an actor or an undergoer. In this context, we will discuss the aktionsart type of pronominal constructions and the semantics of the corresponding transitive constructions. We shall only consider the extent to which the assumption of antipassive constructions

2 Marín, McNally 2011; Cançado 2012; 2015; Cifuentes Honrubia 2015; Ganeshan 2015; 2019; Cançado et al. 2018; Melis 2019; Fábregas, Marín 2020 among others.

3 Cresti 1990; Masullo 1992; Herslund 1997; Kailuweit 2005.

in accusative languages can be justified at the end of the paper. To conclude our contribution, we will demonstrate how both the pronominal construction and the corresponding OE-construction can be modelled in RRG, and how the two are related.

The argument is based on extensive datasets from Romance languages derived from corpus-based and corpus-driven studies conducted by my collaborators and me over a number of years. Based on these findings, we hypothesise that it is possible, in principle, to establish general rules that describe the syntactic and semantic behaviour of OE-verbs in Romance languages. In this respect, our approach is compatible with the generativist work of Belletti and Rizzi (1988), although we do not claim that our description captures universal linguistic competence. Rather, we consider rules and generalisations to be descriptively useful, particularly for identifying parallels and differences between languages and between individual verbs within a language.

Studies with a theoretical orientation, particularly in the context of generative grammar, still generally lack an objective database. Statements about what is grammatical in a particular language are often based on the intuitive assumptions of authors who are usually native speakers of that language. Data on other languages is often uncritically adopted from existing literature. When these data contradict the authors' own findings, ad hoc claims are often made that the differences lie at the level of individual languages. For example, Rozwadowska and Bondaruk (2019, 79) oppose the analysis of Polish to that put forward by Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014) for Greek and Romanian. In my view, these claims are difficult to reconcile with the generative approach. Generative grammar claims to describe a universal linguistic competence. Notable differences in core syntactic questions between individual languages should be attributable to parameters and not exist idiosyncratically alongside one another.

Since there is no objective, empirical basis for the reliability of the data, it seems that generativists have concluded a kind of non-aggression pact. Each study develops its own structural tree based on its own data. The danger here is that one's first-language competence becomes clouded by a desire to confirm one's theoretical assumptions with the data. Anyone who has practised syntax theory based on intuition and critically reflected on the process, including the author of this paper, will have noticed how easily theoretical assumptions can influence judgements of grammaticality.

Therefore, in our work, we would like to counter this approach with a corrective. As linguists specialised in Romance Languages, we describe a large number of these languages in parallel and comparatively. This is not based on first-language competence, but on the competent interpretation of corpus data. This study builds

upon preliminary corpus-based work on French and Italian (Kailuweit 2005), Spanish (Kailuweit 2015; 2018; Wiskandt 2020), as well as preliminary corpus-driven work on Brazilian Portuguese, Catalan, and Romanian (Wiskandt et al. 2023).⁴

The paper is structured as follows. Section 1 provides an introduction to the description of pronominal constructions in RRG. Section 2 presents three studies that argue for the antipassive nature of the pronominal construction of OE-verbs in Romance languages. Section 3 provides further evidence for this hypothesis. Section 4 focuses on causation. Section 5 considers verbs of interest as a special case, illustrating the relationship between pronominal and causative constructions of OE-verbs. Section 5 generalises the results of Section 4. Section 6 distinguishes two classes based on the frequency of pronominal constructions. Finally, Section 7 discusses the Antipassive Hypothesis from a typological perspective. The results are summarised in Section 8.

2 Pronominal Constructions in Standard RRG

In a standard RRG framework (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997; Van Valin 2005), González Vergara (2009) described a Spanish construction corresponding to the French example in (1b) as an instance of an “intrinsic”, non-reflexive *se*-construction (3a).

- (3) a. *Pedro se enojó.* (González Vergara 2009, 364)
 Pedro REFL upset-PST.3SG
 ‘Pedro got angry.’
- b. *Pedro se levantó.*
 Pedro REFL rise-PST.3SG
 ‘Pedro got up.’
- c. *La puerta se cerró.*
 The door REFL close-PST.3SG
 ‘The door closed.’

⁴ In this study we were, for example, unable to confirm the data basis that led to central assumptions in Alexiadou, Iordăchioaia (2014) for Romanian or in Cançado et al. (2024) for Brazilian Portuguese (published online in 2023). In Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia’s (2014) argument, a Romanian pronominal construction that realises the non-experiencer argument with the preposition *de la* plays a central role. However, in our studies, we found no evidence of this construction; instead, we found numerous other prepositions that were used to realise the non-experiencer argument. Cançado et al. (2024) claim that pronominal constructions exclusively realise the non-experiencer argument with the preposition *com* in Brazilian Portuguese. However, we also found numerous other prepositions.

According to González Vergara (2009), all the constructions in (3) were traditionally included in the so-called ‘middle’ construction. The author distinguishes ‘psychological’ (3a) and ‘physical’ (3b and 3c) intrinsic-*se* sentences with an animate or inanimate subject, i.e. an animate or inanimate privileged syntactic argument (PSA) in RRG terms (LaPolla 2023). Hence, González Vergara’s approach to structures such as (3a) is in line with the anticausative or inchoative interpretation of the OE/SE-alternation illustrated in (1) for French.

In order to derive these constructions and other *se*-constructions that are not real reflexives (such as the French construction in (2b)) González Vergara (2009) proposed a lexical rule (4).

- (4) [**do'** (x, Ø)] CAUSE [(BECOME/INGR) **pred'** (y)] ↔ [**do'** (Ø, Ø)] CAUSE [(BECOME/INGR) **pred'** (y)]

This rule operates on the semantic representation – called Logical Structure (LS) in RRG (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997; Van Valin 2005; 2023) – of the transitive basic construction in a way that the semantic argument that originally would have been expressed as PSA (subject) of the transitive construction is no longer available for macrorole assignment. Note that macrorole assignment is crucial for linking the semantic representation, i.e. the LS, to the syntactic representation. Only a macrorole argument can become the PSA at the syntactic level. Transitive predicates assign two macroroles, **actor** to the leftmost (most active) argument in the LS and **undergoer** to the rightmost (most passive) argument. Intransitive predicates, i.e. those lacking a direct core argument, assign only one macrorole. Intransitive activities assign an actor, whereas intransitive predicates of all other aktionsart classes assign an undergoer. In transitive constructions, the actor argument becomes the PSA of the active voice. In macrorole-intransitive constructions, the sole macrorole argument becomes the PSA (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997; Van Valin 2005; Kailuweit 2023).

In (4), the LS on the left side of ↔ is a causative construction with a causing activity [**do'** (x, Ø)] and a caused achievement or accomplishment⁵ [(BECOME/INGR) **pred'** (y)]. The x-argument of the causing activity is erased on the right side of ↔. Hence, there is only one argument left for macrorole assignment, the y-argument of [(BECOME/INGR) **pred'** (y)]. The construction is intransitive. According to standard RRG analysis, the macrorole argument of an

⁵ Traditionally, RRG has operated with the four basis Vendler/Dowty aktionsart classes: activities, states, achievements and accomplishments. However, more recent versions of the theory introduce two additional classes: semelfactives and (atelic) processes (Van Valin 2023).

intransitive activity (i.e. *jump*) is an actor, the macrorole argument of intransitive states, achievements or accomplishments (i.e. *exist*, *explode* or *melt*) is an undergoer. Since the remaining argument – the y-argument in [**do'** (\emptyset , \emptyset)] CAUSE [(BECOME/INGR) **pred'** (y)] – is an argument of an achievement or accomplishment and not of an activity, this argument receives the undergoer macrorole and is realised as PSA.

González Vergara (2009) did not give a detailed analysis of the psych-verb example in (3a), but illustrated his claim for Spanish *ensuciar* (stain), that allows for causative alternation as *cerrar* (close) does in (3c). Hence, the rule applied to the transitive causative LS of *ensuciar* (stain) in (5a) would yield the anticausative/inchoative or “physically intrinsic” construction in (5b).

- (5) a. *Pedro ensució la camisa*
 Pedro shave-PRS.3SG the shirt
 ‘Pedro stained the shirt.’
 [**do'** (Pedro, \emptyset)] CAUSE [BECOME **dirty'** (camisa)]
- b. *La camisa se ensució.*
 the shirt REFL stain-PST.3SG
 ‘The shirt got dirty.’
 [**do'** (\emptyset , \emptyset)] CAUSE [BECOME **dirty'** (camisa)]

However, several problems arise when we try to apply this description to OE-verbs such as Spanish *enojar* (anger). The standard RRG description of causative verbs of anger, i.e. episodic⁶ OE-verbs, is illustrated in (6) (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997, 402):

- (6) *The photo in the newspaper upsets James.*
 [**be-in'**(newspaper, photo)] CAUSE [**feel'**(James, [**upset-about'**(**be-in'**
 (newspaper, photo)))]

A description for a corresponding construction of Spanish *enojar* (anger) would be (7):

⁶ Episodic OE-verbs are those that refer emotions such as anger, sadness, happiness, fear or disgust (Johnson-Laird, Oatley 1989, 85), showing quick onset, brief duration and unbidden occurrence. They correspond to typical facial expressions and physical reactions. They can be found in the behaviour of primates, too.

- (7) *Estos comportamientos enojaron a sus papás.* (CREA)
These behaviours anger-PST.3PL DOM their parents.
[**be'**(\emptyset , behaviours)] CAUSE [**feel'**(parents, [**angry-about'**(**be'**(\emptyset , behaviours)))]⁷
'These behaviours angered their parents.'

When we apply the lexical rule in (4) to the LS provided for episodic OE-verbs like *enojar* (anger) in Standard RRG, the result is (8):

- (8) [**be'**(\emptyset , \emptyset)] CAUSE [**feel'**(parents, [**angry-about'**(**be'**(\emptyset , \emptyset)))]

There are two main problems with this analysis. The most obvious problem is that the PSA-argument of the basic construction does not necessarily remain unexpressed in the *se*-construction. As for Spanish, Masullo (1992, 187) highlights the fact that passive *se*-constructions including anticausatives never express the second argument while this is always possible with *se*-constructions of transitive OE-verbs. In Wiskandt et al. (2023), we investigated the presence of the non-experiencer argument in a larger corpus of psych pronominal constructions of four verbs denoting anger, fear, happiness and sadness in Catalan, Brazilian Portuguese and Romanian. As illustrated in Figure 1 all verbs allow the expression of the non-experiencer argument in pronominal constructions. For *preocupar* (worry) in Catalan and Brazilian Portuguese the appearance of the second argument is even the unmarked case.⁸

⁷ The LS fragment [**be'**(\emptyset , behaviours)] codes an unspecified property of *comportamientos* (behaviours) that provokes parental anger.

⁸ Note that the statistic in Fig. 1 includes some cases of passive constructions with a second argument introduced by a preposition.

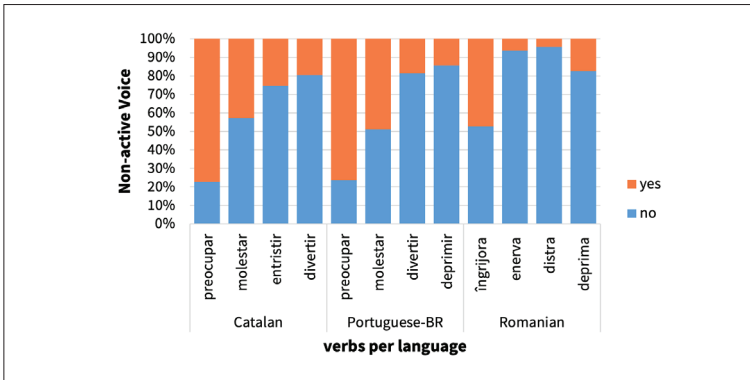


Figure 1 Distribution of non-experiencer PPs in non-active voices per verb. (Wiskandt et al. 2023)

Wiskandt (2020)⁹ proves that Spanish *enfadarse* (get angry) appears regularly without a PP-complement. The same seems to hold for *enojarse* (get angry). However, for Spanish verbs of anger the PSA of the basic construction can be easily expressed via the prepositions *con* or *por* (see (9) and (10)).

- (9) *Michael se enojó con los niños*
 Michael REFL anger-PST.3SG with the children
 ‘Michael got angry with the children’

- (10) *Ninguno de los chicos se enojó por la derrota*
 None of the boys REFL anger-PST.3SG about the defeat
 ‘None of the boys were angry about the defeat’

Note that each prepositions introduce a different participant, which, according to Pesetsky (1995), can be distinguished from the causer of the emotion: the target¹⁰ and the subject matter of emotion.¹¹

⁹ Wiskandt (2020) analyses 15 verbs, 200 tokens per verb, from CORPES XXI of Real Academia Española.

¹⁰ Pesetsky (1995) refers to Kenny (1963, 71) who introduced the term target for the non-experiencer argument citing Wittgenstein (1958, 137): “We should distinguish between the object of fear and the cause of fear. Thus a face which inspires fear or delight (the object of fear or delight), is not on that account its cause, but—one might say—its target” (aphorism 476 of his *Philosophical Investigations*).

¹¹ For this reason, the non-experiencer argument should not be labeled a stimulus, since the term *stimulus* has a causative connotation.

Kailuweit (2005) named these two participants the correlate¹² and the point of reference.¹³ As we shall see, the non-experiencer argument can take on a second semantic role (causer), but does not have to.

While *por* introduces the state of affairs the emotion corresponds to, the correlate in Kailuweit's terms (2005), *con* introduces the person the emotional behaviour is directed at, the point of reference. This becomes even more evident if we change the preposition (compare (9) with (11)):

- (11) *Michael se enojó por los niños* (CREA)
 Michael REFL anger-PST.3SG about the children
 'Michael got angry about the children'

In (9) Michael and the children are necessarily co-present in the event, but the children did not necessarily behave in an annoying way. They may have served as a lightning rod for Michael's anger triggered by something else. On the contrary, in (11) Michael and the children are not necessarily co-present in the event, but a property or action of the children is what Michael is annoyed about.

This leads to the second problem. It is not obvious that the experiencer of the basic construction, when appearing as the subject of the pronominal construction, is still influenced by an unspoken causal event. This makes a clear difference in comparison to the subject of an anticausative construction, e.g. the shirt in the 'physically intrinsic' *se*-construction in (5b). In fact, several authors have claimed that the experiencer of *se*-constructions derived from OE-verbs is not a passive, causally affected argument, but rather an active argument, like the absolutive argument in antipassive constructions in ergative languages (Polinsky 2017).

12 As discussed in detail by Kailuweit (2005), the non-experiencer argument is not a spatio-temporal object, but rather a concept that possesses certain properties. According to Ruwet (1994), two entities are necessarily involved in an emotional scene: the intentional subject (the experiencer) and a state of affairs to which the subject's intentionality refers as its correlate.

13 In Pesetsky (1995), the distinction between the two roles remained rather obscure. As Kailuweit (2005) points out, they can be more easily distinguished when compared with *fearing somebody or something* (target/correlate) versus *fearing for somebody* (subject matter/point of reference). If we are afraid for someone, that person is not dangerous in themselves; rather, they are the subject of our concern. If we observe this person in danger, we can identify the correlate of the fear. Therefore, this argument is a point of reference.

3 The Antipassive Hypothesis

Cresti (1990) for Italian, Masullo (1992) for Spanish and Herslund (1997) for French assume that pronominal constructions of psych-verbs are not anticausatives or passives in a broader sense, but antipassives. Their approaches are informed by different frameworks. While Cresti (1990) works within the Relational Grammar (RG) framework and Masullo (1992) within the generative Principle & Parameter (P&P) approach, basing their analyses on the unaccusativity hypothesis, Herslund (1997) takes a typological functionalist approach. However, what they have in common is that they all consider the experiencer to be the more active argument of the derived construction.

Cresti (1990) argues that the experiencer of Italian *preoccupare* (worry) or *interessare* (interest) is an initial 1 (subject) and demotes to 2 (direct object) in the second stratum. While it is realized as a final 2 (direct object) in the transitive construction it is promoted again to a final 1 (subject) in the pronominal construction.

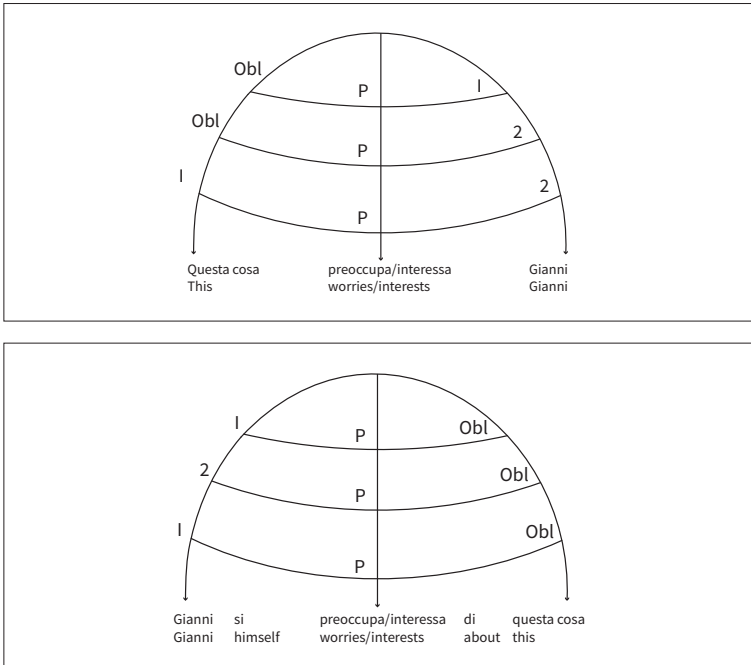


Figure 2 Demotion and Promotion of the experiencer in RG. (Cresti 1990, 62)

Masullo (1992) bases his argumentation on Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) unaccusative hypothesis. Following Belletti and Rizzi (1988), the

experiencer of verbs like *sorprender* (surprise) is the higher (more active) argument in the theta grid, but not an external argument at deep structure. In the transitive construction, the experiencer receives inherent (not structural) accusative case, while the second argument moves to the subject position, just as the argument of Italian unaccusative verbs selecting *essere* (be) in compound tenses, e.g. Italian *arrivare* (arrive). Masullo (1992, 185) assumes an optional morphological frame that allows these verbs to realize the experiencer, the more active argument, in the subject position.

DS:	<i>e sorprendere</i> se_i <i>Juan las noticias</i> $_i$
Incorporation:	<i>e sorprenderse</i> t_i <i>Juan las noticias</i> $_i$
NP-Movement:	<i>Juan</i> $_i$ <i>sorprenderse</i> t_i t_i <i>las noticias</i> $_i$
Cliticization:	<i>Juan</i> $_i$ <i>se</i> $_i$ <i>sorprende</i> t_i t_i t_i <i>las noticias</i> $_i$
Case-Marking:	<i>Juan</i> $_i$ <i>se</i> $_i$ <i>sorprende</i> t_i t_i t_i <i>de las noticias</i> $_i$

Figure 3 Derivation of pronominal psych-verb constructions (Masullo 1992, 185)

Herslund (1997) differs from these more technical approaches assuming a semantic promotion of the experiencer. Hence, he considers the experiencer the more passive argument ('patient') of the basic construction that is promoted semantically and syntactically: "what happens is really a kind of promotion of the Patient: the demotion of the Patient-**role** is performed by the promotion of the Patient-**phrase** to the Agent-role and thereby to the subject relation" (Herslund 1997, 84).

Herslund (1997) does not justify explicitly why he considered the experiencer the semantically promoted agent of the pronominal construction. Masullo (1992) does not provide any direct evidence for considering the experiencer the most active argument. However, he bases his analysis indirectly on the distributional arguments of Belletti and Rizzi (1988), who tried to prove that the experiencer of the verbs in question is not the structural direct object of a transitive construction and that the subject of these verbs is derived. Cresti (1990) justifies her analysis explicitly with some pieces of Belletti and Rizzi's (1988) evidence.

In a first step, Cresti (1990, 63f) proves that the experiencer of OE-verbs is not an initial 2 (direct object). The initial 2 (direct object) of transitive subject experiencer verbs (SE-verbs) such as e.g. *temere* (fear) is able to occur in a participial absolute (12a). However, this construction is ungrammatical with the experiencer of OE-verbs (12b):

- (12) a. *Temute la ripercussioni di questo atto, decidemmo*
 fear.PTCP the repercussions of this act decide-PST.1PL
convocare un'assemblea.

call assembly

‘Fearing the repercussions of this act, we decided to call an assembly’

- b. *Preoccupata la mamma, Gianni tentava di riassicurarla.*
 worry.PTCP the mother Gianni try-PST.3SG to reassure-her
 ‘Having worried the mother, Gianni tried to reassure her’

In a second step, she argues that the experiencer of OE-verbs of the *preoccupare* (worry) class was a 1 at a former stratum because it is able to bind an anaphor in the subject position as illustrated in (13):

- (13) a. *Questi pettegolezzi su di se_i preoccupano Gianni_i*
 These gossips about himself worry-PST.3SG Gianni
ogni altra cosa.
 more than every other thing
- b. **Questi pettegolezzi su di se_i descrivano Gianni*
 These gossips about himself describe-PST.3SG Gianni
più di ogni biografia ufficiale.
 more than every biography official

However, the binding facts are not incompatible with the anticausative analysis put forward in the RRG framework. They are explicitly addressed in Van Valin and LaPolla (1997, 402) who proved that they are compatible with their analysis of episodic OE-verbs as causative states, because the anaphor occurs twice in the LS, not only on the left but also on the right side of the experiencer, as you can see in (14b):

- (14) a. *The photo of himself in the newspaper upsets James.*
 b. [**be-in**'(newspaper, **be**' (photo, [**of**'(himself.)])] CAUSE [**feel**'(James,
 [**upset-about**'(**be-in**'(newspaper, **be**' (photo, [**of**'(himself.)])))]]

According to Masullo (1992) and Herslund (1997) antipassive constructions in Romance languages are not restricted to OE-verbs. Herslund (1997, 84) refers to Foley and Van Valin (1985) to distinguish ‘foregrounding’ from ‘backgrounding’ antipassives. Note that current RRG would call the ‘foregrounding’ antipassives “PSA modulation” antipassives and the ‘backgrounding’ antipassives “argument modulation” antipassives (Van Valin 2005).

While the pronominal constructions of OE-verbs are candidates for ‘foregrounding’ (PSA-modulation) antipassives, there are also constructions that are candidates for ‘backgrounding’ (argument-modulation) antipassives. French *exprimer* (express) or Spanish *confesar* (confess) demote the undergoer of the corresponding transitive sentence. The undergoer can be deleted or appears as oblique in (15b) and (16b).

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- (15) a. *Jean exprime ses opinions clairement.*
 Jean express-PRS.3SG his opinions clearly
 ‘Jean expresses his opinions clearly’
- b. *Jean s'exprime clairement (sur ce sujet).*
 Jean REFL express-PRS.3SG clearly on this subject
 ‘Jean expresses himself clearly (on this subject)’
- (16) a. *Juan confiesa sus pecados*
 Juan confess-PRS.3SG his sins
 ‘Juan confesses his sins’
- b. *Juan se confiesa (de sus pecados)*
 Juan REFL confess-PRS.3SG of his sins

However, this construction is not productive at all. The examples could be considered idiosyncratic lexical alternations. The linking of the arguments is unproblematic since the predicates at issue are activities. Therefore, the remaining macrorole argument is the actor that is realized as PSA in the transitive as well as in the intransitive construction. Masullo (1992) points out that this type of potential anticausative differs substantially in its syntactic and semantic properties from the pronominal constructions of OE-verbs. Hence, they do not provide evidence for the antipassive analysis of the latter.

In this section, we saw that the antipassive hypothesis put forward by Cresti (1990) for Italian and Masullo (1992) for Spanish pronominal psych-verb constructions is consistent with the seminal work of Belletti and Rizzi (1988). According to these authors, the experiencer is the most active argument in both the OE-construction and the corresponding pronominal construction. Conversely, in his analysis of French pronominal psych-verb constructions, Herslund (1997) claims that the experiencer is semantically promoted. It should be noted that the binding facts in Belletti and Rizzi (1988) are not incompatible with an anticausative analysis either (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997). Therefore, further evidence is required to demonstrate that experiencer of pronominal psych-verb constructions is an actor and not an undergoer.

4 Further Evidence for the Antipassive Hypothesis

To approve the hypothesis that pronominal constructions of OE-verbs are more similar to antipassives than to anticausatives, independent evidence is needed that the promoted EXPERIENCER is the most active argument, i.e. an actor in RRG terms. Clearly, the degree of activity of the PSA (subject) argument differs significantly between pronominal constructions of OE-verbs (17b) and corresponding (non-pronominal)

passive constructions as in (17a) (Kailuweit 2005, 218). The two constructions are not synonymous. While (17a) describes a process in which Pierre (precisely an action or property of him) causes Paul's emotion, (17b) denotes Paul's emotional behaviour that is directed against Pierre. In (17b) Pierre is not necessarily the cause of Paul's irritation:

- (17) a. *Paul est irrité par Pierre*
 Paul be-PRS.3SG irritate-PTCP by Peter
 'Paul is irritated by Peter'
 [**do**' (Pedro, Ø)] CAUSE [BECOME **dirty**' (camisa)]
- b. *Paul s' irrite contre Pierre*
 Paul REFL upset-PRS.3SG against Peter
 'Paul gets angry with Peter'

However, prototypical anticausatives are also not synonymous with corresponding passive constructions. In anticausative (or 'physically intrinsic') *se*-constructions, a semantic promotion also takes place without the passive argument of the transitive construction – i.e. the undergoer in RRG terms – being converted into an actor (Kailuweit 2011). We will illustrate this fact with some examples taken from the CREA corpus of the Real Academia Española.

- (18) a. *Él prefirió empobrecerse poco a poco y continuar operando la cafetería*
 he prefer-PST.3S impoverish-PRON little by little and continue operating the coffee shop
 'He preferred getting poorer and poorer keeping the coffee shop open to becoming rich by selling it.'
- b. *La crisis empobreció al dueño de la cafetería.*
 The crisis impoverish-PST.3SG DOM+DET owner of the coffee shop
 'The crisis impoverished the coffee shop owner'
- c. *El dueño de la cafetería fue empobrecido por la crisis.*
 Owner of the coffee shop be-PST.3SG impoverish-PTCP by the crisis
 'The coffee shop owner was impoverished by the crisis'

In (18a), the coffee shop owner, who corresponds to the object of the transitive construction in (18b), consciously accepts his impoverishment; however, he does not willingly cause it and thus remains causally affected. In the passive construction of (18c), however, there is no conscious acceptance of impoverishment. Therefore, the coffee shop owner in (18a) seems to be semantically slightly upgraded compared to those in (18b) and (18c), but he is still an undergoer and not an actor.

An argument in favour of the actor analysis of the experiencer in the pronominal psych-verb constructions may be derived from aktionsart. Anticausative constructions remove the agent-causer and the focus on the change of state or result. The remaining only argument is an undergoer. Intransitive predicates that assign an undergoer does not have an activity predicate in their semantic representation (Van Valin 2005, 63). Antipassive constructions most naturally align with activities (Tatevosov 2011; Denniss 2017). If it could be demonstrated that the pronominal constructions of OE-verbs satisfy the activity tests, the experiencer argument would be considered an actor in RRG terms. This would lend weight to the antipassive hypothesis.

OE-verbs of Belletti and Rizzi's *preoccupare* (worry) class has been attributed to all of the four Vendler-Dowty (Vendler 1967; Dowty 1979) aktionsart classes (see Kailuweit 2015 for an overview).¹⁴ However, there are very few studies addressing the aktionsart of the corresponding pronominal constructions. Marín and McNally (2011) suggest that they are generally associated with achievements because of their inchoative nature. However, although this claim is made for anticausatives such as *darken* or *sink* (Dowty 1979), the studies cited by Marín and McNally do not refer to pronominal psych-verb constructions.¹⁵ While Marín and McNally (2011) distinguish between an achievement subclass (*enfadarse* 'get angry') and a stative subclass with a left boundary (*aburrirse* 'get/be bored'), Marín and McNally (2019) describe these constructions indiscriminately as (left) bounded states. In fact, if we define achievements as punctual change-of-state verbs as in standard RRG (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997; Van Valin 2005; 2023), then it is easy to show that pronominal psych-verbs fall outside this class because they are not punctual.¹⁶

Härtl (2001a, 2001b) claimed that OE-verbs and their pronominal constructions represent durative, non-telic activities. While this analysis may seem unusual, particularly in relation to non-agentive OE-verbs (Kailuweit 2005; 2015), it is worth considering in the

14 Marín and McNally (2011; 2019) also list studies that classify these verbs as accomplishments, achievements or states. However, they do not mention the works of Härtl (2001a; 2001b) who argues that these verbs are activities.

15 With the exception of Smith (1991, 293), who includes the French verb *se facher de* (to become angry) among the achievements. However, in her brief description of French achievement predicates, Smith does not provide an argument directly justifying the inclusion of pronominal psych-verb constructions.

16 Verbs like *enfadarse* (get/be angry) or *sorprenderse* (get/be surprised) are extended in time. They can be combined with *for X time* phrases or with *more and more*: i. *Los asistentes se sorprendieron durante los quince segundos que ella permaneció semidesnuda* (The attendees were surprised for the fifteen seconds that she remained half-naked); ii. *lo que hace que Liam se enfade más y más* (which makes Liam get angrier and angrier). (<https://www.corpusdelespanol.org/now/>).

context of pronominal constructions. It is a well-known fact that some OE-verbs allow constructions with an agent who is supposed to intentionally evoke an emotion in the experiencer, while others do not.¹⁷ However, it is never certain that one can cause another person's emotions. Whether or not a person is easily annoyed or delighted depends on their disposition. On the other hand, an individual can control or allow their emotions to a certain extent. Thus, imperative constructions are acceptable: 'Don't worry, be happy!'.¹⁸

Pronominal constructions of Spanish OE-verbs meet all activity tests listed in Van Valin (2005, 35). As illustrated with examples from the Corpus de Español, Spanish *enojarse* (get/be angry) allow the progressive (see 19a) and occur with adverbs of intensity such as *strongly* (see 19b) and pace adverbs such as *quickly* (see 19c).

- (19) a. *Mi madre no me contestó apretaba los labios*
My mother not me answer-PST.3SG purse-IPFV.3SG the lips
y comprendí que se estaba enojando.
and understood-PST.1SG that REFL be-IPFV.3SG upset-PROG
'My mother did not answer me. She pursed her lips and I understood that she was getting angry.'
- b. *Amy se enoja fuertemente con Sheldon quien*
Amy REFL upset-PRS.3SG strongly with Sheldon who
no entiende la situación
not understand-PRS.3SG the situation
'Amy gets very angry with Sheldon who doesn't understand the situation.'
- c. *En Monterrey la gente tiene mal carácter.*
In Monterrey the people have-PRS.3SG bad character
Se enojan rápidamente.
REFL upset-PRS.3PL quickly
'In Monterrey people have bad tempers. They get angry quickly.'

However, on closer semantic analysis, it must be acknowledged that adverbs of pace with pronominal psych-verb constructions, such as in (19c), do not refer to the emotion itself, but rather to the time lapse before the emotion begins, using the metonymic strategy. If people get angry 'quickly', they do not need to be exposed to a potentially annoying event for a long time before showing anger.

¹⁷ Ruwet 1972; Arad 1998; Pylkkänen 2000; Kailuweit 2005; Landau 2009; Marín 2011.

¹⁸ Several hundred occurrences of *¡no te enfades!* (don't get angry) and *¡alégrate!* (be happy) can be found in <https://www.corpusdelespanol.org/now/>.

According to Ekman (1994), episodic emotions, which are triggered by a particular situation and only last a short time, are associated with specific facial expressions. Additionally, there are other physiological effects and behaviours that cause an observer to attribute a particular emotion to a person. OE-verbs refer to the emergence of emotions, whereas the corresponding pronominal constructions focus on emotional behaviour. Therefore, these constructions could be considered atypical activities, with an actor as their sole macrorole. This lends weight to the antipassive hypothesis, given that the sole argument of anticausatives is an undergoer.

In this section, we have demonstrated that pronominal constructions of psych-verbs can, at best, be classified as atypical activities within the Vendler/Dowty aktionsart classes. If this is correct, they cannot be considered anticausatives, since anticausatives are never activities. As antipassives most naturally align with activities, our findings could support an antipassive analysis.

5 More on Causation

Nonetheless, the PSA of a pronominal OE-verb construction still could be an undergoer if we consider the construction a kind of passive of a caused activity. The analysis would be analogous to (20):

- (20) a. *A robber has been put to flight by a pensioner.*
b. [**be-in'**(newspaper, **be'** (photo, [**of'**(himself)]))] CAUSE [**feel'**(James, [**upset-about'**(**be-in'**(newspaper, **be'** (photo, [**of'**(himself)])))])]

According to the Linking algorithm from syntax to semantics given in Van Valin (2005, 149), the construction would be a passive in a language that allows a voice opposition. In (20a), the subject will be linked to the undergoer macrorole (the rightmost argument of the LS in (20b)), even if the caused event (the event on the right side of CAUSE) is an activity. The argument appearing in the periphery, introduced by the preposition marking passive agents (e.g. *by* in English), will be linked to the leftmost argument of (20b): the argument of the causing event on the left side of CAUSE.

However, for semantic reasons this analysis does not seem to be appropriate for pronominal constructions of OE-verbs. It neither reflects the semantic promotion of the experiencer nor the fact, that in many cases the oblique argument cannot be considered a passive agent-causer. Even if the preposition *por* (*by*) is not excluded by some Spanish pronominal constructions, these constructions regularly

appear with different prepositions to those that mark the passive agent.¹⁹

Indeed, the causative analysis of OE-verbs proposed by Grimshaw (1990) and Pesetsky (1995) has been undergone modifications in recent years (see Temme 2018 for an overview). If we assume a causal structure for these verbs, the question arises as to why these verbs exhibit ‘psych-properties’ such as the impossibility of participial absolutes in (12b). Following Landau (2009), Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014) distinguish between causative ‘eventive’ and non-causative ‘stative’ constructions of OE-verbs. Only the latter show psych-properties. Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014) propose that the pronominal constructions derived from the eventive constructions are anticausative. However, they analyse some OE-verbs as being stative exclusively. Consequently, Romanian pronominal constructions of OE-verbs that lack an eventive reading cannot be considered anticausatives. In addition, the authors claim that Romanian anticausative psych-verb constructions realise the non-experiencer argument, if present, with the causative preposition *de la* (from). However, our corpus study of four Romanian verbs (Wiskandt et al. 2023) revealed no instances of *de la* in conjunction with a pronominal construction. According to Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014), the subject experiencer construction of the English verb *worry* (*about*) is not causative neither, since, in their analysis, *worry* does not allow an eventive reading. Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014) do not categorise pronominal constructions derived from ‘stative’ OE-verbs as belonging to a specific syntactic class. These constructions appear to be lexical idiosyncrasies.

In our view, this analysis also has several issues. The distinction between causative and non-causative OE-verbs in Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014) is based on Grimshaw’s (1990) analysis of OE-verbs as causative accomplishments. However, this is not convincing for the vast majority of OE-verbs, as they sound very strange in the ‘in X time’ test: *??x annoyed/delighted y in 10 minutes*. The imperfective paradox, which Dowty (1979) identified as a central criterion for the class of accomplishments, does not apply to OE-verbs either, at least not when no intentional behaviour triggers the emotion. If something was annoying x, then this circumstance annoyed x. The possibility that OE-verbs are causative states, i.e. the standard RRG analysis

19 Wiskandt et al. (2023) demonstrated that a wide range of prepositions can introduce the non-experiencer argument. Of the four verbs tested, in Catalan we found *a, amb, en, davant, de, per* (to, with, in, in front of, of/from, for) in Brazilian Portuguese *com, com relação a, de, devido a, diante de, em, por, por causa de* (with, in relation to, of/from, due to, before, in, by/for, because of). Finally, in the Romanian corpus appeared *cu, de, din, din cauza, la, pe, pentru, prin* (with, of, from, because of, at, on, for, through).

of the OE-verb construction, is not considered by Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014).

The facts are highly complex, and further empirical research is needed to clarify the relationship between aktionsart, causativity, and psychological properties (Temme 2018). Some evidence comes from verbs of interest. Although their syntactic behaviour appears exceptional among OE-verbs, they can still provide insight into the general structural properties of this class.

6 Verbs of Interest

In this section, we will focus on verbs of interest in order to develop a description of the relationship between the causative (eventive), the non-causative (stative), and the pronominal construction of OE-verbs. Consider the different constructions in (21) documented in the Frantext corpus:

- (21) a. *Il m'intéressait à ce qui l'intéressait* (Frantext)
 He me-interest-IPFV.3SG in what 3SG.ACC-interest-IPFV.3SG
 'He got me interested in what he was interested in'
- b. *Je m'intéressais à ce qui l'intéressait*
 I REFL-interest-IPFV.3SG in what 3SG.ACC-interest-IPFV.3SG
 'I was interested in what s/he was interested in'

The construction in (21a) demonstrates the three-place causative use of the French verb *intéresser* (interest). The same verb appears again in the embedded argument as a non-causative two-place predicate. (21b) illustrates a pronominal construction derived from the two-place construction, rather than the three-place causative construction.

French *intéresser* (interest) is evidence for the claim that not all transitive OE-verbs are causative. The three-place construction is the causativisation of the two-place construction; for example, *The sergeant marched the soldiers to the barracks* is a causativisation of the non-causative active accomplishment *The soldiers marched to the barracks* (Van Valin, LaPolla 1997, 101). The pronominal construction in (21b) refers to emotional behaviour (showing interest) and demonstrates semantic and syntactic elevation of the experiencer-argument.

These three different constructions of verbs of interest are also attested in Spanish, Catalan (Royo 2017, 2019), German and English although some speakers consider the three-place construction to be unusual and slightly marked.

Figure 4 presents a lexical rule that relates the three constructions.

7 Towards a LS-Description of Episodic OE-verbs

The findings from the last section will now form the basis for proposing a general LS for OE-verb constructions that captures both structural alternations and constraints. It is important to remember, that verbs of interest are clearly exceptions. While there are a few genuine causative three-place OE-verbs such as the Spanish verb *incitar* (incite), most OE-verbs exhibit what Pesetsky (1995) termed the “target/subject matter-restriction” (T/SM-restriction): the causer must be referentially identical to the non-experiencer argument (23).

(23) [...y / *z...] CAUSE [**feel**'(x, [**pred**'(...y...))]

A lexical rule relating causative and non-causative constructions²¹ of episodic OE-Verbs is given in (24):

(24) [...y / *z...] CAUSE [**feel**'(x, [**pred**'(...y...))]] <=> 1MR [**feel**'(x, [**pred**'(...y...))]]

The representation in (24) is able to describe the fact that these verbs exhibit so-called psych properties in certain contexts, while behaving like causative agent-patient verbs in others (Bouchard 1995). Note that there is no linking problem with the LS for the causative construction. The non-experiencer argument (y) appears twice, first on the left side of the CAUSE operator and second on the right. Since the linking algorithm starts with actor assignment by reading the LS from left to right, the actor-macrorole is assigned to the leftmost argument, i.e. the non-experiencer argument on the left of CAUSE. When assigning the undergoer, the first option, the non-experiencer argument (y), is unavailable because it has already been selected for the actor. Therefore, the experiencer (x) receives the undergoer-macrorole. The actor is linked to the PSA function and the undergoer appears as a direct core argument.

Figure 5 shows that the basic non-causative construction of episodic OE-verbs allows for two derived constructions: the causative and the pronominal constructions. Therefore, the pronominal constructions are not directly related to the causative constructions and cannot be considered anticausative.

21 In (24), the causative construction corresponds to the “eventive” and the non-causative construction to the “stative” reading in Alexiadou and Iordăchioaia (2014). However, it is not clear if causativity of OE-verbs is a corollary of eventivity (see Temme 2018 for a critical overview).

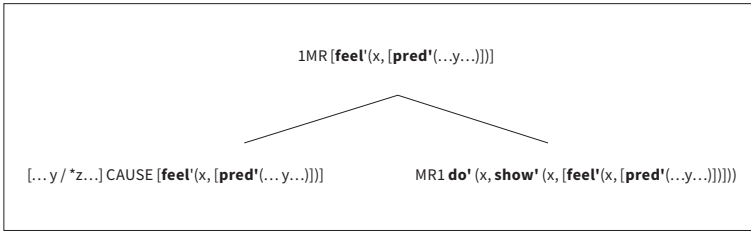


Figure 5 Non-causative, causative and pronominal constructions of OE-verbs

8 Experiencer-Centred Episodic Verbs of Emotion

It is a matter of fact that, at least in Romance languages, for many OE-verbs the pronominal construction is the more frequent construction. Let us consider the results of the corpus study in Wiskandt et al. (2023).

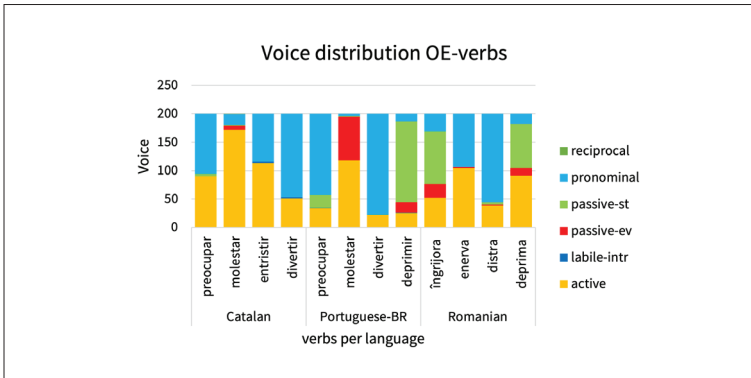


Figure 6 Voice distribution of four OE-verbs in Catalan, Brazilian Portuguese and Romanian (Wiskandt et al. 2023)

Of the four verbs analysed, those for distraction (Catalan and Brazilian Portuguese *divertir* and Romanian *distra*) appear significantly more often in pronominal constructions than in active constructions with a non-experiencer subject. The same is true of Brazilian Portuguese *preocupar* (worry), while Catalan *preocupar* (worry) is distributed roughly equally between pronominal and active constructions.

The tendencies observed in the Catalan data, which we found in a corpus including Catalan literature and press from the late nineteenth

century onwards,²² were confirmed by an elicitation test conducted in May 2023 with 63 participants at the University of Palma. The participants had to use any construction of a given psychological verb to describe a picture. The ratio of active to pronominal use for *molestar* (bother) was 51:49, and for *entristir* (sadden) it was 22:78. The other two verbs analysed in Wiskandt et al. (2023) were not tested. When we compare the experimental data with the corpus analysis, we see that the pronominal construction is more frequent for both verbs. However, *molestar* is more frequently used in the active construction than *entristir* in both datasets.

Based on these results, we claim that there is continuum between an experiencer-centred conceptualization and a correlate-centred conceptualization with each verb showing a more or less pronounced affinity to one of the two poles. The experiencer-centred view focusses on the fact that the experiencer exhibits a certain emotional behaviour in relation to a correlate that may remain unexpressed. The correlate-centred view highlights the fact that, given²³ a certain correlate, an experiencer (has come to and) remains in a certain emotional state.²⁴ The examples in (25), taken from the Corpus textual informatitzat de la llengua catalana (CTILC), illustrate a correlate-centred conceptualisation (25a) and an experiencer-centred conceptualisation (25b):

- (25) a. *Els sons aguts la molestaven* [CORRELATE-centred]
 The sounds high-pitched 3SG.FEM.ACC bother-IPFV.3PL
 ‘high-pitched sounds bothered her.’
- b. *Ens divertíem amb tota mena de jocs* [EXPERIENCER-centred]
 REFL.1PL distract-IPFV.1PL with all kind of games
 ‘we had fun with all kinds of games.’

The position that a predicate occupies on the scale between the two poles seems to vary according to the type of text. However, we argue that certain predicates (e.g. verbs expressing disturbance, such as the Catalan verb *molestar* in (25a)) are situated closer to the correlate-centred pole than other predicates (e.g. verbs expressing distraction,

²² Corpus textual informatitzat de la llengua catalana (<https://ctilc.iec.cat/scripts/>).

²³ The correlate may be given in the co-text or in the context.

²⁴ We essentially follow Marín and McNally’s (2011) approach, which states that OE-verbs denote a state marked inchoatively by a “left boundary”. Similar considerations can be found in the work of Kailuweit (2005) and Kailuweit (2015). In the present paper, however, we do not attempt to formalise the left boundary in the LS because it is irrelevant for linking purposes. Therefore, our formalisation is essentially compatible with the LS of the Standard RRG for episodic OE-verbs.

such as the Catalan verb *divertir* in (25b)) across languages and text types. We cannot rule out the possibility of diachronic change towards the experiencer-centred perspective, but this would require further empirical research to confirm.

The corpus study conducted by Wiskandt et al. (2023) also suggests a negative correlation between the occurrence of an animate non-experiencer argument and the frequency of the pronominal construction [fig. 7]. This is in line with the Spanish data that can be extracted from the ADESSE Corpus.²⁵ Overall, the ADESSE data shows a certain correlation between the animation of the non-experiencer argument and the active constructions. If the argument is animated, there is a greater probability of an active construction, whereas if it is inanimate, there is a greater probability of a pronominal construction.²⁶

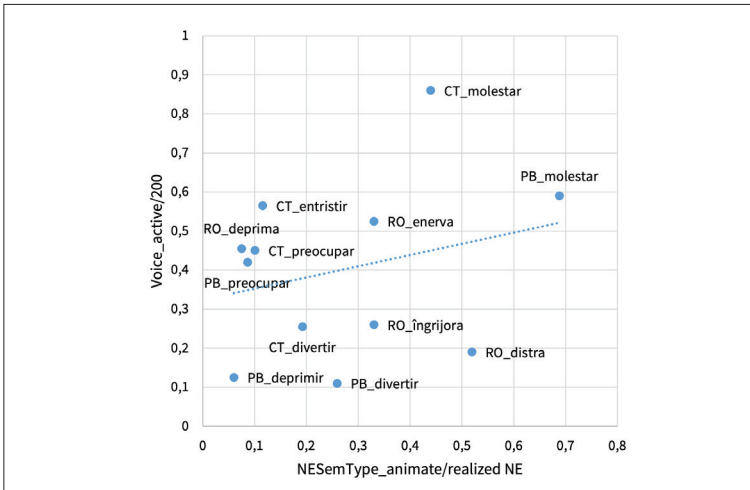


Figure 7 Correlation between active voice and animacy of the non-experiencer argument (Wiskandt et al. 2023).

We interpret animacy of the non-experiencer argument as an indicator of a causative reading of the active construction due to its animacy. Animacy is a necessary condition for deliberate and controlled action that affects another participant. In this sense, agentivity is a sufficient criterion for causativity (Kailuweit 2005, 182), which is difficult to prove in languages without a causative verb morphology.

25 ADESSE Corpus (<http://adesse.uvigo.es/>).

26 Personal communication José García-Miguel (23/02/2024).

This leads us to claim that we should distinguish correlate-centred and experiencer-centred episodic OE-verbs.²⁷

Lexical rule for CORRELATE-centred episodic OE-verbs	
1MR feel' (x, [pred' (... y...)])	(Basic construction)
=> [... y / *z...] CAUSE [feel' (x, [pred' (... y...)])] ???	(Causativisation)
MR1 do' (x, show' (x, feel' (x, [pred' (... y...)]))	(Pronominal construction)
Lexical rule for EXPERIENCER-centred episodic OE-verbs	
MR1 do' (x, show' (x, feel' (x, [pred' (... y...)]))	(Basic construction)
=> 1MR feel' (x, [pred' (... y...)])	(Stative construction)
=> [... y / *z...] CAUSE [feel' (x, [pred' (... y...)])]	(Causativisation)
A few verbs (i.e. verbs of interest) allow causativisation with z	

Figure 8 Correlate-centred and experiencer-centred episodic OE-verbs

In this section, we have demonstrated that a causative structure can be derived with the non-experiencer argument in the subject position for correlate-centred OE-verbs. The subject argument receives two semantic roles: correlate and causer. As adding a causer is optional for basically non-causative structures, the pronominal construction of OE-verbs cannot be considered an anticausative. The extent to which causativisation is also available for experiencer-centred episodic OE-verbs remains an open question for further research.

9 Antipassives – A Typological Approach

One central question remains. Should the pronominal construction be considered an antipassive construction in an accusative language? According to standard RRG, antipassive constructions are restricted to ergative languages (Watters 2023, 313). Herslund acknowledges the risk of his antipassive approach, which is that

²⁷ Note that the proposal of experiencer-centred episodic OE-verbs parallels to a certain extent with the idea of an 'autocausative' class in Mateu and Royo (this volume). However, some of their examples, such as Catalan *avergonyir-se* (to be ashamed), *pendir-se* (to repent) and *compadir-se* (to pity) appear to exhibit highly idiosyncratic syntactic behaviour. When comparing languages, it is questionable whether there is a standardised class of 'autocausatives' here. Nevertheless, the concept of an 'autocausative' structure is consistent with our analysis, as it demonstrates that so-called autocausative pronominal constructions of OE-verbs are clearly not anticausative.

The straitjacket of Latin grammar is replaced by an unprincipled promiscuity of all kinds of categories from the grammars of exotic languages. (Herslund 1997, 76).

However, he claimed that this danger could be mitigated:

First, by the requirement of the existence of a functional category, i.e. the already mentioned common functional content of different grammatical structures. Secondly, by the awareness that the grammaticalisation of structural patterns occurs in different degrees in different languages [...] I think there is a good chance of making sense out of the idea of cross-linguistic functional categories. Such categories could for instance be the ways in which different languages proceed to get rid of Agent- and Patient-arguments under certain pragmatic or textual circumstances. These procedures are, however great the structural differences from language to language, good candidates for the status of cross-linguistic functional categories. (Herslund 1997, 76).

In a broad typological survey of 448 languages, Heaton (2017) demonstrated that antipassive constructions exhibit significant heterogeneity across languages. These constructions vary significantly in their morphosyntactic, semantic, and pragmatic properties. The author notes that, based on her criteria, these constructions occur in both accusative and ergative languages. According to Heaton's classification, 43% of ergative languages have antipassives, compared to 18% of nominative-accusative languages (Heaton 2017, 153). Heaton (2020, 148f) lists eleven features of antipassive. Of the 448 languages in the sample (Heaton 2017), more than 100 different sets of features were found to describe various constructions as potential antipassives. Only 64 of these sets were not unique in the data. However, most of these appeared just a few times (Heaton 2020, 137f).

Heaton (2020) does not explicitly explain which features she considers to be sufficient or necessary. Nevertheless, she emphasises that "antipassives with oblique patients and primarily syntactic functions are rare" (Heaton 2020, 140). Consequently, only a very small number of ergative languages have constructions that have been considered prototypical cases of antipassives, following Dixon (1979). Conversely, dozens of languages have constructions that exhibit at least some of the eleven features identified by Heaton.

The following provides a brief schematic overview of Heaton's features, applying them to the reconstruction of two pronominal OE-verbs in Spanish, one correlate-centred verb, *enfadar(se)* (upset), and one experiencer-centred verb, *interesar(se)* (interest).

Table 1 Six out of eleven features for antipassive (Heaton 2020, 148f) applicable to Spanish *se*-constructions of OE-verbs

Feature	Description	<i>enfadarse (get/be angry) / interesarse (get/be interested)</i>
[oblique]	The patient appears in an oblique phrase.	+ (<i>enfadarse con/por; interesarse por/en</i>)
[mark]	Present antipassive marker that detransitivises the predicate, preserves the agent, and demonstrably indicates voice.	+ (<i>enfadarSE, interesarseSE</i>)
[asymm]	The antipassive construction corresponds to an unmarked or less-marked bivalent transitive construction. It may also apply to ditransitives, intransitives, etc., as long as it acts primarily on bivalent structures.	+ (<i>María enfada / interesa a Pedro => Pedro se enfada / interesa por María</i>)
[intrans]	The resulting predicate is intransitive.	+ (<i>Pedro se enfada / se interesa por María</i>)
[ValDec]	The construction is valency decreasing, the patient argument must always be omissible	(+) (<i>Pedro se enfada / ??se interesa</i>)
[semantics]	Antipassive-like semantics / functions: nonindividuation, genericness, nonspecificity, or indefiniteness of the patient; the expression of partitive relationships; habitual or canonical action; incompletive aspect; promotion of the agent; and/or demotion or deletion of the patient from the discourse.	(+) Promotion of the experiencer to actor; demotion or deletion of the undergoer.

Table 2 Five out of eleven features for antipassive non applicable to Spanish se-constructions of OE-verbs

Feature	Description	<i>enfadarse (get/be angry) / interesarse (get/be interested)</i>
[dedicated]	The antipassive marker is dedicated to the antipassive construction and does not have other uses beyond signaling the antipassive. (In many languages the antipassive marker has evolved from a middle marker or reflexive/reciprocal marker and still has that function as well, in which case the marker is not dedicated to the antipassive)	– (se has also the function of a middle marker and reflexive/reciprocal marker <i>inter alia</i>)
[–lexical]	The antipassive is nonlexical.	– restricted to a small number of semantic verb classes: OE-verbs, verbs of communication such as <i>confesar-se de (confess)</i>
[productive]	The operation applies to (almost) all transitive verbs. Coupled with [–lexical], the presence of [–lexical] but not [productive] indicates that the construction is nonlexical, but not entirely productive.	(–) Productive only with OE-verbs.
[–patient]	The operation creates a predicate where there is no implication of any specific patient.	– The undergoer of the basis construction always remains expressible as an oblique.
[syntax]	The construction is used to circumvent various types of restrictions on nonabsolute Arguments. It participates in syntactic ergativity.	– Spanish is not an ergative language.

As Tables 1 and 2 show, six of the eleven antipassive features apply to the pronominal constructions of OE-verbs in Spanish. Please note that the features [oblique] and [–patient] are mutually exclusive and that the feature [syntax] only applies to ergative languages. Therefore, the maximum number of features for a construction in an accusative language such as Spanish would be nine. Since six of the nine possible features take on a positive value, it would be quite justified to describe the construction as antipassive, in line with the approach taken by Cresti (1990), Masullo (1992) and Herslund (1997).

However, the main problem with assuming a PSA-modulation antipassive construction in Romance languages or German is that this construction is restricted to a clear-cut semantic class: episodic OE-verbs. This suggests that the pronominal construction of these verbs is derived from a lexical rule rather than a basic voice operation. In this respect, we consider the [productive] feature to be a prerequisite for the adoption of a grammatical antipassive. Our approach thus aligns with standard RRG's description of voice operations (Van Valin 2023, 125-30; Watters 2023, 310-4).

10 Conclusion

Contrary to widespread opinion, which also forms the basis of the standard RRG analysis, pronominal constructions of OE-verbs in Romance languages cannot be considered anticausatives, as we have seen in this paper. A more compelling argument is to classify them as antipassives, as Cresti (1990) did for Italian, Masullo (1992) did for Spanish, and Herslund (1997) did for French. Pronominal constructions of episodic OE-verbs as they occur in Romance languages differ substantially from anticausatives and other 'passive-like' pronominal constructions. Firstly, they always permit the non-experiencer argument to be expressed as an oblique. In many cases, from a semantic point of view, this argument is clearly not the 'cause' of the emotion. Secondly, while the subject of anticausative constructions (PSA in RRG) is an undergoer, the experiencer of pronominal constructions of OE-verbs is an actor. Pronominal constructions are, at best, classified as activities rather than states because they fulfil several of the criteria for activities. Semantically, they can be considered non-prototypical activities focusing on the emotional behaviour of the experiencer. Unlike the corresponding active OE-constructions in the standard RRG analysis, they are not causative states. Furthermore, they cannot be classified as caused activities. Since the antipassive construction takes an actor as the PSA and demotes the undergoer syntactically, it generally aligns with activities. Therefore, there are some good arguments in favour of the antipassive analysis of pronominal constructions of OE-verbs in Romance languages.

We began our own RRG analysis of these constructions with verbs of interest. These verbs provide evidence that the pronominal construction does not derive from a causative construction. The pronominal construction is related to a macrorole-intransitive stative construction, in which the non-experiencer argument acts as the undergoer and PSA. A third argument is introduced as the actor in a causativised three-place construction, while the experiencer becomes the actor in the pronominal construction. This changes

the semantics from a state to an (non prototypical) activity, and the undergoer is demoted syntactically.

In a second step, we generalised these structures and demonstrated that verbs of interest are rare exceptions to Pesetsky's (1995) T/SM-restriction. Taking this restriction into account enables us to explain that both the causative and pronominal constructions of episodic OE-verbs are derived from a non-causative base. Generally, the T/SM-restriction excludes the introduction of an external causer. Instead, the non-experiencer argument is given the additional semantic role of a causer.

However, due to its frequency, the pronominal construction can be considered as the basic construction for many episodic OE-verbs. We have described these verbs as experiencer-centred, in contrast to the correlate-centred verbs, where the pronominal construction is derived. Experiencer-centred verbs seem to allow causativisation less easily. Further research is needed in this area.

Finally, we addressed the question of whether the pronominal construction should be considered an instance of antipassive in an RRG framework. According to Heaton's (2017; 2020) list, the construction shows several features that are characteristic of antipassive. However, standard RRG only allows for antipassive constructions in ergative languages. Since the construction is confined to a specific semantic domain (OE-verbs), we chose to derive it using a lexical rule rather than considering it to be a basic voice operation.

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