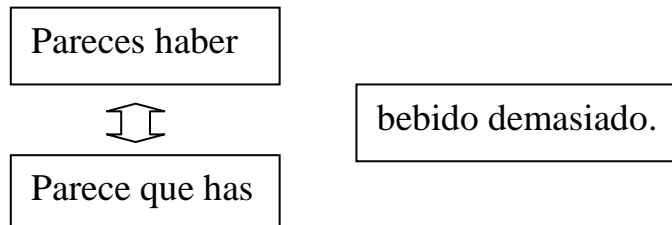


## Constructions with the raising verb *parecer* in Spanish



Disa Holmlander

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### Abbreviations

1s	1 <sup>st</sup> person singular
3p	3 <sup>rd</sup> person plural (etc.)
IC	impersonal construction
RC	raising construction

### Word list

comer	eat
dar	give
deber	have to, must
decir	say
entender	understand
escuchar	listen, hear
estar	be, be situated <sup>1</sup>
haber	aux. have <sup>2</sup>
hacer	do, make
indicar	indicate
intentar	try
ir	go <sup>3</sup>
guardar	keep, save
oír	hear
poder	be able to
poner	put
pretender	pretend
recordar	remember
saber	know
sentir	feel
ser	be, exist <sup>4</sup>
tener	have, own <sup>5</sup>
tomar	take
ver	see

<sup>1</sup> *estar* is 'be' expressing situation, i.e. 1) 'be situated' (in space and time); 2) followed by adjective or participle to express a temporary situation: *Estoy enfermo* ('I'm ill'), *Estoy ocupado* ('I'm busy'); 3) followed by a gerund expressing an action in progress: *Estamos cenando* ('We're eating') and in a number of special expressions.

<sup>2</sup> *haber* is the auxiliary 'have', which forms the compound tenses, and is also used in impersonal constructions as the following: *Hay comida en el frigo* ('There's food in the fridge'). It forms several modal periphrases, expressing obligation: *Hay que evitarlo* ('one has to avoid it'), or probability: *Ha de ser así* ('It must be that way'), etc.

<sup>3</sup> *ir*, except for its basic meanings, its used in periphrases expressing close future or intention: *Vamos a mudarnos de casa* ('We're going to move'), progressive course of events: *Voy mejorando* ('I'm getting better and better'), as well as in other expressions.

<sup>4</sup> *ser* is the 'be' used 1) with predicative complement: *Juan es médico* ('John is a doctor'); 2) in impersonal expressions: *Es tarde* ('It's late'); 3) in emphatic constructions: *Es Juana quien decide* ('It's Joanna who decides'); 4) as auxiliary in passive constructions: *La exposición fue inaugurada ayer* ('The exhibition was inaugurated yesterday'), and in a number of other expressions. It can mean 'exist', 'occur', 'become', etc.

<sup>5</sup> *tener* is 'have' in the sense of 'own', 'possess', and also 'receive', 'contain', 'hold', and is used in the modal periphrasis: *Tengo que protestar* ('I have to protest'), etc.

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 *The notion of subject raising*

This essay is concerned with two alternative constructions involving the so-called raising verb *parecer* ('seem') in Spanish, on one hand the impersonal type of construction, and on the other, the actual raising construction. Subject raising is not in any way unique to the Romance language group, but exists, for instance, in Germanic languages, such as English and Swedish, as well. Raising has received quite a lot of attention within generative grammar, with investigation focusing on English, while Spanish descriptive grammars in general do not mention this phenomenon. An example of a subject raising sentence is given in 1:

1.     Jorge           parecía           beber       demasiado.  
        Jorge         he.seemed       to.drink    too.much  
        'George seemed to drink too much'

As we can see, the predicate *beber demasiado* is not immediately preceded by a subject, which is normally necessary. The reason for the absence of the subject is, of course, that *Jorge*, the subject of *parecía beber demasiado*, is also the subject of *beber demasiado*. In other words, this is an instance of a subject with two predicates.<sup>6</sup>

The alternative construction to raising, involving a canonical subject, is what we can call an impersonal construction. Related to sentence 1 above, we have the following:

2.     Parecía         que     Jorge         bebía         demasiado.  
        it.seemed     that    Jorge         drank         too.much  
        'It seemed that George drank too much'

### 1.2 *Purpose*

This is an empirical investigation of the distribution of one and the other of the construction types in 1 and 2 above. Although it is often very difficult to distinguish the meaning of a raising sentence from the meaning of its impersonal alternative, these two constructions do not appear with the same frequency and not necessarily in the same linguistic contexts. Also, there are certain signs indicating that their distribution is inconsistent when it comes to grammatical features, such as person, number, tense, etc. The aim of this essay is, firstly, to delineate the internal distribution of these two construction types, and secondly, to define some of the factors that might govern the choice of one construction above the other.

The purpose of this work is *not* to find the theoretical approach which can best explain subject raising, nor to find weak points in grammatical theories. I am not adopting any particular theory, though the vocabulary I use is taken from generative grammar and I will present the theoretical explanation to subject raising of the latest generative approach, the Minimalist Programme (MP). Generative grammar will not be a guiding star which my explanations must necessarily follow, but will rather function as the base from which I start out and to which I relate my ideas. It will not keep me from considering thoughts that are outside of the generative framework.

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<sup>6</sup> Borsley: 91.

### 1.3 *Material and method*

The material consists mainly of corpus concordances, with some additional information obtained through informant interviews. The corpus selected for the project was Corpus del Español, created by Professor Mark Davies at Brigham Young University<sup>7</sup>. This is an unusually comprehensive corpus, with a total number of 100 million words (9314 texts): 20 million from the 1200s – 1400s, 40 million from the 1500s – 1700s and 40 million from the 1800s – 1900s. The 20 million words from the 1900s are divided between three genres: literature, oral texts, and newspaper / encyclopaedic texts. The determining factor for choosing this corpus was the possibility of using special search expressions (partly regular expressions, but not altogether), which allow the user to look for specific grammatical categories. This kind of search was not possible in, for instance, the corpus of the Royal Spanish Academy (RAE) (!).

#### 1.3.1 *Corpus-search work*

Even though the search tools of the corpus were very useful in comparison to those of other corpora, there were still some things that it could not do. The one limitation which had the greatest consequences for the study, was the impossibility of searching for expressions where the wanted words stood further apart than with one word in between. This was a great disadvantage, because most of the impersonal cases have two or more words between *parecer que* and the adjacent verb. Most often, these words are nouns with longer complements (a), but also inserted subordinate clauses may occur (b):

- 3a. Parecía que la chica (de 16 años) había venido al país ilegalmente.  
 det.verkade att den flicka på 16 år hade kommit till.det land illegalt  
 'Det verkade som om (den 16-åriga) flickan hade kommit till landet illegalt'
- b. Parece que, aunque me he cuidado bien, me he puesto enfermo.  
 det.verkar att fastän mig jag.har skött bra mig jag.har satt sjuk  
 'Det verkar som att jag, fastän jag har skött mig bra, har blivit sjuk'

Of course it was statistically important to know the total number of impersonal sentences with *parecer*, whether they had two, several or no words at all between *que* and the following verb. The convenient lemma search function made this possible. I could just type in [parecer.\* que] to get every form of *parecer* in different spellings<sup>8</sup>, followed by *que*, and from there I could easily sort out the unwanted matches. Since I could not search and obtain the figures for every adjacent verb form in all these cases, I let the examples where *que* is immediately followed by the verb form represent the total number of cases in the closer analysis of adjacent verbs, grammatical features, etc.<sup>9</sup>.

The same thing was done with the raising constructions (henceforth RC), that is, counting only the cases where *parecer* is immediately followed by the infinitive form: [parecer.\* que] gave all these cases. For the total number I also wanted the examples where an adverb appears between the words<sup>10</sup>, like in 4:

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.corpusdelespanol.org>

<sup>8</sup> Up until the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the spelling of *parecer* alternated between *parecer*, *parescer*, *pareçer* and *pareşcer*.

<sup>9</sup> A further limitation was only to analyse sentences with simple verb forms.

<sup>10</sup> An adverb is the only element which can intervene here.

4. Los niños parecían no saber adónde iban.  
 de barn de.verkade inte veta vart de.gick  
 'Barnen verkade inte veta vart de var på väg'

The additional search: [parecer.\* \*.ADV \*.V\_INF], gave those examples, including some abundant cases.

To obtain impersonal examples for closer analysis, I entered: [parece/parece/pareçe/pareçe que \*.V\_PRESENT], and got all the cases with a *parece que* (present tense) followed by a verb form also conjugated for the present tense. Still with *parecer* in the present tense I went through all the remaining tenses for the adjacent verb. Thereafter, I put *parecer* in all the remaining tenses, and for every tense I went through all tenses for the following verb.

Unfortunately, it was not possible to search for individual persons and numbers, so these consequently had to be sorted out by hand from the list after every search.

The ranking did not sort for person and number either, but depended solely on the number of occurrences of every individual form, why also this sorting had to be done by hand.

### 1.3.2 Informant interviews

The informant interview consisted of a collection of 30 sentence pairs, and was made for two Romance target languages: Spanish and Catalan. The phrases were invented by me myself, with variation in person, number and tense: 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular and plural in present tense, simple perfective preterit, imperfective preterit, future and conditional. The sentence pairs were composed so that the first sentence was an impersonal construction (henceforth IC), and the second was the corresponding RC.

This material was given to one native speaker of Spanish (Argentina) and two native speakers of Catalan (Barcelona, Girona). The task of the informants was to evaluate the naturalness of the sentences, with a grade out of a four-level scale: 1: very natural, 2: rather natural, 3: not very natural, 4: not natural. Due to dialectal differences between the Catalan informants, and a contrast between the Castilian Spanish used in the task and the Argentinean Spanish of this informant, they were allowed to change the words (not the grammatical construction), so that the choice of words seemed natural to them, before they judged the naturalness of the IC and RC. If I had not allowed this manoeuvre, some word which was not at all relevant to the study could have influenced on the judgement.

The informants were also asked to comment how they perceived the examples, for instance in what context they would use a sentence, if they considered there to be a difference in meaning between the members of a pair, etc.

All three informants were university students, one of Arts and two with scientific careers. None of them were used to any advanced linguistic analysis of their mother tongue.

## 2. Subject raising in the Minimalist Programme

To get a theoretical overview of our matter of interest, I will, in the following paragraph, present what the Minimalist Programme (MP), the latest version of generative grammar, has to say about it.<sup>11</sup>

### 2.1 General features of subject raising

Raising is thus a process through which an argument is removed from its predicate, giving a complement which does not look like a sentence. The argument, which semantically belongs to the complement clause, is placed in a position with a grammatical relation (e.g. subject or object) to the matrix predicate. In other words, there is a movement of an argument from a lower to a higher sentence, which is why it is called raising.<sup>12</sup>

What we are dealing with here is subject raising<sup>13</sup>, that is, raising of a complement subject to main-clause-subject position, as we can observe comparing (5a) with (b); in (b), *los niños* has been raised:

- 5a. **Parece** [ *que los niños* odian el café ].  
 it.seems. that the children they.hate the coffee  
 ‘It seems that children hate coffee’
- b. *Los niños* **parecen** [ odiar el café ].  
 the children they.seem to.hate the coffee  
 ‘The children seem to hate coffee’

The verbs in bold-print above have a *que*-clause (*that*-clause) complement in (a) and an infinitive complement in (b). What is special about these examples is that the words in italics, which is the subject of the bracketed complement clause in (a), has suddenly become the subject of the matrix clause, i.e. the clause containing the complement clause, in (b). Thus, *los niños* is the subject of *odian* in (a), but the subject of *parecen* in (b)<sup>14</sup>. The bracketed infinitive complement in (b), though, seems to have no subject.

To explain how the complement-clause subject in (a) becomes the matrix-clause subject in (b) and how the complement clause in (b) ends up without a subject, MP supposes that *los niños* is originally the subject of the complement clause, i.e. of *odian*, and is then raised, by application of subject raising, to become matrix-clause subject, i.e. subject of *parecen*. When *los niños* is raised, it leaves behind an empty category trace in the complement-clause-subject position.<sup>15</sup>

The DP *los niños* in (6) originates as the subject of *odiar*, then raises to become the first subject of *parecen*. This movement, subject raising, leaves an empty category trace as the subject of the complement clause, and the raising predicate *parecer* takes such infinitive complements with trace subjects.

(6) illustrates the MP explanation to how the subject becomes raised:

<sup>11</sup> This description has been made following Radford (2): 134-141. The examples have been partly changed and adapted to Spanish.

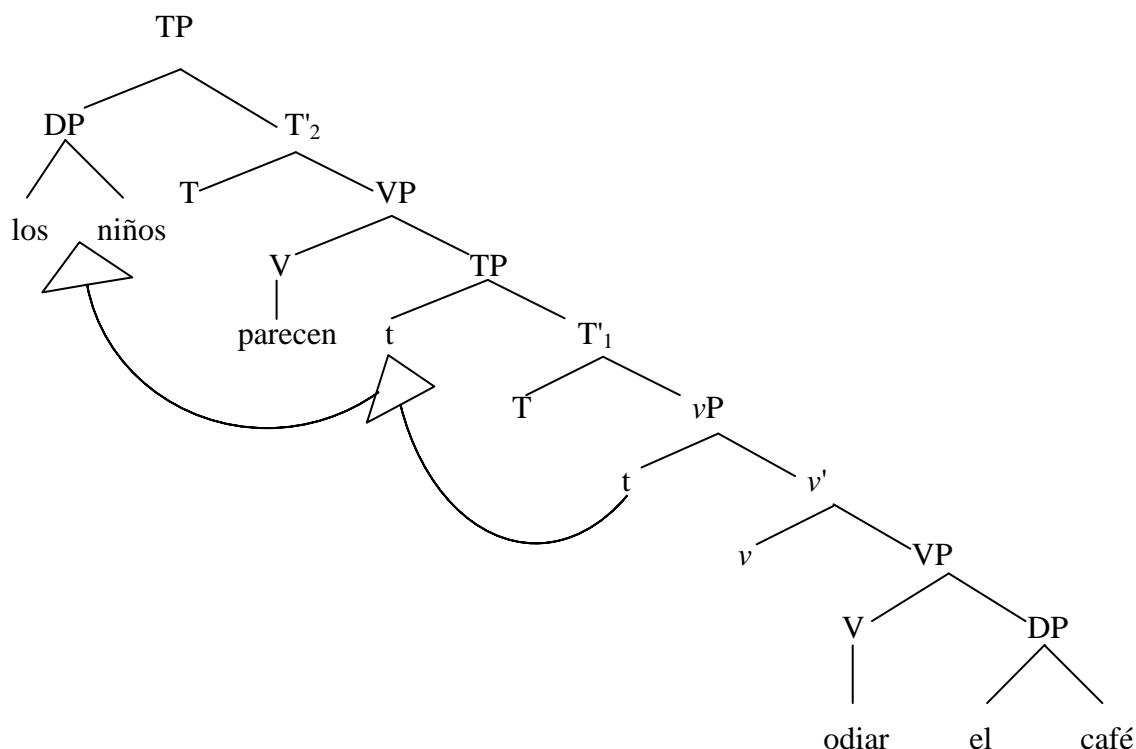
<sup>12</sup> Shopen: 68-71.

<sup>13</sup> Other terms that have been used in descriptive grammar are ‘shifting of subject’ (Poutsma) and ‘split subject’ (Jespersen) (Radford (1): 436).

<sup>14</sup> This is obvious due to the subject agreement suffixes person, except in 3<sup>rd</sup> person, where the form coincides with the impersonal form.

<sup>15</sup> Radford (2): 334-336.

6. Los niños parecen odiar el café.  
 the children they.seem to.hate the coffee  
 'The children seem to hate coffee'



The elements of the sentence merge recursively from the bottom upwards. The verb *odiar* merges with its DP complement *el café* to form the VP *odiar el café*. This VP merges with *v* to form a *v'*, which then merges with the subject *los niños*, forming a *vP*. At the *vP* stage, a theta-role is assigned to the subject *los niños*. The subject still has to move upwards, though, to check its case. The merging process goes on up to *T'*<sub>1</sub>, with which *los niños* merges a second time (Move). It still cannot check its case though, since this Spec-TP position lacks case and is therefore defective. At the second Spec-TP, the subject can check its case though, and merges with the *T'*<sub>2</sub> to form the ultimate TP.

The conclusion of this reasoning is that raising predicates like *parecer* have an infinitive complement with a trace subject (since the subject of *parecer* serves as the subject of the infinitive complement before being raised).

## 2.2 How do we know it is a raising predicate?

MP points out that raising verbs like *parecer* have a very different syntax from control predicates like *intentar* ('try') which take an infinitive complement with a PRO subject, as in (7) below:

7. Los niños intentarán [ PRO beber el café ].  
 the children they.will.try to.drink the coffee  
 'The children will try to drink the coffee'

Here, PRO has a controller (= *los niños*) in the *intentarán* clause. It is important to know how we can tell that a given verb which selects a seemingly subjectless infinitive complement is a



raising predicate and not a control predicate, and to explain the differences between these predicates.

One difference is that raising verbs like *parecer* allow a dummy (expletive) subject, whereas control verbs like *intentar* do not. If we look at the impersonal construction in English and Swedish, we can see that the dummy subject is explicit; in (8) they appear in bold:<sup>16</sup>

- 8 a. **It** seemed that George drank too much.
- b. **Det** verkade som om / att Göran drack för mycket.  
 it seemed like if that Göran drank too much  
 ‘It seemed that George drank too much’

In Spanish, the dummy subject is implicit. The Spanish raising verb (just like all impersonal verbs<sup>17</sup>) is inflected for 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular.<sup>18</sup> In English and Swedish, dummy *it* appears in the theta-role free subject position, while in Spanish there is simply a  $\emptyset$  appearing there, cf. (9).

9. Pareció haber alguien viviendo allí.  
 there.seemed to.be someone living there  
 ‘There seemed to be someone living there’

The derivation of (9) is straightforward: the implicit dummy subject (corresponding to *there* in the English translation) is originally the subject of *haber*, then it is raised to become the subject of *pareció*, and finally the subject of the abstract constituent preceding *parecer*, in MP denominated T. One reason why a control verb like *intentar* does not allow an expletive subject to be the controller of PRO, like in (10),:

10. \*Intentó [ PRO haber una huelga ].  
 there.tried to.be a strike  
 ‘\*There tried to be a strike’

is that PRO is a referential pronoun, and therefore must be controlled by a referential expression. Since a dummy subject is non-referential, it cannot control PRO as the subject of a control predicate like *intentar*, which selects an infinitive complement with a PRO subject. Thus, the subject of *intentar* must always be referential.

Another reason has to do with thematic rolls. *Intentar* assigns the theta-role AGENT to its subject, and so requires a subject referring to a rational being. With the dummy subject in (10), *intentar* will not have an AGENT subject. *Parecer*, on the other hand, does not theta-mark its subject<sup>19</sup>, i.e. does not require an AGENT or EXPERIENCER subject, and therefore allows a dummy subject.

Accordingly, a control predicate does not take just any subject, but only an entity which can think rationally, as we see comparing (11a) with (b), whereas a raising verb does not restrict its choice of subject, cf. (c) and (d).

<sup>16</sup> The comparisons between Spanish, English and Swedish are my own.

<sup>17</sup> The typical example of an impersonal verb is *Llueve* (*It rains*), where an explicit subject is inconceivable. This must be distinguished from the normal Spanish subject omission, which is always optional: *She cleaned off the table* → *Limpió la mesa / Ella limpió la mesa* (the subject (pronoun) is normally explicit only when you want to emphasize it, or when there is a risk of confusion with other 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular subjects), in contrast to *\*El tiempo llueve*, or something similar, which is impossible.

<sup>18</sup> This happens in English as well, and would have been the case also in Swedish, if verb inflection of this type had still existed.

<sup>19</sup> In this respect, raising predicates resemble auxiliaries.

- 11a. Tu teoría parece ser probada.  
 your theory it.seems to.be proved  
 'Your theory seems to be proved'
- b. !Tu teoría intentó ser probada.  
 your theory it.tried to.be proved  
 'Your theory tried to be proved'
- c. Juan parece entender el problema.  
 Juan he.seems to.understand the problem  
 'John seems to understand the problem'
- d. Juan intentó entender el problema.  
 Juan he.tried to.understand the problem  
 'John tried to understand the problem'

The essential difference between control and raising predicates is, again, that the former theta-mark their subjects, while the latter do not. This, of course, explains why *parecer* can function as a raising predicate but not a control predicate and why the opposite is true of *intentar*. Assignment of theta-roles is constrained by a UG<sup>20</sup> principle (**theta-criterion**), saying that *Each argument bears one and only one theta-role, and each theta-role is assigned one and only one argument*. Considering this criterion, let us look at the following sentence pair:

- 12a. Juan parece conocer inglés.  
 Juan he.seems to.speak English  
 'John seems to speak English'
- b. Juan pretende conocer inglés.  
 Juan he.pretends to.speak English  
 'John pretends to speak English'

If *parecer* is a raising predicate, *Juan* will originally be the subject of *conocer inglés* in (12a) and can be given the right theta-role (EXPERIENCER argument of *conocer*). *Juan* will then be raised in a successive cyclic fashion to become the subject of *parece conocer inglés*, as shown in (13).

13. [ TP Juan [ VP parece [ TP t [ VP t [ VP conocer inglés]]]] ]
- 

Assuming that raising predicates do not theta-mark their subjects, the only theta-role *Juan* will have is that of EXPERIENCER of *conocer* (satisfying the theta-criterion). MP supposes that *Juan* has to raise for reasons of **greed**<sup>21</sup>.

Let us consider what would happen if we tried to use *parecer* as a control predicate. *Juan* would start as the subject of *parecer* and be the controller of the PRO subject of *conocer inglés*.

14. [ TP Juan [ VP parece [ TP PRO [ VP [ conocer inglés]]]] ]

<sup>20</sup> UG = Universal Grammar.

<sup>21</sup> **Greedy** implies a subject moving only the minimal distance required in order to get into a position where it can check its nominative case.

The complement-clause subject PRO would be EXPERIENCER of *conocer inglés*. The subject of *parecer*, *Juan* would have no theta-role at all, though. Therefore, the derivation in (14) violates the theta-criterion.

Passing over to the sentence in (12b), *Juan pretende conocer inglés*, we suppose that *pretender* ('pretend') is a control predicate, and *Juan* is the subject of *pretende*, which controls the PRO subject of *conocer inglés*:

15. [ TP Juan [ VP t [ VP pretende [ TP PRO [ VP [ VP conocer inglés]]]]]]
- 

PRO will be EXPERIENCER of *conocer* and the nominal *Juan* AGENT of *pretende* (originating as the subject of *pretende*). Since PRO and *Juan* each have their own theta-roles, the criterion is satisfied.

If we try to use *pretender* as a raising predicate, *Juan* will be the subject of *conocer inglés*, then raise to subject of *pretende conocer inglés*.

16. [ TP Juan [ VP t [ VP pretende [ TP t [ VP t [ VP conocer inglés]]]]]]
- 

What is problematic here is that *Juan* gets two theta-roles, EXPERIENCER of *conocer* and AGENT of *pretende*. This is an obvious violation of the theta-criterion.

### 2.3 A special Spanish construction

Spanish constructions with raising predicate share most of their characteristics with English and Swedish ones. There is one variant, though, which seems to be specific for Spanish. In English, the construction *Juliet<sub>i</sub> it seems [CP that [e<sub>i</sub> loves Romeo]]* is quite impossible; however, the construction in 17 is very common in spoken Spanish, as we will see later in this essay:

- 17a. Julia<sub>i</sub> parece [ CP que [e<sub>i</sub> ama a Romeo ]].  
 Julia it.seems that she.loves OBJ.MARK. Romeo  
*lit.* 'Juliet it seems that she loves Romeo'
- b. Tú parece que amas a Romeo.

In third person (a) it looks like *parece* has two subjects, but in (b) it stands clear that *parecer* is not conjugated for *Julia* or *tú*, that is, these nominals have not actually been raised to become subject of the main clause; the construction is still impersonal, with an implicit dummy subject. Therefore, this kind of construction does not cause a problem for the MP. Still, there are similarities (both structural and functional) with a RC: a movement process has taken place, by which the subject of the subordinate clause has been topicalised and moved to the beginning of the main clause, where the subject usually appears. The grammatical structure of the sentence has not been changed, though, i.e. the topic does not function as the subject (see further 3.4.1).

### 3. Results

After giving a theoretical background to raising, I will now get to the chief purpose of this work: to delineate the internal distribution of IC and RC, as well as defining some of the factors that might govern the selection of one of them above the other.

#### 3.1 *The total numbers*

Following the procedures described in section 1.3.1, I obtained a total of about 25 000 impersonal examples, to be compared with around 7000 raising sentences. In the following paragraphs, there will be a thorough analysis of the circumstances surrounding these figures.

#### 3.2 *Factors to take into account*

There is a number of possible factors that are likely to influence on the choice between IC and RC. Here is a list of the aspects that appear to be the most important to take into account, and some corresponding questions that might be useful when trying to justify the choice of expression:

- semantic factors:            Could there be some difference in meaning between IC and RC, which can justify the choice of one of them?
- syntactic factors:            Is there a grammatical justification for the choice of expression?; does the grammatical context, i.e. the syntactic structure of the sentence, favour it?
- diachronic and stylistic factors:    Could there be a diachronic aspect to it?; i.e. is the expression chosen more in harmony with the age and stylistic level of the text?
- economy factors:            Is there some sort of economic justification, e.g. to save space in the text, to save time or to simplify for oneself in some other way?
- formal grammatical factors:    Do grammatical characteristics (person, number, tense / aspect / mood) of *parecer* and of the adjacentverb make it more likely to find either of the constructions?
- the ‘adjacent verb factor’:    Could the choice have something to do with which is the exact adjacent verb?; do some verbs appear more often with either expression?

In the following paragraphs I will go through these factors in turn.

#### 3.3 *Semantic factors*

When considering what might influence on the choice of the impersonal- or the raising-sentence structure, the first assumption is that there is some more or less subtle difference in meaning between the two. This appears to be true in some cases, at least.

### 3.3.1 General impression versus subject emphasis

The most general comment among the informants had to do with what they considered as a difference in point of view between the impersonal and the raising type of construction. Three of the sentence pairs to which the Catalan informants attributed this difference were the following:

- 18a. Em digué en Jordi que semblava que jo estava enfadada amb ell.  
to.me he.said the Jordi that it.seemed that I I.was angry with him  
'George said to me that it seemed that I was angry with him'
- b. Em digué en Jordi que jo semblava estar enfadada amb ell.  
to.me he.said the Jordi that I I.seemed to.be angry with him  
'George said to me that I seemed to be angry with him'
- 19a. Si li telefono ja, semblarà que no puc esperar.  
if to.him/her I.call already it.will.seem that not I.can wait  
'If I call him/her already, it will seem that I can't wait'
- b. Si li telefono ja, semblaré no poder esperar.  
if to.him/her I.call already I.will.seem not to.be.able.to wait  
'If I call him/her already, I will seem not to be able to wait.'
- 20a. Si li dius això, semblarà que no entens res.  
if to.him/her you.say that it.will.seem that not you.understand nothing  
'If you tell him/her that, it will seem that you don't understand anything'
- b. Si li dius això, semblaràs no entendre res.  
if to.him/her you.say that you.will.seem not to.understand nothing  
'If you tell him/her that, you will seem not to understand anything'

The impersonal (a) constructions are considered by the informants to say something about the situation in general, while the raising (b) sentences rather emphasize the perspective of the subject of the clause (though they did not put it in technical terms). One informant said about (18b) that it “emphasizes that *I* was angry with him”, about (19) that (a) is “more general” and (b) “is like I can't contain myself”, (20a) is “normal” and (b) is more like “I am saying that you're a fool”. Raising gives the impression that the subject is taking a more active part in the ‘action’ of *semblar*. This is of course explained by the fact that subject raising is exactly what it is all about: in the raising sentences there is a personal subject, with *semblar* conjugated for it, while the IC is precisely impersonal, and therefore not focusing on any element of the clause in particular. The raising subject, though, is not only grammatically the subject of this *semblar*, but is also perceived as the subject semantically.

Though the comments above were made by the Catalan informants, exactly the same is true of Spanish, and even of English and Swedish, if we compare the pairs (21a-b), (c-d) and (e-f) below:

- 21a. Me dijo Jorge que parecía que yo estaba enfadada con él.  
to.me he.said Jorge that it.seemed that I I.was angry with him  
'George said to me that it seemed that I was angry with him'
- b. Me dijo Jorge que yo parecía estar enfadada con él.  
to.me he.said Jorge that I I.seemed to.be angry with him  
'George said to me that I seemed to be angry with him'

- c. Göran sade till mig, att det verkade som om jag var arg på honom.  
Göran said to me that it seemed like if I was angry with him  
'George said to me that it seemed that I was angry with him'
- d. Göran sade till mig, att jag verkade vara arg på honom.  
Göran said to me that I seemed to be angry with him  
'George said to me that I seemed to be angry with him'
- e. George said to me that it seemed that I was angry with him.
- f. George said to me that I seemed to be angry with him.

### 3.3.2 *No periphrastic meaning of ir + a + infinitive with raising*

Raising can not be combined with the periphrasis<sup>22</sup> *ir + a + infinitive* ('to be going to'), as we can see comparing the (22a) with the (b) sentences below:

- 22a. Parece que va a ser poco creíble ese político.  
it.seems that he.goes to be little trustworthy that politician  
'It seems that he won't be very trustworthy, this politician'
- b. \*Parece ir a ser poco creíble ese político.  
he.seems to.go to be little trustworthy that politician  
'?He seems not to be going to be very trustworthy, this politician'
- 23a. Pareció que iba a llorar.  
it.seemed that he/she.went to cry  
'It seems that he/she was going to cry'
- b. \*Pareció ir a llorar.  
he/she.seemed to.go to cry  
'He/she seemed to be going to cry'

The impossibility of the (b) examples above has nothing to do with the subject-raising process itself. The problem is that what is supposed to be the infinitive form of this periphrasis does not assign the periphrastic meaning. This periphrasis actually does not work in any other tenses than present and imperfective preterit<sup>23</sup>, so if we tried to put it in some other tense, like the perfective preterit (simple or compound): *Parece que fue a llorar* or *Parece que ha ido a llorar*, these constructions will not assign the periphrastic meaning 'It seems that he was going to cry', but would rather be interpreted literally, i.e. like 'It seems that he walked off to cry'. This is the reason why the verb *ir* is so much more frequently represented in IC than in RC: one of its most common uses is not available in the infinitive form, which is the form that a RC requires for its adjacent verb.

<sup>22</sup> A unit of two or more verbs (one conjugated and one infinitive verb form), sometimes conjoined by a connective particle, which together function like one single verb, with some additional semantic nuance, aspectual or modal, e.g.: *ir creciendo* (to successively be growing), *andar riéndose* (to walk around laughing), *ir a hacer* (to be about to do), *tener que comer* (to have to eat), etc.

<sup>23</sup>

### 3.3.3 Impersonal construction with indirect object expressing opinion

Often, the IC of *parecer* with indirect object has a slightly different meaning than otherwise, namely more of ‘having an opinion’ in the stronger sense (in contrast to just ‘perceiving’).

24a. A mí, me pareció que hay muchísimo que hacer en Costa Rica.  
to.me to.me it.seemed that there.is very much that do in Costa Rica  
‘It seemed to me / I thought / that there is a lot to do in Costa Rica’

b. Cuando mis hijos eran pequeños, eso querían de la comida.  
when my children were little this they.wanted of the food  
‘When my children were little, this was the food they wanted’

Me parece que es lo principal para su desarrollo.  
to.me it.seems that it.is the most.important for their development  
‘I think that it is the most important thing for their development’

c. Le parecerá que es bien suave la pena  
to.him it.will.seem that it.is well soft the punishment

que la ley impone al que roba.  
that the law imposes on.him who steals  
‘He will think that the punishment that law imposes on someone who steals, is very light’

Since raising cannot be combined with an indirect object, as we will see in the next paragraph, there is no corresponding raising alternative for this stronger sense of *parecer*.

### 3.4 Syntactic factors

There are some syntactic contexts where the two constructions behave differently, and therefore are not directly interchangeable.

#### 3.4.1 No raising with indirect object

A very clear tendency is that raising never occurs in combination with *parecer* (25a) taking an indirect object (except for the special ‘half-raising’ type we will see in 3.8.2). These examples are all given the lowest grade by the informants: (4) not natural. The impersonal version (b) is totally accepted, though, and all the informants, on several occasions, even wanted to add a 1s indirect object pronoun to the impersonal constructions.

25a. ??Me parezco estar enfermo, porque estoy muy pálido.  
to.me I.seem to.be ill because I.am very pale  
*lit.* ‘I seem to me to be ill, because I’m very pale’

b. Me parece que estoy enfermo, porque tengo mucho frío.  
to.me it.seems that I.am ill because I.have much cold  
*lit.* ‘It seems to me that I am ill, because I feel very cold’

In first person this could, again, be explained by the fact that the raising sentence gives a point of view more closely bound to the subject. A situation, a general impression, is more likely to “seem to me”, than me giving myself an impression of myself.

More of a challenge, however, is to explain why raising with indirect object never occurs in other persons either. (26a) is very common in the corpus, while there are no instances of examples such as (b) and (c).

- 26a. Me parece que tienes conocimientos de lenguas extranjeras.  
 to.me it.seems that you.have knowledge of languages foreign  
 'It seems to me that you have knowledge of foreign languages'
- b. ??Me pareces estar enfermo porque estás muy pálido.  
 to.me you.seem to.be ill because you.are very pale  
*lit.* 'You seem to me to be ill, because you are '
- c. ??A tu profesor, le pareces tener buenos conocimientos del inglés.  
 to your teacher to.him you.seem to.have good knowledge of.the English  
 'You seem to your teacher to have a good knowledge of English'

In the (b) and (c) examples above, there should be no semantic problem, but when these sentences were tested on a native Spanish associate professor, they were unconditionally refused<sup>24</sup> (see further 3.8.2)

### 3.4.2 Topicalization and raising

The following explanation is in a way backward thinking from a generative grammatical point of view. There, topicalization is a consequence of raising and can therefore never be seen as the cause of it. That leads to a limitation in the possibilities of explaining the choice of construction. I will now explain how topicalization might in fact be the cause of raising.

Let us consider the existence of a common colloquial alternative construction (mentioned in 2.2), which is still impersonal<sup>25</sup>, though the subject of the subordinate clause has been moved to a position of topic in the main clause, a position where the subject usually appears. Thus, a clause beginning with a topic could either be a RC, where the topic has been raised to become the grammatical subject of *parecer* (27), or an IC, where the subject of the subordinate clause has been topicalized and appears in main-clause-subject position, but without actually being the subject of *parecer*.

- 27a. La palabra parecía salir abollada después de un difícil viaje.  
 the word it.seemed to.come.out crumpled after of a hard journey  
 'The word seemed to come out crumpled after a hard journey'
- b. Dicha relación afectiva parece ser de gran ayuda para los autistas.  
 said relation affective it.seems to.be of great help for the autistic.people  
 'The given affective relation seems to be a great help to autistic people'
- 28a. Este fenómeno parece que puede revestir una enorme trascendencia.  
 this phenomenon it.seems that it.can cover an enormous importance  
*lit.* 'This phenomenon, it seems that it can be of enormous importance'
- b. Este espiral... parece que va hacia abajo, de derrotas para el PAN.  
 this spiral it.seems that it.goes towards down of defeats for the PAN  
 'This spiral... it seems that it's going downwards, to a defeat for PAN'

<sup>24</sup> Nevertheless, the informant pointed out the possibility of deleting the indirect object pronoun *me* to get an acceptable sentence.

<sup>25</sup> This is proved by the fact that *parecer* is conjugated in 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, and so does not agree with the topic (see 30d).



- c. Incluso la justificación de la urgencia parece que es acertada.  
 even the justification of the urgency it.seems that it.is successfull  
*lit.* ‘Even the justification of the urgency, it seems that it’s successful’
- d. Los vecinos parece que se han ido, porque nunca los veo.  
 the neighbours it.seems that themselves they.have gone because never them I.see

And how does this lead me to claiming that topicalization causes raising (and not the other way around, as we would usually assume to be the case)?

Let me take my own use of raising in this essay as an example, (a) and (c):

- 29a. Both curves seem to follow each other upwards.
- b. Ambas curvas parecen correr paralelas hacia arriba.
- c. The infinitive complement seems to have no subject.
- d. El complemento infinitivo parece no tener sujeto.

and assume that I had written this text in Spanish, like in (b) and (d). When I write these sentences, I will not produce them in my head first and then say them; I will know that I want to say something about a nominal, in these cases *ambas curvas* and *el complemento infinitivo*. It will therefore be natural for me to start with these words, and not until after that I realized that I wanted to use the raising verb *parecer*. Since I have already started the sentence with a topic, a RC with the topic as the subject will be a natural result.<sup>26</sup> I could also have chosen to say: *El complemento infinitivo parece que no tiene sujeto*, where the nominal is just topicalized and not raised to subject, but that did not come to mind, since such a construction does not belong to the writing sphere of language.

This way of reasoning probably works best for written language, since spoken language does not leave much room for saying one word and then thinking. It is also proved that raising is much more common in newspaper texts than in oral texts (see 3.5.2).

The essence of my argumentation is that topicalization of a nominal leaves two alternatives: a RC or the construction which we can call ‘impersonal topicalization’. In written language topicalization is more likely to lead to a RC, since the other one is part of a more informal (spoken) linguistic sphere.

The same phenomenon can be observed in relative clauses, where the relativized nominal has obviously appeared already, in the previous clause:

- 30a. Lo miró con un aire que parecía decir: “Qué os importa?”  
 him he.looked.at with an expression which seemed to.say what to.you it.matters  
 ‘He/she looked at him with an expression which seemed to say: “What does it matter to you?”’
- b. La chica allí, que parece buscar la atención de todo el mundo,  
 the girl over.there who she.seems to.look.for the attention of all the world  
 es la novia de mi hermano.<sup>27</sup>  
 she.is the girlfriend of my brother  
 ‘The girl over there, who seems to look for everyone’s attention, is my brother’s girlfriend’

<sup>26</sup> An IC would in this case require a re-writing of the sentence: *El complemento infinitivo... → Parece que el complemento infinitivo no tiene sujeto; ...ambas curvas... → Parece que ambas curvas corren paralelas hacia arriba.*

<sup>27</sup> Compare these with the impersonal alternative: “...un aire que parecía que decía...” and “La chica allí, que parece que busca la atención...”.

In this case we cannot speak of topicalization, since the head must precede its relative clause; there is no alternative. The use of impersonal construction in relativization (let us call it an ‘impersonal relativization’) has the same distribution as the impersonal topicalization, i.e. it is limited to, first and foremost, spoken language:

- 31a. Aquellas mujeres, que parece que son hermanas, no se conocen.  
 those women that it.seems that they.are sisters not each.other know  
 ‘Those women, who seem to be sisters, don’t know each other’

### 3.5 Diachronic and stylistic factors

#### 3.5.1 Frequency of impersonal and raising constructions over the years

Historical development is another important factor. Language use has not been constant over the years. The variation is obvious both in the historical distribution of each construction, and in the frequency of different adjacent verbs. In 3.7 I will present tables of how the top ten adjacent verbs in IC and RC have varied over the centuries. Tables 1 and 2 below show how the frequency of the constructions has developed.

	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s – total
<b>Nr.</b>	226	324	1281	5177	3192	2075	3386	4607
	6,905,000	2,820,000	8,515,000	18,001,000	12,746,000	10,263,000	20,465,000	20,350,000
<b>‰</b>	0,3	1,1	1,5	2,9	2,5	2,0	1,7	2,3

Table 1. Occurrence of impersonal examples for each century. The topmost line shows the number of occurrences. The next line indicates the total number of words from each century in the corpus. On the bottom line we find the per mil that the number of occurrences represent out of the total number of words.

	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s – total
<b>Nr.</b>	8	39	442	1534	420	470	2050	2500
	6,905,000	2,820,000	8,515,000	18,001,000	12,746,000	10,263,000	20,465,000	20,350,000
<b>‰</b>	0,01	0,1	0,5	0,9	0,3	0,5	1	1,2

Table 2. Occurrence of raising examples for each century.

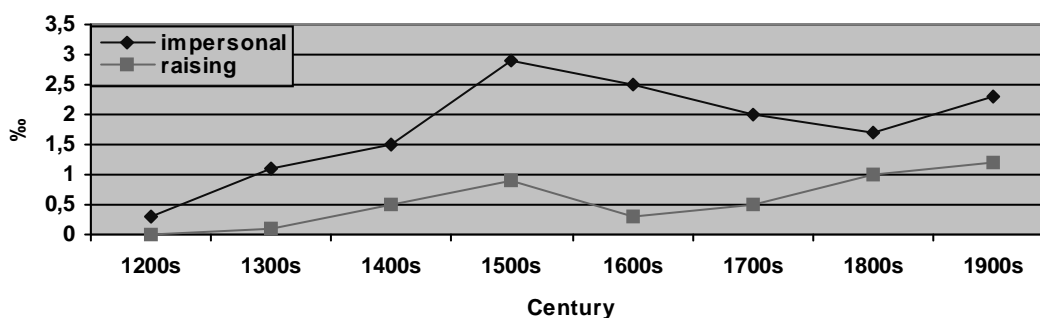


Diagram 1. Historical frequency development of both constructions (%o of the total number of words for each century).

These tables give us some quite interesting results, which are illustrated in diagram 1. The diagram gives us a developmental curve for both constructions (illustrating the %o line in

the tables). It shows us the advantage of the IC in every moment of history, reaching its highest point in the 1600s. Both constructions reached a top in the 1500s; in the case of the IC it has never been so common since. The IC had a quick rise up until the 1500s, then had a less abrupt downfall which turned upwards again in the 1800s. The RC grew very evenly between the 1300s–1500s, then had a sharp fall towards the 1600s, and since then it has grown steadily, to be slightly more frequent nowadays than in the 1500s.

The bumpiness of these curves is a bit surprising, and without further examination of the types of texts appearing, it is impossible to decide whether such circumstances might influence, or if it is all about variations in linguistic fashion.

### 3.5.2 *A stylistic perspective: over-representation of raising in newspaper texts*

Another question is, if there is some stylistic connection between the type of text and the choice of construction. Could the stylistic level be a factor in the election of expression? For the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the texts are divided between literature, oral texts and newspapers / encyclopaedias. So, let us have a look at the differences in distribution between these three categories for each construction type.

	Impersonal construction (1900s)			Raising construction (1900s)		
Style	literature	oral texts	newspaper texts	literature	Oral texts	newspaper texts
Total	1264	2973	371	1357	340	803
%	17,8	41,8	5,2	19,1	4,8	11,3

Table 3. *Frequency of both constructions in different text styles of the 1900s. The upper line shows the number of appearances in the corpus, and the lower line shows the percentage that every section represents between IC and RC in total. The percentage line is illustrated in diagram 3 below.*

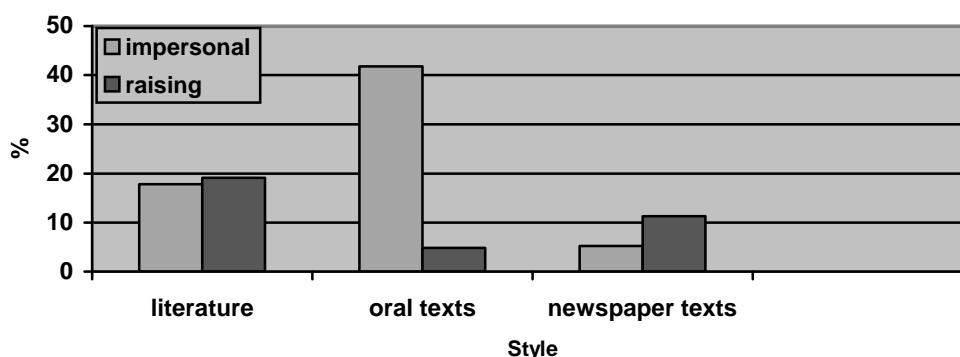


Diagram 3. *Distribution of impersonal and raising examples between different text styles of the 1900s.*

One stylistically interesting observation that table and diagram 3 have to offer, is the relative size of the newspaper section for impersonal and raising examples respectively. Among the impersonal examples, the newspapers make up a very small part, just about an eighth in relation to the oral texts, while, in the raising category, this section is actually more than twice as big as the oral section. From the diagram we can easily see that authors of literary texts use both constructions, with just a tiny preference for raising, whereas speakers totally discriminate the raising alternative, and among journalists the RC is at least twice as popular as the IC.

We can also observe another statistically important thing: the numeral advantage of the IC is only to be found in the oral text style (at least in the 20<sup>th</sup> century); in the other two sections the RC is actually more common than the IC.

In other words, there is without any doubt a stylistic aspect to the choice of expression. Then, what might be the reason for this stylistic distribution?

There could be a formality aspect to it (although we do not have any direct proof for this claim). Newspaper text is the most formal text style and the RC might have a more formal touch to it than the IC, an intuition which is supported by the fact that it is so underrepresented in oral texts, and is nearly always ranked lower in informant interviews (see 3.8.3). When judging the naturalness of the sentences, it is almost certain that the informants, probably unconsciously, will weigh their formality; the most informal alternative, which they are most likely to use in their own everyday speech, will be perceived as ‘more natural’.

In 3.4.2, we looked at topicalization as a raising promoter, although this is a controversial outlook from the generative standpoint. Assuming that this is the case, though, it seems very plausible that topicalization would be common in newspaper and encyclopaedic articles, which are constructed around topics. A high share of the sentences is likely to begin with a topicalized nominal, which then becomes the subject of a RC.

Finally, let us assume that there is also an economy factor intervening, which is what I will propose in the following section.

### 3.6 *Economy factors: raising as a space-saver*

Could it be that raising is used as a space-saving measure in newspaper and encyclopaedic articles, since it requires less graphic space than the impersonal alternative? If we compare (32a) and (b),

- 32a. Parece que los niños odian el café.
- b. Los niños parecen odiar el café.
- c. It seems that the children loathe coffee.
- d. The children seem to loathe coffee.
- e. Det verkar som om barnen avskyr kaffe.
- f. Barnen verkar avsky kaffe.

we notice that the RC (b) is slightly shorter than the IC (a). This will always be the case, since the RC saves one graphic word: *que*. The same is true of English, where we save *that* (and also *it*; on the other hand we add *to*). Swedish is the language which makes the greatest gain of space exchanging the IC for a RC; it saves three words: *det* and *som om*.<sup>28</sup>

An interpretation of the table and diagram above would be that the IC is chosen whenever there is room for it, firstly in spoken language, where raising is hugely inferior, and secondly in literature, where the distribution is about fifty-fifty, whereas in informative articles, which are loaded with facts and where space is valuable, raising is the most economical alternative. It is a well-known fact that journalists are often willing, or forced, to find quite drastic linguistic solutions to save a few high-cost words in their titles and texts. Therefore, it should not be too far-fetched to believe that raising has such a high representation in newspaper and encyclopaedic texts partly for having a shorter graphic form.

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<sup>28</sup> Of course there is also a variation in the length of the verb forms, according to whether they are infinite or finite, which person and number they agree with, etc.

### 3.7 Formal grammatical factors

An influence which was hard to weigh beforehand, was that of the grammatical characteristics and composition of the verb forms themselves, that is, of *parecer* and of the adjacent verb, in person, number, tense, etc.

#### 3.7.1 Distribution in tense

The combinations of tense that occur with any considerable frequency in the corpus are exposed in table 4. The percentages show the internal distribution between different tenses and combinations.

Nr.	Impersonal		Total <sup>29</sup>	%	Raising		Total	%
	Tense of <i>parecer</i>	Tense of adj. verb			Tense of <i>parecer</i>			
1	present	present	698	57,0	present	440	55,1	
2	present	perfective preterit	87	7,1	imperfective preterit	217	27,2	
3	present	imperfective preterit	80	6,5	perfective preterit	110	13,8	
4	perfective preterit	imperfective preterit	74	6,0	present subjunctive	18	2,3	
5	imperfective preterit	imperfective preterit	70	5,7	preterit subjunctive	5	0,6	
6	present	conditional	58	4,7	conditional	5	0,6	
7	present	future	45	3,7	future	3	0,4	
8	present	present subjunctive	24	2,0				
9	perfective preterit	conditional	19	1,5				
10	present	preterit subjunctive	17	1,4				
11	imperfective preterit	conditional	10	0,8				
12	present subjunctive	present	9	0,7				
		<b>Remaining</b>	35	2,9				

Table 4. Ranking order for combinations of tense in IC and for tense in RC (based on 3s forms of the most common adjacent verb ser).<sup>30</sup>

To compare the impersonal combinations of tense with the raising tenses, we will have to disregard the impersonal adjacent verb for a moment, and just look at the tense of *parecer*. A bigger part of the IC has a present tense *parecer* (82,4 %), in comparison to the RC (55,1 %). On the other hand, imperfective preterit is relatively more frequent in RC than in IC.

Apparently, a present tense *parecer* in an IC cannot only be combined with a present tense adjacent verb, but also with perfective and imperfective preterit, conditional, future, preterit and present subjunctive, etc. The same is true of *parecer* in other tenses; the adjacent verb does not have to be in the same tense as the matrix verb. All these double-tense combinations lack a raising alternative. Let us consider (34):

- 34a. Parece que Ana es víctima del asesinato. (present)  
 it.seems that Ana she.is victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana is victim of the murder'
- b. Parece que Ana fue víctima del asesinato. (perfective preterit)  
 it.seems that Ana she.became victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana became victim of the murder'

<sup>29</sup> Remember that these figures are only a representation of the total number of cases. In reality, the numeral difference between IC and RC is much bigger. The figures can only be compared within each construction (see 1.3.1).

<sup>30</sup> Looking at these data, we should have in mind that not any combination of tenses is semantically possible.

- c. Parece que Ana era víctima del asesinato. (imperfective preterit)  
 it.seems that Ana she.was victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana was victim of the murder'
- d. Parece que Ana fuera víctima del asesinato. (preterit subjunctive)  
 it.seems that Ana she.became/was victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana became/was victim of the murder'
- e. Parece que Ana sea víctima del asesinato. (present subjunctive)  
 it.seems that Ana she.is victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana is victim of the murder'
- f. Parece que Ana será víctima del asesinato. (future)  
 it.seems that Ana she.will.be victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana will be victim of the murder'
- g. Parece que Ana sería víctima del asesinato. (conditional)  
 it.seems that Ana she.would.be victim of.the murder  
 'It seems that Ana would be victim of the murder'
- 35a. Ana parece haber sido víctima del asesinato.  
 Ana she.seems to.have become/been victim of.the murder  
 'Ana seems to have become/been victim of the murder'
- b. Ana parece ser víctima del asesinato.<sup>31</sup>  
 Ana she.seems to.be victim of.the murder  
 'Ana seems to be/become victim of the murder'

(34a-f) are examples of all the possible combinations of tense in IC with present tense *parecer*. There is obviously a great amount of temporal, modal and aspectual differences that can be made combining one tense for *parecer* with another tense for the adjacent verb. When we try to find the corresponding raising sentences for all these combinations, we find that (b-d) would all be replaced by the raising alternative in (35a). This would not be the most accurate way of saying it, especially since there is an important semantic difference between (34b) and (c): (b) relates a change of state (becoming a victim) and (c) describes a state (being a victim). The RC corresponding to (34e) would be (35b) (which would also substitute (34a)). (34f-g), finally, cannot be expressed with a RC at all. Presumably, a speaker will more or less automatically choose the IC in those cases where a RC is not capable of transmitting the desired nuances of information.

Since the amount of possibilities is so different between the constructions, we cannot draw any conclusions from the figures only. We can assume, though, that distributional differences are partly due to the text style where each construction is mostly used: the IC is common in oral texts, where the present tense is likely to be more dominant than in other genres, whereas the imperfective preterite is probably more common in literature, where raising is big. We can also assume that raising is only an alternative in 'one-tense sentences', where it does not imply a semantic impoverishment.

<sup>31</sup> My statistics do not include differences between compound (perfective) infinitive, like *parece haber sido* ('it/he/she seems to have been'), and simple (imperfective) infinitive, *parece ser* ('it/he/she seems to be').

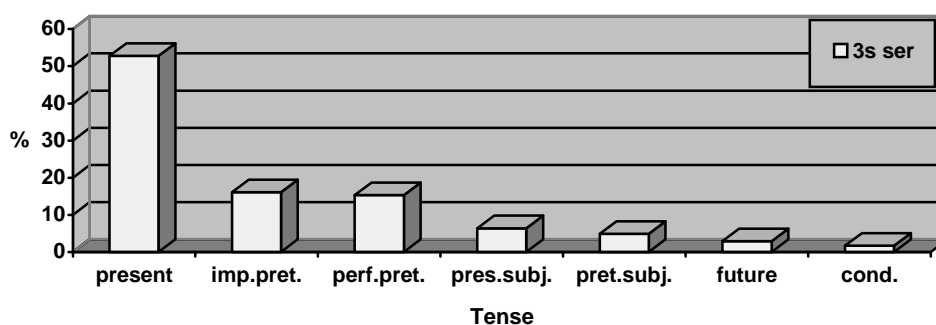


Diagram 4. Distribution between tenses for 3s forms of *ser* in the whole corpus.

Diagram 4 shows the distribution of 3s forms of the verb *ser* between tenses in the whole corpus. If we compare it with the raising (right) half of table 4, we find that the statistics are quite similar, which tells us that there is nothing extraordinary about the application of tenses in RC in relation to the language in general. For IC, this kind of comparison is hard to make.

### 3.7.2 Distributional differences related to person

The way that IC and RC are distributed in person and number is illustrated in diagrams (5) and (6). Looking first at the material as a whole, it is easy to see that only 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular (and, secondly, plural) represent any considerable figures. This is true of all the possible combinations of tense/aspect/mood.

Diagram (7) shows the distribution of present tense forms in the corpus as a whole. Comparing (5) with (7), it is clear that there is a stronger concentration of 3s forms among IC than in general. The IC 1s and 3p columns are significantly below the average, whereas the representation of the remaining person /numbers is just about equal between the diagrams.

Passing over to the raising diagram (6), this is even more extreme: almost 85 % of the examples are 3s, in comparison to a good 75 % of IC and just below 69 % in general. The 3s share is bigger for RC than for IC, and 3p slightly bigger, while 1s, 2s and 1p are close to nothing and 2p does not occur at all in the RC of this corpus.

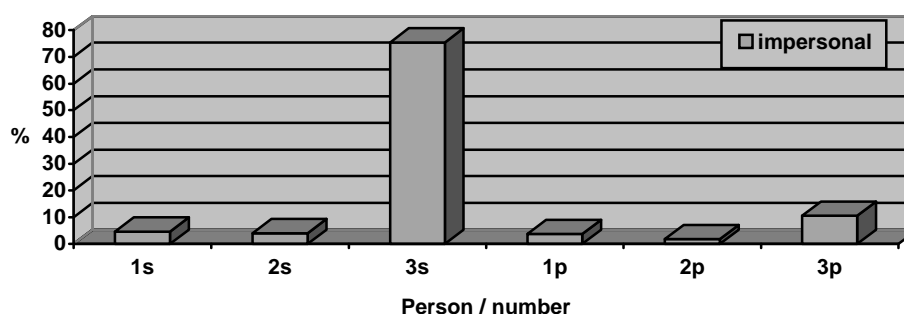


Diagram 5. Distribution of IC between different person / numbers (based on the number of the most common adjacent verb for every combination of person, number and tense).

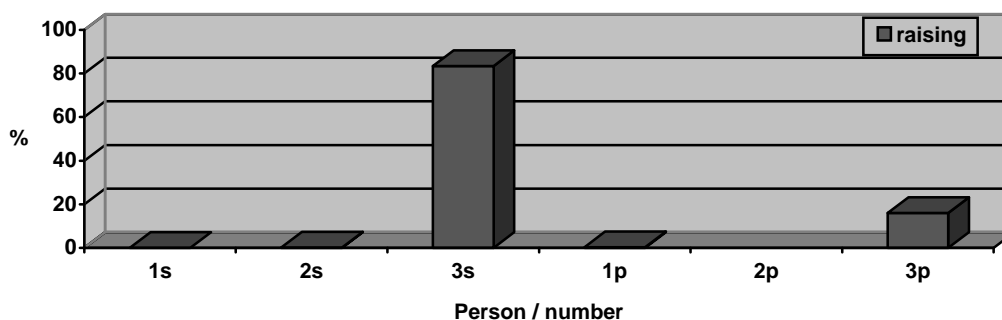


Diagram 6. Distribution of RC between different person / numbers (based on the number of the most common adjacent verb for every person, number and tense).

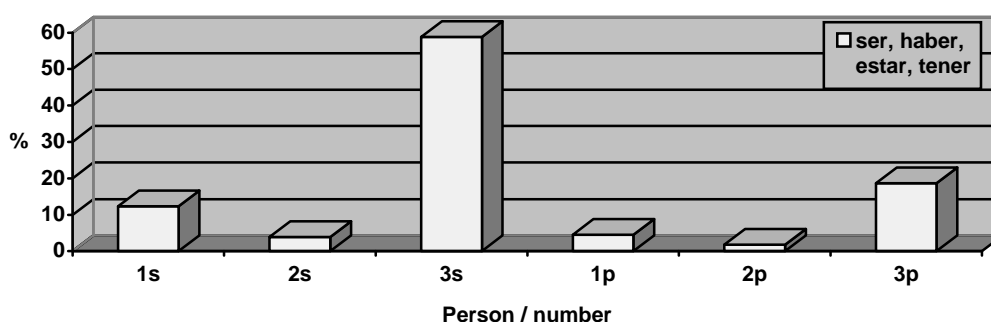


Diagram 7. Distribution between different person / numbers in the whole corpus (based on the average number of present tense forms between *ser*, *haber*, *estar* and *tener*).

Since raising examples in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person cannot be considered ungrammatical (see also 3.8.3), there must be other reasons why they are so rarely used.

The most important explanation is very simple and general (i.e. is not only true of RC): the superiority of 3<sup>rd</sup> person topics / subjects in relation to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person ones is tremendous. On top of this, 2<sup>nd</sup> person singular and plural are formally addressed using 3<sup>rd</sup> person verb forms in Spanish.

A possible and very likely theory has to do with the form of *parecer*. The 3s forms, *parece*, *pareció*, etc., obviously appearing in 3s RC, are also the ones used as impersonal forms in all person / numbers of the IC. Thus, when RC appears in 3s, *parece*, there is no morphological clash with IC *parece*. The 3s forms of *parecer* in different tenses are therefore perceived as the ‘normal’ versions, while other person / numbers of RC (and only RC) require special forms, like *parezco*, *pareciste*, *parecía*s, etc. which are so much less common from the start, that speakers tend to see them as ‘abnormal’ and avoid them.

An intuition in connection to this is that an overt subject pronoun should be more commonly found with RC *parecer* than with matrix verbs in general. From the corpus material no such conclusion can be drawn, though.

Less important to the statistics, but still worth mentioning, is an observation having to do with relativization, as discussed in 3.4.2. There it was pointed out that subject raising is normal when a nominal is complementized by a relative clause with *parecer*. What is not so natural, though, is for such a relative clause to appear with 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person nominals. The situations where we could imagine a relative clause accompanying a 3<sup>rd</sup> person subject are



abundant, but it is certainly not quite as often that we need to relativize 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> person subjects. These persons are physically participating in the context of the speech act and seldom need any further comment. There is one example in the corpus from 1890 (36a):

- 36a. Sólo tú, que pareces haber venido para eso, puedes deshacerlas y  
 only you that you.seem to.have come for that you.can dissolve.them and  
 mostrarme su clave de verdad, sea ella la que fuere.  
 show.to.me their key of truth is this the.one that it.is  
 ‘Only you, who seem to have come for that, can dissolve them and show me their key of truth,  
 whatever it is’
- b. Tú, que pareces estar a punto de irte, ¡entra, por favor!  
 you that you.seem to.be on point of go.yourself come.in please  
 ‘You, who seem to be about to leave, please, come in!’
- c. Nosotras, que parecemos tener más edad, entramos primero, ¿vale?.  
 we that we.seem to.have more age we.go.in first it.is.valid  
 ‘We, who seem to be older, go in first, okay?’

The (b) and (c) examples are invented, and it is obviously very hard to find credible examples of this kind. The restrictive relative clause is completely unthinkable in 1<sup>st</sup> person (there will never be any doubt about who the speaker is) and in 2<sup>nd</sup> person it would be about as forced as in (b) above. In other words, it takes a very specific context with several ‘yous’, who could be mistaken to be the person spoken to. Even the non-restrictive relative clause, like in (a), is seldom motivated.

### 3.8 The ‘adjacent-verb factor’

The last member in the collection of factors is the adjacent verb, which is a finite form in IC and an infinitive in RC. Do the adjacent verbs differ between the two constructions? The answer is yes, and in the following paragraph we will see how.

#### 3.8.1 Impersonal and raising adjacency from a historical point of view

We can assume that the exact adjacent verbs that appear most commonly throughout the material are partly a result of which are the most frequent verbs in the language as a whole, and partly depending on what verb types are useful and current in combination with *parecer*.

To put the constructions with raising verb in relation to the rest of the language, and at the same time carry the historical analysis a bit further, let us compare table (5), which shows the ten all over most common 3s present tense verb forms for each century, with table (6), showing the top ten adjacent verbs in 3s present/present tense IC<sup>32</sup>.

Nr.	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s
1	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser
2	deber	haber	decir	haber	haber	haber	haber	haber
3	decir	decir	haber	estar	estar	poder	estar	estar
4	haber	querer	hacer	tener	tener	estar	poder	tener
5	poder	deber	querer	decir	poder	tener	tener	poder
6	hacer	poder	poder	poder	decir	decir	hacer	ir
7	contar	hacer	deber	hacer	salir	hacer	deber	hacer

<sup>32</sup> This kind of denomination refers to examples where *parecer* is in present tense and the adjacent verb also in present tense.

8	significar	hablar	tener	parecer	hacer	deber	decir	parecer
9	reinar	reinar	venir	dar	dar	parecer	parecer	decir
10	dar	convenir	tomar	querer	parecer	dar	ir	contar

Table 5. Most common 3s present tense verb forms occurring in the whole corpus.

Nr.	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s
1	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser
2	querer	haber	deber	estar	haber	haber	haber	haber
3	estar	decir	haber	haber	estar	estar	estar	estar
4	deber	salir	ir	tener	tener	tener	tener	ir
5	decir	morir	hablar	ir	ir	poder	ir	tener
6	hacer	entrar	decir	querer	hablar	deber	deber	hacer
7		arder	querer	venir	poder	querer	hacer	querer
8			convenir	deber	hacer	dar	venir	deber
9			hacer	poder	venir	ir	querer	poder
10			traer	convenir	decir	convenir	tratar	dar

Table 6. Most common adjacent verbs in 3s present / present tense IC.

The top-list for adjacent verbs in IC does not differ a lot from the general top ten. *Ser*, *haber*, *estar* and *tener* are in the top. Verbs with higher positions in the IC list are *ir*, *venir* and *querer* and with lower positions *decir*, *poder* and *parecer* (quite obviously). *Hacer* and *deber* have quite similar rankings in both tables.

Tables (7) and (8) give the corresponding results for the most common infinitive forms in general and as adjacent verbs in RC.

Nr.	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s
1	hacer	hacer	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser
2	ser	ser	hacer	hacer	hacer	hacer	hacer	hacer
3	dar	dar	decir	ver	ver	haber	ver	decir
4	haber	haber	saber	dar	dar	dar	decir	ver
5	decir	saber	dar	decir	decir	decir	haber	tener
6	saber	decir	comer	tener	haber	ver	dar	poder
7	poder	poder	tomar	haber	tener	tener	tener	estar
8	ir	ir	ver	saber	poder	poder	poder	haber
9	guardar	guardar	poder	poder	saber	saber	saber	ir
10	tomar	tomar	poner	ir	estar	estar	ir	dar

Table 7. Most common infinitive forms occurring in the whole corpus.

Nr.	1200s	1300s	1400s	1500s	1600s	1700s	1800s	1900s
1	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser	ser
2	haber	mostrar	haber	haber	haber	haber	haber	haber
3	estar	concordar	estar	estar	tener	estar	decir	estar
4	morir	toller	tener	tener	querer	tener	tener	indicar
5			venir	querer	estar	hacer	ver	tener
6			decir	ver	quedar	deber	estar	ver
7			hacer	indicar	decir	decir	dar	querer
8			saber	dar	pasar	confirmar	querer	decir
9			convenir	convenir	ver	salir	indicar	recordar
10			hablar	quedar	volver	corresponder	salir	escuchar

Table 8. Most common adjacent infinitives in 3s present tense RC.

Here, the differences are much bigger. *Ser* is the most common in both cases, but we find that *haber*, *estar*, *tener*, *querer*, and *indicar* have better positions in RC than in general, while the opposite is true of *hacer*, *dar*, *poder*, *saber*, *ir*, *ver* and *decir*.

The raising table (8) has actually more in common with (5) and (6) than with (7). This is no surprise, since the raising infinitives correspond to the conjugated verb forms in IC. The impersonal and raising tables share the top four: *ser*, *haber*, *estar*, *tener*. *Ir* is obviously more common in impersonal examples, due to the use of the periphrasis *ir a + infinitive* (see 3.3.4). The same is true of modal verbs *deber y poder*, which are more easily used IC. *Deber* is especially hard to raise, since it is a modal verb expressing obligation, or, with preposition *de*, probability (*deber de* – ‘be likely to’) (37a). On the other hand, a majority of the impersonal examples with *deber* occur with (1<sup>st</sup> person) indirect object, with the semantic connotation of ‘opinion’ (b):

- 37a. ?Aquel perro gordo parece deber adelgazarse.  
 that dog fat seems to.have.to become.thinner  
*lit.* ‘That fat dog seems to have to loose weight’
- b. Una Asamblea nos parece que debe ser un espacio de reflexión.  
 An Assembly to.us it.seems that it.should be a space of reflection  
 ‘We think that an Assembly should be a space for reflection’

On the contrary, *ver* is more frequent in raising, definitely because of its specific use with perceptual verbs (see 3.8.2). Also *decir* is more common in RC, while *hacer* and *venir* occur more constantly in IC, likely because of their use in special expressions and periphrases, like *hace mucho/poco* (‘long ago / recently’) and *venir a + infinitive* with an approximative meaning.

We notice that the verb *indicar* has a surprisingly high representation among the RC, especially in the 1900s, but does not appear at all among the impersonal examples. A closer look at the material reveals that 75 % of the examples from the 20<sup>th</sup> century make up the cliché *todo parece indicar* in (38), which occurs in newspaper and encyclopaedic articles.

38. Todo parece indicar que el accidente tendrá graves consecuencias.  
 everything it.seems to.indicate that the accident it.will.have serious consequences  
 ‘Everything seems to indicate that the accident will have serious consequences’

### 3.8.2 ‘Impersonal raising’ with indirect object and perceptual verb

There is a special construction, which does not really involve raising, but which has still been included among the 3s RC. This construction has a high representation of 1<sup>st</sup> person indirect objects. It is principally used with perceptual verbs, such as *ver* (‘see’), *mirar* (‘watch’), *oír* (‘hear’), *recordar* (‘remember’), *sentir* (‘feel’), *tocar* (‘touch’), *entender* (‘understand’), but also e.g. with *estar* (‘be’) and adjective, like in (f) and (h).

- 39a. ¡Me parece ver a mis dos niñas!  
 to.me it.seems to.see OBJ.MARK. my two little.girls  
 ‘It’s like seeing my two little girls!’
- b. ¡Me parece estar oyendo al mismo Dios!  
 to.me it.seems to.be hearing OBJ.MARK.the himself God.  
 ‘It’s like hearing God himself’
- c. Se pone cada vez más nervioso, y hasta le parece oír pisadas.  
 himself he.puts every time more nervous and even to.him it.seems to.hear foot-steps  
 ‘He gets more and more nervous, and he even thinks that he’s hearing footsteps’

- d. A veces me parece estar otra vez en esa casona escuchando  
 at times to.me it.seems to.be one.more time in that house listening  
 a esos seres misteriosos.  
 to those beings mysterious  
 ‘Sometimes it seems to me that I am once again in that house, listening to those mysterious beings’
- e. Me parece adivinar que vuestra suerte ha cambiado.  
 to.me it.seems to.guess that your luck it.has changed  
 ‘I think I’m guessing that your luck has changed’
- f. Me parece estar obligado a pagar el diezmo.  
 to.me it.seems to.be forced to pay the tithes  
 ‘It seems to me that I am forced to pay the tithes’
- g. Me parece estar ante una ventana que me muestra el mundo real.  
 to.me it.seems to.be in.front.of a window that to.me it.shows the world real  
 ‘It seems to me that I am in front of a window which shows me the real world’
- h. No me parece estar solo; no creo haber estado solo ni un segundo  
 not to.me it.seems to.be alone not I.think to.have been alone even one second  
 desde que comencé este viaje.  
 since that I.started this journey  
 ‘It doesn’t seem to me that I’m alone; I don’t think that I’ve been alone even for a second since I started this journey’

A corresponding construction, which is used in identical contexts, exists in Swedish:

40. Jag tycker mig höra pappa när jag säger det här.  
 I think myself to.hear dad when I say this  
 ‘It’s like hearing dad when I say this’

There is a grammatical difference between Spanish and Swedish in this respect, though. In Spanish there is no grammatical 1<sup>st</sup> person subject, that is, the subordinate clause subject is not actually raised and the construction is still impersonal, while in Swedish the 1<sup>st</sup> person experiencer is in fact the subject of the main clause, just like in normal raising.

Cases like (39), which we could call ‘impersonal raising’, are thus no typical examples of raising, and maybe they should better be considered as an intermediate case between IC and RC, a kind of ‘half-raising’ construction. On one hand, the subordinate clause subject is not actually raised, and there is still an implicit dummy subject, but on the other hand the subordinate clause includes an infinitive which has the experiencer as its underlying subject. The Spanish construction is also semantically very close to the Swedish example in (40). In a sentence like (39a) the experiencer is in fact the 1<sup>st</sup> person and not the dummy subject. The phrase does not give a general opinion, which would be a semantic characteristic of an IC like (41)<sup>33</sup>:

<sup>33</sup> One could indeed argue that impersonal examples with indirect object of the type: *Me parece que estoy ensoñando, que esto es una pesadilla* (‘It seems to me that I’m dreaming, that this is a nightmare’) have these characteristics, too, though they are constructed impersonally.

41. Hay ruido en las escaleras, parece que viene papá.  
 there.is noise in the staircase it.seems that he.comes dad  
 'There's a noise in the staircase, it seems that dad's coming'

The existence of examples like (39) might also be a reason why constructions such as (42a) do not occur (see 3.4.1). There is simply a convention saying that what could theoretically be expressed like (42a), will be formulated like (b)<sup>34</sup>:

- 42a. ??Me parezco estar enfermo, porque tengo mucho frío.  
 to.me I.seem to.be ill because I.have much cold  
 'I seem to be ill, because I feel very cold'

- b. Me parece estar enfermo, porque tengo mucho frío.  
 to.me it.seems to.be ill because I.have much cold  
 'I think I'm ill, because I feel very cold'

### 3.8.3 *Interview results*

The analysis of the informant task led to a broad generalisation, which confirms the results of the corpus-search work. The raising alternative seldom gets the highest score in the interviews, more exactly this happens in 7 out of 90 cases. In other words, the IC is clearly favoured in a test where both alternatives are grammatical and communicate the same amount of information. Another characteristic is that there is a higher acceptance of both alternatives in 3<sup>rd</sup> person singular, which is also completely in accordance with the corpus results. There is no indication of any difference in tendencies between Catalan and Spanish.

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<sup>34</sup> This particular example was tested on the native Spanish associate professor.

#### 4. Summary and conclusions

This work aimed at an empirical investigation of the distribution of the two alternative constructions involving the raising verb *parecer* in Spanish: the impersonal construction and the raising construction. First of all, I wanted to examine the way they were distributed internally, and second, to find different types of factors that might be present in the process of choosing one of these constructions above the other. In other words, I wished to define some characteristics of the contexts where each construction appears.

In order to do this, I worked with an extensive Spanish corpus, Corpus del Español, and in addition to this material informant interviews were carried out in Spanish and Catalan.

The most basic result was the total number of each construction, which was obtained through some experimenting and trick-using in the corpus: c. 25 000 impersonal and 7000 raising sentences. Further, I defined a group of factors to help explaining why a certain construction might have been chosen in a certain context. A summary of these factors is:

- 1) **Semantic factors:** Semantic differences between IC and RC?;
- 2) **Syntactic factors:** Grammatical circumstances favouring one of them?;
- 3) **Diachronic and stylistic factors:** Does the text style or age decide?;
- 4) **Economy factors:** Is one of them more economical in some aspect?;
- 5) **Formal grammatical factors:** Do person, number, tense, etc. have an effect?;
- 6) **The ‘adjacent-verb factor’:** Do adjacent verbs rather select one than the other?.

The conclusions are summarised in the following items:

- Informants perceived a semantic difference between the IC, which they thought gives a general opinion about the situation, and the RC, which takes the point of view of the subject. The subordinate-clause subject is raised to become the semantic as well as the grammatical subject of the main clause.
- Periphrasis *ir + a + infinitive* cannot function as the adjacent verb of a RC, since the periphrastic meaning only gets through in the present and imperfective preterit tenses. This is why *ir* is so much more common in IC than in RC.
- The IC with indirect object can acquire a stronger sense of expressing an opinion rather than an impression. Actual raising does not let the predicate *parecer* take an indirect object, though. In 1<sup>st</sup> person, there could be a semantic reason why, but in 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> person there is no totally obvious explanation. It might have something to do with the existence of a special construction, so-called ‘impersonal raising’, where *parecer* takes an indirect object and an infinitive adjacent verb, especially used with perceptual verbs.
- Topicalization of a nominal leaves two alternatives: RC or ‘impersonal topicalization’. In written language the RC is most likely to appear, since the other alternative is more colloquial. The same thing happens in ‘impersonal relativization’.
- From a historical point of view, the IC has always been superior to the RC. Both had a top in the 16<sup>th</sup> century; the IC has never reached this level since, while the RC is somewhat more frequent today than 500 years ago.

- A comparison between three different text styles of the 20<sup>th</sup> century revealed that the oral texts are what makes the impersonal category look so much bigger than the raising category. There, the IC is eight times as common as the RC, while in literature they are equal and in newspapers the RC represents more than twice the amount of examples.
- Three possible reasons for these stylistic tendencies are: **1) Formality**: Newspaper and encyclopaedic texts are formal and the RC might give a more formal impression than the IC; **2) Topicalization**: Newspaper texts are full of topics and a topicalized nominal becomes the subject of a RC; **3) Economy**: Raising is used as a space-saving measure in newspaper articles for having a shorter linguistic form (saving the *que* element).
- IC and RC are distributed differently between tenses, although the constructions are hard to compare in this respect, since IC is a combination of two finite verbs and RC has just one finite verb. The IC offers a wider range of semantic nuances when it comes to tense / aspect / mood, due to the fact that *parecer* and the adjacent verb can be in different tenses. The RC is thus insufficient in double-tense sentences. The distributional differences must also be due to the text styles where each construction is frequent. RC distribution between tenses is not significantly different from the general distribution between tenses in the corpus.
- The IC has a higher share of 3s than the corpus in general, while 1s and 3p have a lower representation in IC. 3s has almost 10 percentage points more in RC than in IC, and 3p just a few points more, whereas the remaining person / numbers hardly occur in RC.
- Why is raising in 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person so rare? 1) Superiority of 3<sup>rd</sup> person topics / subjects in texts and formal addressing with 3<sup>rd</sup> person verb forms; 2) RC in 3s does not clash with the impersonal form (both *parece*), whereas other person / numbers of RC need special forms, and are avoided by speakers; 3) 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person nominals are seldom relativized.
- There is no evidence of subject pronouns appearing more often in RC than in general.
- Impersonal adjacent verbs do not differ so much from the generally common present tense verb forms. Adjacent infinitives in RC have, not unexpectedly, more in common with adjacent IC verbs, than with generally common infinitives. Differences in verb adjacency between IC and RC are due to, for instance, a distinct compatibility with periphrasis, modal verbs, perceptual verbs, special expressions, etc.
- There is a so-called ‘impersonal raising construction’, where *parecer* takes an indirect object, most often in 1<sup>st</sup> person. It mainly appears with perceptual verbs: *ver*, *oír*, *recordar*, *sentir*, *entender*, etc. No actual raising occurs, but the indirect object is experiencer and the phrase gives a subjective point of view.
- In 93 % of the informant interview examples the test persons preferred the IC. The conclusion of this is, that when both alternatives are grammatically convenient and semantically sufficient, the IC will be chosen. The formality aspect is presumably important in the judgement; the more informal version will be considered as more natural. A higher acceptance of the RC was observed in 3<sup>rd</sup> person. The interview results confirm the corpus results.

## 5. Discussion

In several aspects, the results of my study were not quite what I had expected. First of all, I thought that the total distribution between IC and RC would be more equal than it turned out to be. Later, the stylistic study revealed that the superiority of IC in the 20<sup>th</sup> century was completely due to the oral text section.

When it comes to the factors defined, the only intuition I had at the beginning of the work was that, at least sometimes, there must be a semantic difference between the two constructions. This intuition was later confirmed by the informants. I also had in mind from the start to find out the importance of grammatical characteristics in the verb forms and of the exact adjacent verb. Further, I had some idea about a possible formality aspect of raising. The remaining factors came up after the analysis had been initiated.

It is obviously difficult to weigh the importance that each factor might have in the process of picking a construction, or to be sure that there are no other elements intervening which were not identified in this limited study. However, it could not be within my ambition to be that exact, just to indicate some possible sources of influence.

If you start analysing your own use of constructions with raising verb in different contexts, you will often find that both IC and RC are grammatically and semantically possible, and still one of them has come to your mind first, and you have a strong intuition about this being the most appropriate choice. I can analyse my own use of raising verbs in this essay according to the criteria that have been identified here, but the question is what would happen in a less conscious environment. Would I consequently make the same choice in the same context, or would there be inexplicable choices that I could not justify? And would other people agree with me on every choice I made? The ideal would be to be able to design an experiment, where the informants react before they have had time to analyse their intuition too much.

Further investigation is needed on the stylistic aspect of constructions with raising verb. Why does the IC have such a predominance in oral texts, while the distribution is equal between constructions in literary texts and the RC is dominant in newspapers? I have suggested some explanations above, but a more thorough study is needed.

I would also like to closer examine the possible connection between raising – formality. I have still no strong evidence of such a link, but there are definitely indications of it. A study on spontaneous speech might shed light on the formality aspect, but the problem would be to obtain a big enough material. Another approach to the stylistics could be a sociolinguistic investigation. Does the background and education of the informants influence on the use of constructions with raising verb?

Conveniently enough, I am just about to make a follow-up study on this topic. Though it will not be possible to deal with all the elements that could be of interest, I have a few ambitions which are based on what I have achieved so far:

1) To work out new, more appropriate and covering informant interviews, using my previous results as a basis. I will then eliminate the factors that turned out to be less interesting, like all the different variants of one-tense sentences, and add more important elements, like combinations of several tenses in IC. I might also try to distinguish between various stylistic levels in the material.

2) To make a more thorough comparison of my results from Spanish with other Romance languages: Catalan, Italian and French.

There are some very specific things that I would like to investigate further in my forthcoming work. One of them is the type of construction that I call ‘impersonal raising’, which is a bit curious in comparison to normal RC and IC. Could I get closer to an identification of it by comparing with other languages (Romance or non-Romance)? Another



aim is finding a better explanation to the fact that the RC does not allow the predicate to take an indirect object. I also want to find support for my view that topicalization can promote raising, and does not always have to be seen as the simple result of raising. Further, I want to better delineate how double-tense IC are treated when being transformed into raising sentences. Finally, it will be necessary to turn to other sources than the ones used here, to find out whether overt subject pronouns are more frequent in RC than otherwise.

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