

An Aspectual Restriction on Spanish Nominal Infinitives

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to provide an analysis of two types of Spanish infinitival constructions headed by a determiner. Firstly, I attempt to define the categorial status of the infinitive morpheme. My hypothesis is that there are two homophonous infinitival morphemes which project two different structures: one of them is inflectional in nature and projects clausal configurations; the other one is derivational in nature and projects nominal structures. This latter suffix carries an activity aspect and attaches only to aspectually compatible verbal stems. The proposed hypothesis allows us to explain the different properties and contexts for the two structures analysed, and, more interestingly, to give an account of a number of data that remained unexplained in previous analyses.

0. Introduction¹

The aim of this article is to provide an analysis of two types of infinitival structures headed by a determiner in Spanish. These structures are shown in italics in (1).²

- (1) a. *El decirlo* tú y *entenderlo* yo me causa
the to-say-it(acc.) you (nom.) and to-understand-it(acc.) I(nom.) me makes
nueva admiración.
new surprise

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(2) Some of the examples given in this article are from classical authors and also appear in

'For you to say it and me to understand it makes me even more surprised.'
(Cervantes, *El coloquio de los perros*)

- b. El sosiego, [...], la serenidad de los cielos, *el murmurar de las fuentes*
the peace, [...], the calm of the sky, the to-murmur of the fountains
[...], son grande parte para...
[...], are large part for
'The peace, [...], the calm of the sky, *the murmuring of the fountains* [...],
contribute to...' (Cervantes, Preface to *Don Quijote*)

Both (1a) and (1b) consist of an infinitive (*decir* 'to say' and *murmurar*, 'to murmur'), a DP semantically identifiable as the subject of the infinitive (*tú* 'you' and *las fuentes* 'the fountains') and a determiner (*el* 'the') which heads the corresponding maximal projection. However, (1a) and (1b) differ crucially in the Case assigned to, or checked by, the DP to the right of the verb: while *tú* appears in the nominative in (1a), *las fuentes* appears in the genitive introduced by the preposition *de* in (1b). This means that in (1a) a mechanism is available for licensing the lexical subject although there are no overt features for Agreement and Tense. In (1b), the DP subject of the infinitive seems to receive its inherent genitive Case from the N, with the preposition *de* as a morphological realization of that Case (see Chomsky 1986: 3.5.2.5.); thus *murmurar* has the same behavior in this respect as any other primitive or deverbal noun in Spanish, e.g., *murmullo* 'murmur' in *el murmullo de las fuentes* 'the murmur of the fountains'.

This article is devoted to exploring these and other differences related to the properties, internal configuration and distribution of the structures in (1a-b), and in particular to providing an explanation for an interesting constraint imposed on structures of the type in (1b). Its organization is as follows. Section 1 discusses the categorial status of the Spanish infinitive, and suggests that there are two different infinitival forms. Section 2 reviews the data which support this hypothesis in some detail. Section 3 offers a more precise characterization of the phenomenon at issue, focusing on its semantic constraints. Section 4 presents the analysis proposed for (1a-b) and some consequences of it. At this point, we will confirm the hypothesis of the different categorial status of the infinitival morpheme in (1a) and (1b), and attribute to this the behaviour of some, until now, unexplained data. Finally, Section 5 suggests a possible way to approach the analysis of a restricted set of data which remain problematic for the hypothesis proposed.

1. The Categorial Status of the Spanish Infinitive

The contrast illustrated in (1) is not unique to Spanish, and it has been studied by grammarians from different schools and from very widely differing points of view.³ The

traditional discussions of the constructions studied here. They are all perfectly grammatical in present-day Spanish.

(3) See, for example, Varela (1979), Plann (1981), Hernanz (1982), Bosque (1989), Yoon & Bonet-Farran (1991) and Fernández Lagunilla & Anula (1994), to mention only works dealing with Spanish within the generative tradition.

main positions adopted in the treatment of the infinitive are: (i) to consider it a mixed category [+V, +N], which in certain contexts undergoes the neutralization of one feature, or (ii) to give it double status: [+N] in some contexts, and [+V] in others, but not [+N] and [+V] at the same time. There have also been proponents of an exclusively nominal status for the infinitive. Thus, Spanish traditional grammarians include the infinitive in the class of nouns for three reasons: (a) because it appears with a determiner (D); (b) because, in some contexts, it is difficult to differentiate its meaning from that of the corresponding abstract action noun,⁴ and finally, (c) because, according to this view, unlike other verbal forms, the infinitive does not express Tense.⁵

The arguments used by traditional grammars to support the nominal status of the infinitive are easy to refute, as we will see. In view of examples like (1b), it is impossible to deny the nominal character of certain infinitives. But the distinction between (1a) and (1b), in particular the fact that (1a) has a nominative subject and an object that appears as an accusative clitic (*lo*) while (1b) has a genitive marked subject, doesn't follow from the arguments in (a)-(c).

The fact that a determiner heads the clause does not imply that the infinitival form has nominal status. It only implies that the whole clause is contained within a DP (see, for example, Plann 1981), which has different implications for the status of the infinitive. In any case, it is only in (1b) that the determiner is necessary, while in (1a) its presence seems optional, as we can see in (2).⁶

- (2)a. (El) Decirlo tú y (el) entenderlo yo es
 (the) to-say-it(acc.) you(nom.) and (the) to-understand-it(acc.) I(nom.) is
 siempre simultáneo.
 always simultaneous
 'Your saying it and my understanding it always happens simultaneously.'

(4) This was precisely Bello's (1847) thesis. He bases his argument on the fact that *murmurar* 'to murmur' in (1b) expresses the same content as, for example, *murmullo* 'murmur'. It is true that, translated into the terms I am using, the infinitive shares with some classes of deverbal nouns the fact that it contains information relative to the kind of event denoted by the predicate. I will return to Bello's hypothesis later in the paper.

(5) However, R. J. Cuervo (1954), another grammarian in this tradition, stated that it is not necessary for a word to express tense in order to be included in the V class. (In the same way, of course, it is not true that anything that expresses tense is a V: in fact, a language may not have tense inflection and still have Vs.)

(6) For the moment, I will not discuss what kind of category the complement of D can be. Note, however, that the finite clause of (i) is a good substitute for the infinitive clause in (1a):

- (i) El que lo digas tú y lo entienda yo me maravilla.
 the that it(acc.) say (3sg.pres.subj.) you and it(acc.) understand I me surprises
 'Your telling me and my understanding it surprises me.'

Nor will I explore the real status of *el* in (1a). Another near-substitute for this clause is:

- (ii) Lo de decirlo tú ...
 it of to-say-it(acc.) you(nom.)
 'The fact of your saying it ...'

where *lo* is a pronoun which heads factive clauses (see Bosque & Moreno 1990; thanks to L. Eguren for pointing this out). In fact, the categorial status and structural location of *el* in (1a) is an open question which requires further study.

- b. Desde aquí se oye *(el) murmurar de las fuentes.
 from here *se* hear(3sg.pres.) *(the) to-murmur of the fountains
 'From here is heard the murmuring of the fountains.'

As for the similarity between infinitives and abstract nouns, it should be pointed out that it does not obtain when the infinitive appears with a lexical subject in the nominative, as in (1a) or in (3a) below. In this latter case, the meaning of the infinitive (*morir* 'to die') is not abstract, but concrete and specific; it now describes or identifies a fact as having temporal reference and heads a factive clause. As such it cannot appear as the subject of verbs like *ocurrir* 'to happen', which require eventive (non factive) subjects (cf. 3b). In contrast, an abstract noun like *muerte* 'death' in (3c) is ambiguous between an eventive and a factive reading. Hence, in its eventive reading an expression like *la muerte de Juan* 'John's death' may function as the subject of *ocurrir*.⁷

- (3) a. El morir Juan tan repentinamente nos sorprendió
 the to-die Juan so suddenly us surprises
 'The sudden dying of Juan's surprises us'
 b. *El morir Juan tan repentinamente ocurrió ayer.
 the to-die Juan so suddenly happened yesterday
 c. La muerte de Juan ocurrió ayer.
 the death of Juan happened yesterday
 'Juan's death took place yesterday.'

And, finally, infinitives like (1a)—those that project factive clauses with explicit subjects—do express Tense, contrary to the view held by traditional grammarians.⁸

In fact, there should be no doubt about the ability of the infinitive to express Aspect either. The imperfect form of the infinitive in (4a) denotes an event that is under way. This action is understood as simultaneous to the development of the matrix predicate (which can be understood, in turn, as past, present or future in relation to the moment of the speech act). As regards the perfect aspect of clauses like (4b), this shows that the event described by the infinitive is always finished with respect to the moment when the event denoted by the main predicate takes place; in other words, it is anterior to the matrix Tense.

- (4) a. El llegar_{i/j/k} el niño tan tarde tenía_i/tiene_j/tendrá_k preocupada a su
 the to-arrive the child so late had/ has/ will have worried to his
 family
 familia.
 'The child arriving so late had/has/will have his family worried.'
 b. El haber llegado_{i-1/j-1/k-1} el niño tan tarde tenía_i/tiene_j/tendrá_k
 the to-have arrived the child so late had/ has/ will have
 preocupada a su familia.
 worried to his family
 'The child having arrived so late had/has/will have his family worried.'

(7) For a complete overview of the different readings associated with deverbal nouns, see Zucchi (1993) and Ormazábal (1995).

(8) For a similar proposal for Basque, see Odriozola & Zabala (1995).

As can be seen in the examples above, the action expressed by the infinitive in (4) can be anterior to, or simultaneous with, the main Tense. This means that the infinitive is capable of expressing Tense, a non-specific Tense, relative to the matrix predicate in examples such as (1a) or (4) (see Stowell 1996 for the syntactic representation of Tense dependencies). This property is regularly exhibited by verbs, which do not always enter into configurations with a specific temporal reference (past, present or future in relation to the time of utterance); rather, verbal forms generally express relative temporal information (anterior, simultaneous or posterior with respect to another Tense). Thus, it can be said that the infinitive in (1a) is a verbal form with a specific aspectual feature and a relative temporal feature.⁹ We can conclude for the moment, then, that the infinitival form in (1a) is a V. The next issue is to determine whether this is the only alternative.

Let us first examine whether infinitives share the semantic properties of abstract nouns. In (3b-c) we have seen one context in which the infinitive and the corresponding abstract noun differ, but there are also contexts which suggest that infinitives and abstract nouns may share semantic and syntactic properties. An example of this is shown in (5), where both the infinitive (*murmurar* 'to murmur') and the corresponding abstract noun (*murmullo* 'murmur') are interpreted as non factive. Syntactically, they necessarily require a determiner and assign genitive Case to their subject:

- (5) a. Desde mi habitación se oía *(el) murmurar de las fuentes.
 from my room *se* heard (3sg.imperf.) the to-murmur of the fountains
 'From my room was heard the murmuring of the fountains/*the fact that
 the fountains murmur.'
- b. Desde mi habitación se oía *(el) murmullo de las fuentes.
 from my room *se* heard(3sg.imperf.) the murmur of the fountains
 'From my room was heard the murmur of the fountains/*the fact that the
 fountains murmur.'

These properties, and others that are dealt with in Section 2, suggest that the configuration in (5a), which cannot be paraphrased by a finite clause such as "the fact that Subject + finite Verb", is different from that in (3a).

We therefore return to the question: is the infinitive nominal and verbal at the same time, or is it sometimes an N and sometimes a V? I shall defend here the second hypothesis:¹⁰ the infinitive is not a mixed category because it never exhibits both the properties of verbs and those of nouns at the same time.¹¹ It can be either verbal or nominal, and, as a consequence, different kinds of structures (sentential vs. nominal) are projected depending on the kind of infinitive that heads them. This is

(9) Similarly, Elordieta (1993) presents evidence for the assumption that infinitival structures contain an independent specification for the feature [Tense] when they are adjuncts (but not when they are complements). See also Fernández Lagunilla & Anula (1994), for the view that infinitival structures are temporal structures.

(10) Which is also the one most widely accepted at the moment; see, for example, Bosque (1989), Fernández Lagunilla & Anula (1994), and references given there. See also Borsley (1993) for the same position with regard to the "so-called 'verb-nouns' in Welsh".

(11) But see Zubizarreta & van Haften (1988) for the opposite hypothesis.

actually in line with current theoretical approaches, since lexical items are necessarily specified with a particular categorial feature (as N, V,...), and the possibility of mixed categories is ruled out.

2. Verbal and Nominal Properties of Infinitives in Spanish

In this section, I systematically examine the differences between the two constructions in (1) and show that the verbal and nominal properties of the infinitives are in complementary distribution.

Compare the examples in (6) and (7). The examples in (6) involve the same type of infinitive as (1a) while the examples in (7) involve infinitives of the type illustrated in (1b). To facilitate the discussion, I shall refer to the former type as "type A infinitives" and to the latter type as "type B infinitives".

- (6) a. El andar el niño tan tarde por esa zona nos preocupa.
 the to-go-about the child so late in that district us worries
 'The child going about so late in that district worries us.'
- b. El lamentar la familia lo sucedido no lo evita.
 the to-regret the family the(neut.) happened not it(acc.) prevent
 'The family regretting what happened does not prevent it.'
- c. El llegar tan tarde el niño nos preocupó a todos.
 the to-arrive so late the child us worried to all
 'The child arriving so late worried us all.'
- d. El comprar una casa Juan nos alegró.
 the to-buy a house Juan us made-happy
 'Juan's having bought a house made us happy.'
- (7) a. El andar errabundo del niño acabó en una comisaría.
 the to-wander aimless of-the child ended in a police-station
 'The aimless wandering of the child ended up in a police station.'
- b. El dulce lamentar de dos pastores
 the sweet to-lament of two shepherds
 'The sweet lamenting of two shepherds' (Garcilaso, *Égloga*, I, v.1)
- c. *El llegar tardío de Juan nos preocupó a todos.
 the to-arrive late(adj.) of Juan us worried to all
- d. *El comprar una casa de Juan nos alegró.
 the to-buy a house of Juan us made-happy

Note that an intransitive verb like *andar* 'to walk', 'to go about', 'to wander', and a transitive verb used as intransitive, *lamentar* 'to lament', 'to regret', can project both a sentential (6a-b) and a nominal structure (7a-b). Other verbs, like the unaccusative *llegar* 'to arrive' or the transitive *comprar* 'to buy', only accept the sentential configuration (6c-d), as shown by the ungrammaticality of (7c-d). I will return to this interesting difference in Section 3 below.

The relevant properties of the examples in (6) and (7), some of which have already been mentioned in this article (and are generally covered in the literature: see Bosque 1989; Hernanz 1982; Plann 1981, 1984) are the following:

- (i) The subject of the event is in the nominative in all the examples involving infinitives of type A as in (6) and in the genitive in all the cases involving infinitives of type B as in (7).
- (ii) Infinitives of type A can realize all their arguments. In (1a), for instance, in addition to the subject, there is a direct object, and there could also be an indirect object, as shown in (8a) below. Moreover, temporal, modal and locative adjuncts may appear in these structures, as shown in (11a). In contrast, infinitives of type B hardly develop their argument structure, with the exception of the PP with the subject θ -role. (But see section 5 for infinitives with incorporated nouns.)
- (iii) Infinitives of type A allow the realization of the arguments in the form of clitic pronouns, which is not possible for infinitives of type B, as shown by the contrast in (8). However, as A. Mendikoetxea (p.c.) points out, infinitives of type B do accept reflexive or inherent *se*, as shown in (9).¹²

- (8) a. El decírmelo Juan...
the to-tell-me(dat.)-it(acc.) Juan
'Juan's telling me it...'
- b. *Ese decírmelo de Juan...
that to-tell-me(dat.)-it(acc.) of Juan
- (9) a. Ese descuidado afeitarse de Juan...
that careless to-shave-himself of Juan
'That careless shaving of Juan's'
- b. Ese andarse por las ramas de Juan...
that to-walk-himself along the branches of Juan
'That beating about the bush of Juan's'

- (iv) The θ -role of the subject can be realized in the form of a possessive with infinitives of type B but not with those of type A. Note that a possessive cannot head a finite sentence such as (10c) either:

- (10) a. *Su lamentar profundamente los hechos no los evita.
his to-regret deeply the facts not them (acc.) avoid
- b. Su dulce lamentar llegó hasta mis oídos.
his sweet to-lament reached until my hearing
'His sweet lament reached my ears.'
- c. *Su que lo digas tú me preocupa.
his that it(acc.) say you me worries

(12) The situation in Italian is the same, as pointed out in Zucchi (1993): examples such as (i), with an objective or a dative clitic pronoun, are ungrammatical in infinitival constructions where the subject θ -role is borne by a NP in a PP. However, reflexive or inherent clitics can cooccur with an infinitival construction with a genitive subject, as in (ii):

- (i) *Il credergli di Piero /*Il mangiarne di Piero
the believe(inf)-him(cl) of Piero/the eat(inf)-of-them(cl) of Piero
- (ii) Il radersi di Piero/Il vergognarsi di Piero
the shave(inf)-himself(cl) of Piero/the be-ashamed(inf)-himself(cl) of Piero
(Examples and translations from Zucchi 1993: 245).

In fact, the infinitive can appear not only with *el* or *su* but also with a wide range of determiners and quantifiers that select nouns, though this is only possible with the infinitives of type B. Moreover, these infinitival forms must be selected by a determiner; this requirement does not apply to infinitives of type A, where the article appears to be optional.¹³

- (v) Infinitives of type A admit adverbial modification, as shown in (11a-b), and do not allow adjectival modification, thus the ungrammaticality of (11c-d). The distribution is exactly the reverse in the case of infinitives of type B, as shown by the contrast between (12a-b) and (12c-d).

- (11) a. El andar Juan *tan tarde/tan alegremente/por las calles*
 the to-go-about Juan so late /so happily / in the streets
 'Juan's going about so late/so happily/in the streets'
 b. El lamentar *profundamente* la familia lo sucedido
 the to-regret deeply the family the (neut.) happened
 'The family's deeply regretting what happened'
 c. *El andar *tardío* Juan
 the to-go-about late(adj.) Juan
 d. *El lamentar *profundo* las autoridades
 the to-regret deep(adj.) the authorities

- (12) a. El andar *errabundo* de Juan
 the to-go-about aimless of Juan
 'Juan's aimless wandering'
 b. El *dulce* lamentar de los pastores
 the sweet to-lament of the shepherds
 'The shepherds' sweet lament'
 c. *El andar *errabundamente* de Juan
 the to-go-about aimlessly of Juan
 d. *El lamentar *dulcemente* de los pastores
 the to-lament sweetly of the shepherds

(13) Infinitives of type B can be selected, for example, by a demonstrative (*este, ese, aquel*), an indefinite (*cierto, algún*) and other possible quantifiers (*todo, cada*), as in:

- (i) {Este, cierto, todo} dulce lamentar embarga mis sentidos.
 this/ a certain/ all sweet to-lament overpowers my senses
 'This/a certain/ all sweet lament overcomes my senses.'

This is not the case with infinitives of type A, that is, those constructions where the D is optional:

- (ii) *(Este, cierto, todo lamentar profundamente) los hechos no los evita.
 this/ a certain/ all to-regret deeply the facts not them(acc.) avoid

The behaviour of these infinitives in Italian with respect to the range of determiners accepted seems to be the same:

- (iii) L' avere / *Quell' avere / *un avere egli compiuto i suoi primi studi in Francia
 the have(inf)/ that have(inf)/ a have(inf) he done his first studies in France
 (Examples and translations from Zucchi 1993: 229)

In any case, the status of the determiner in this construction and the issue of its optionality is a topic in need of independent study, as pointed out in note 6.

- (vi) Infinitives of type A can be negated, which is not possible for those of type B, as shown by the contrast between the examples in (13) and (14).

(13) a. El no andar ya Juan por las calles nos tranquiliza más.
the not to-go-about any-more Juan in the streets us relieves more
'Juan's no longer going about in the streets relieves us more.'

b. El no lamentar las autoridades lo sucedido
the not to-regret the authorities the(neut.) happened
'The authorities' not regretting what happened'

(14) a. *El no lamentar dulce de los pastores
the not to-lament sweet of the shepherds

b. *El no andar errabundo del niño
the not to-go-about aimless of-the child

- (vii) Infinitival forms of type A allow compound, passive and periphrastic forms; that is, they can manifest aspect morphologically, as shown in (15), which is not possible for forms of type B, as shown in (16).

(15) a. El haber andado /haber estado andando /poder andar
the to-have-gone-about /to-have-been-going-about/to-be-able-to-go-about
el niño por las calles
the child in the streets
'The child's having gone about/having been going about/ being able to go about in the streets'

b. El haber sido lamentados los sucesos por la familia
the to-have-been-regretted the events by the family
'The events having been regretted by the family'

(16) a. *El constante haber andado /haber estado andando /poder andar
the constant to-have-gone-about/to-have-been-going-about /being-able-
del niño
to-go-about of-the child

b. *El haber sido lamentado de los pastores...
the to-have-been-lamented of the shepherds

- (viii) Infinitives of type B can be replaced by a masculine pronominal form (*él/ese*), whereas those of type A take the neuter form *ello/eso*:

(17) a. El mirarle tan dulcemente la amada, *eso* (**ése*) es lo que le
the to-gaze so sweetly the beloved, that (*this) is what him
mantiene ilusionado.
keeps hopeful
'His loved one's gazing at him so sweetly is what keeps his hopes strong.'

b. Acostumbrado al dulce mirar de su amada, ya no podía vivir
used to-the sweet to-gaze of his beloved, now not could to-live
sin *él* (**ello*).
without it (*that).
'Used to the sweet gaze of his loved one, he could no longer live without it.'

(ix) A type B infinitive can be the antecedent of a restrictive relative (18b)), which is not possible for a type A infinitive (18a).¹⁴

- (18) a. *El deambular el jugador por el campo que ha tenido lugar
 the to-run-aimlessly the player around the field which has taken place
 últimamente me preocupa.
 recently me worries
- b. El deambular del jugador que me preocupa es el que ha tenido
 the to-run-about of-the player which me worries is the that has taken
 lugar en los últimos torneos.
 place in the last matches
 'The player's aimlessly running which worries me is that which has taken
 place in the last few matches.'

Type A infinitives only accept non-restrictive relatives headed by the neuter form *lo cual/(lo) que*, while type B infinitives only accept the *el que* form, as shown by the contrast between the examples in (19) and (20).

- (19) a. El deambular el jugador, lo cual/(lo) que ha tenido lugar
 the to-run-aimlessly of-the player, which (neut.) has taken place
 últimamente, es preocupante.
 recently, is worrying
 'The player's aimlessly running about, which has taken place recently, is
 worrying.'
- d. *El deambular el jugador, el que ha tenido lugar últimamente,
 the to-run-aimlessly the player, which (masc.) has taken place recently,
 es lo que me preocupa.
 is what me worries
- (20) a. El deambular del jugador, el que me preocupa, es el
 the to-run-aimlessly of-the player, which (masc.) me worries, is that
 que ha tenido lugar últimamente.
 which has taken place recently
 'The player's aimlessly running about which worries me is that which has
 taken place recently.'
- b.* El deambular del jugador, lo cual/(lo) que me preocupa, es el
 the to-run-aimlessly of-the player, which (neut.) me worries, is the
 que ha tenido lugar últimamente.
 that has taken place recently

(14) The situation in Italian is again the same, as can be seen in the following examples:

- (i) Quell'aver Giorgio rifiutato ogni compromesso, a cui abbiamo più volte accennato.
 that to-have Giorgio rejected any commitment, to which (we) have other times mentioned
 (Renzi & Salvi 1991: 560; my translation)
- (ii) Quel frenetico precipitare di tutte le cose che lo accompagnava da mesi.
 that frantic to-rush of everything which him (acc.) accompanied for months
 (Buzzati, *Un amore*, from Renzi & Salvi 1991: 560; my translation)

In (i) we have a type A infinitive with a non-restrictive relative modifying it; in (ii) we have a type B infinitive with a restrictive relative as the complement of the head of the NP. Example (ii) would be acceptable also if modified by a non-restrictive relative but the infinitive in (i) does not accept a restrictive relative, as is the case also in Spanish.

- (x) It is only possible to coordinate infinitives belonging to the same group, as indicated by the ungrammaticality of (21).

(21) a. *Ese mirar tierno de Luis y el sonreír Adela
 that to-look tender of Luis and the to-smile Adela

Furthermore, when we coordinate type A infinitives, the matrix verb remains in the singular, as in (22a) and in (1a) above, whereas when infinitives of type B are coordinated the matrix verb agrees, taking the plural form, as in (22b) and in (1b) above.¹⁵

- (22) a. El mirar Luis tan tiernamente y el sonreír Adela al mismo tiempo
 the to-look Luis so tenderly and the to-smile Adela at-the same time
 me emocionó/(**emocionaron*).
 me touches(sg.)/(**touch(pl.)*)
 'Luis' looking so tenderly and Adela's smiling at the same time touch me.'
- b. Ese mirar tierno de Luis y su contenida sonrisa me *emocionan*/
 That to-look tender of Luis and his repressed smile me touch (pl.)/
 (**emociona*).
 (**touches(sg.)*)
 'That tender of Luis and his repressed smile touch me.'

3. Semantic Constraints on DP Infinitives

The properties displayed in (i-x) follow quite simply from assuming that infinitives of type A are verbal or sentential, while those of type B are nominal.

This correlates with a crucial semantic difference between the two types of infinitival constructions. Infinitivals of type A can be the complements of verbs like *lamentar* 'to regret' (a fact which points to a factive interpretation) and can be headed by an explicative *porque* 'since' (23a-b). In contrast, infinitival structures of type B can cooccur with verbs like *durar* 'to last, to go on', *molestar* 'to bother, to annoy' or *recordar* 'to remember', which points to a different interpretation, namely that of an activity (as defined by Vendler 1967) which develops, and the manner, frequency, or duration of its development (23c-e).

- (23) a. Lamento *el haber andado* *el niño* /**el andar* *del niño*
 (I) regret the to-have-gone-about the child /**the to-go-about of-the child*
 por ahí.
 around there
 'I regret the child having been around there'
- b. *El jugar Moyà tan mal* /**el extraño jugar de Moyà* porque le dolía
 the to-play Moyà so badly/**the strange to-play of Moyà* because to-him hurt
 el codo se malinterpretó.
 the elbow se(pass.) misinterpreted
 'Moyà's playing so badly/Moyà's strangely playing because his elbow hurt
 was misinterpreted.'

(15) A final difference, noted by Plann (1981), is the fact that some prepositions, i.e., *a* 'to', *contra* 'against' and *sobre* 'over', only select a DP headed by an infinitive of type B, while other, i.e., *por* 'by', *para* 'for', *sin* 'without' or *de* 'of', select both types of infinitive.

- c. Aún dura ese continuo y molesto *piar* *de los pájaros/*los pájaros*.
still go-on this continued and irritating to-tweet of the birds /*the birds
'That continued and irritating tweeting of the birds is still going on.'
- d. Aún recuerdo aquel continuo (*piar* *de los pájaros/*los pájaros*) al
still (I)remember that continued to-tweet of the birds /*the birds at-the
mediodía.
midday
'I still remember that continued tweeting of the birds at midday.'
- e. Me molesta ese *piar* (*de los pájaros/*los pájaros*) cerca del río.
me annoys that to-tweet of the birds /*the birds near of-the river
'That tweeting of the birds near the river annoys me.'

At this point, we are clearly justified in assigning a different structural description to both classes of infinitives. Following Plann (1981) and others, I consider that the (factive) infinitives of type A are verbal and project a clause. As regards the (activity) infinitives of type B, these are nominal in nature and head a NP. Section 4 will be devoted to the structure proposed for each type. But before turning to that issue, however, we must clarify what the difference is between the infinitives that project DP's (type B infinitives) and ordinary nouns. Note that there is, in Spanish, a third group of forms ending in *-ar, er, ir* (such as *deber* 'obligation, task', *haber* 'asset', *poder* 'power', *parecer* 'opinion, view', *entender* 'way of thinking, opinion', *saber* 'knowledge', *pesar* 'regret', *placer*, 'pleasure', *querer* 'love, affection' and *cantar* 'song') with a genuine nominal use and often with a semantic content somewhat different from that of its historically related verb. These apparent infinitives (called "false infinitives" by Varela 1979) are completely lexicalized as nouns, as is shown by the fact that, in general, they can manifest the plural agreement of nouns (*deberes* 'obligations', *haber* 'assets', *poderes* 'powers', etc.). Their productivity is minimal and very idiosyncratic. Thus, most verbs do not have corresponding nouns of this class (**los ives* 'the goings', **los daves* 'the givings', **los telefonaves* 'the phonings'). I conclude that these are not nominalized infinitives but real nouns.

Consider now the ambiguous sentence in (24).

- (24) El cantar de Juana me emocionó.
the to-sing of Juana me moved
'Juana's singing/Juana's song moved me.' (Varela 1979)

The ambiguity of (24) derives from the fact that *cantar* can refer to the result of the verbal event (as a synonym of *canción* 'song') or else to the activity in progress: in the latter case we have a homophonous form, the nominalized infinitive of type B. It is this infinitive that traditional grammar has considered similar to an abstract noun.

We find the same ambiguity in some deverbal nouns (as has been extensively studied by, among others, Grimshaw 1990). For example, *construcción* in (25a) can refer either to the event denoted by the verb, as an abstract noun as in (25b) or to the result of the event, as a concrete noun synonymous with "building" as in (25c):

- (25) a. La construcción provocó mucha polémica.
the construction caused a-lot-of controversy
'The construction caused a lot of controversy.'

- b. La construcción fue paralizada.
the construction was stopped
'The construction (=the process of building) was stopped.'
- c. La construcción fue derribada.
the construction was demolished
'The construction (=the building) was demolished.'
- d.??Las construcciones fueron paralizadas.
the constructions were stopped
- e. Las construcciones fueron derribadas.
the constructions were demolished
'The constructions (=the buildings) were demolished.'

The sentence in (25b) does not admit plural inflection, as we can see in (25d), where the interpretation "the processes of building were stopped" is not possible. This is an expected property of process nominalizations (see again Grimshaw 1989); (25c), instead, does take the plural, being a result noun, as shown in (25e). Returning now to (24), *cantar* shows the same behaviour. It can be pluralized, as a result noun; as a process nominalization (=an abstract noun), it cannot. Taking these data as my starting point, I hypothesize that in the constructions involving type B infinitives, the cases that have been called nominal infinitives here, *-r* is a derivational affix just like *-ción* is. This derivational affix attaches to the verbal stem and categorizes it as [+N]. Its meaning is that of activity, as mentioned above —the manner and frequency of the activity occurring as inferred values.

Now let us examine in more detail the semantic constraints on the infinitives of type B, exemplified in (7c-d), repeated here for convenience.

- (7) c. *El llegar tardío de Juan nos preocupó a todos.
the to-arrive late(adj.) of Juan us worried to all
- d. *El comprar una casa de Juan nos alegró.
the to-buy a house of Juan us made happy

The syntactic distribution of the two types of infinitives is not the same, as we have seen above. In fact, their semantic interpretation is also different: the infinitival clause involving an infinitive of type A is understood as a factive nominalization ("the fact that") while the nominal infinitive of type B is understood as an action or manner nominalization. What interests us at the moment is the fact that, while any verb can enter into the first type of clause, only intransitive verbs (and transitives used as intransitives) can enter into the nominal structure. Transitives and unaccusatives seem to be excluded from this latter type of structure.

Let us recall that intransitive verbs, as opposed to transitives and unaccusatives, denote unfinished, non-perfective, activities. Moreover, in Spanish unaccusatives and transitives, contrary to the intransitives, have the possibility of forming nominalizations in *-ción* and *-miento* (e.g., *construcción* 'building', *nacimiento* 'birth', vs. **andación*, **andamiento* from *andar* 'to walk'). This contrast can be explained if we consider that *-ción* or *miento* have a semantic value of perfectivity and so can only be affixed to perfective verbs. Thus, intransitive verbs, which express non-perfective activities, cannot take these nominalizing affixes.

In contrast, I have proposed that the *-r* derivational suffix bears a semantic value of non-perfectivity. That is why it attaches to verbs denoting an activity that is taking place (and the manner, or frequency of the activity), for instance, *andar* 'to walk' or *lamentar* 'to regret (understood as an activity)', but not resultative verbs such as *llegar* 'to arrive' or perfective predicates such as *comprar una casa* 'to buy a house'. Nominal infinitives of type B therefore exclude unaccusative (*nacer* 'to be born') and obligatorily transitive verbs (*hacer* 'to do, to make', *decir* 'to say'), as well as intransitive verbs denoting a state (*estar* 'to be'). With these verbs in the infinitive we can only form factive nominalizations but not "activity nominalizations".¹⁶

To repeat, I am taking *-r* to be another nominalizing affix in the lexicon; the feature that characterizes it is aspectual in nature: specifically, non-perfective. That is the reason why the verbs that accept it usually cooccur with adjectives (even adverbials, in some special cases) having a duration or frequency value, like *constante* 'constant', *continuo* 'continuous', or *siempre* 'always' vs. *súbito* 'sudden' or *repentino* 'unexpected', as illustrated in (26):

- (26) a. La vida desta corte no es vivir, sino un *continuo* morir.
 the life of-this court not is to-live, but a continuous to-die
 'Life in this court is not living, but a continuous dying.'
 (Guevara, from Lapesa 1985)
- b. Verás un *siempre* temer /un *eterno* idolatrar, un diestro lisonjear/y
 (you)will-see an always to-fear/an eternal to-adore, a skillful to-flatter /and
 un incierto pretender.
 an uncertain to-try
 'You will see a continual fearing/an eternal adoring, a skillful flattering/and
 an uncertain trying'. (Lope de Vega, from Lapesa 1985)

The derivational affix proposed is in semantic competition with other affixes in a number of languages.¹⁷ It does not therefore constitute a sort of nominalization by defect, as could be deduced from Otero's (1979) hypothesis that intransitive verbs form nominal infinitives because they have no means of deriving nouns with *-ción* or *-miento*. The opposite could then also be true: that is, that we do not use nominal infinitives for transitive and unaccusative verbs because we have no need to use this possibility. This argument poses two problems. First, it does not make clear why a V must become an N only because a language does not have a rule to form Ns from certain verbs. Second, the most common situation is that in which a verbal stem has a deverbal noun but can also form a nominal infinitive, as in the pairs *murmullo*

(16) There are some lexically exceptional cases of unaccusative or transitive (i.e., perfective) verbs with derivational *-r*, as the idiomatic expression *en un abrir y cerrar de ojos* 'in a to-open and to-shut of an eye'. I suggest that they are fossilized relics of an older grammar, since Old Spanish admitted nominal infinitives with verbs like *mover* 'to move', *nacer* 'to be born', *pasar* 'to pass' and *salir* 'to go out'. (See Bosque 1989 and the references therein.)

(17) Malkiel (1982) has pointed out that in French *pensée* 'a thought' and *penser* 'capacity to think' contrast in aspect. Boer & Tiel di Maio (1985) have pointed out that an aspectual constraint obtains in Italian between *lo scalare della montagna* 'the to-climb of-the mountain' and *la scalata della montagna* 'the climb of-the mountain'. Similar facts have been noted by Plann (1981) for Spanish.

'murmur' and *murmurar* 'to murmur', *muerte* 'death' and *morir* 'to die', and *lamento* 'lament' and *lamentar* 'to lament'.

In these cases, there is a certain semantic specialization: the infinitival form only refer to the verbal event while it is happening. In my terms, the nominal infinitive, as a process (or activity) nominalization, preserves the information relative to the event. Therefore, *lamentar* 'to lament' refers to the event as a dynamic activity, while *lamento* 'lament' may take the same reality as static or concrete (and pluralizable) —though it can also have other readings in the right context: see Zucchi (1993) and Ormazábal (1995)—. Thus, against the traditional view mentioned at the beginning of this paper, I do not agree that *murmurar* 'to murmur, murmur' is the same as *murmullo* 'murmur'. The examples in (27), with obvious expressive value, are included to illustrate the fact that the nominal infinitive is not simply a defective nominalization.

- (27) a. Nuestras vidas son los ríos/ que van a dar en la mar/que es el morir.
our lives are the rivers/which go to end in the sea/which is the to-die
'Our lives are rivers/which flow to the sea/which is dying.'
(Manrique, *Coplas*, vv.25-27)
- b. Ojos claros, serenos;/si de un dulce mirar sois alabados,/por qué si me
eyes light, calm; /if of a sweet look (you)-are praised, /why if me
miráis, miráis airados?
(you)-look-at, (you)-look angry?
'Bright, calm eyes;/if you are praised for a sweet look, why, if you look at
me, you look angry?'
(Cetina, *Madrigal*, vv.1-3)
- c. No me podrán quitar el dolorido/sentir, si ya del todo/
not me will-be-able to-take-away the painful/to-feel, if now of-the all/
primero no me quitan el sentido.
first not me (they)-take-away the feeling
'Nothing can take away my painful/suffering, unless first all/my feelings are
removed.'
(Garcilaso, *Égloga*, vv. 349-351)

The data examined up to now seem to confirm the hypothesis that, apart from the "false infinitives" which are incorporated into the lexicon of the language as ordinary nouns, there are two kinds of infinitival forms, depending on the nature of the infinitive morpheme in each case. I propose, then, that there are two homophonous morphemes. One of them is derivational and carries information about the lexical aspect of the resulting nominalization. Its derivational nature explains the semantic constraints on the verbs it affixes to, which must be activity verbs. We are thus able to account for an aspectual constraint over the formation of nominal infinitives that remained unexplained in previous analyses.

This nominalizing affix attaches to a verbal stem and recategorizes it as [+N]. This explains the obligatoriness of D with nominal infinitives. Now, if the affix is derivational in nature it could be followed by an inflectional affix, plural, for example, and this is not the case. The reason has already been suggested: the result of this affixation is a process nominalization (not a result one) and this class of nominalization cannot be pluralized (see (25d) above).

The other *-r* is an inflectional affix. Hence, it does not impose any semantic constraint on the verbal stem and does not recategorize it as a [+N]. This explains the verbal properties exemplified in (i)-(x). This inflectional affix carries aspectual and temporal information as was shown in (4) above and as will be further detailed in Section 4 below.

4. TP and DP Infinitival Structures in Spanish

For concreteness, I will adopt an approach along the lines of Chomsky (1993) for my analysis of type A infinitives as involving infinitival structures with both a syntactically realized Tense Phrase (TP) and an Aspect Phrase (AspP), as shown in (28) below. The information about the event is projected through this latter category.¹⁸ Thus, an infinitival form of type A is a V and has a specific aspectual feature and a relative temporal feature. Both of them are strong features; therefore, the verb must check them before LF. The verb checks these features when it raises to the head of the AspP above the VP and then to the head of the TP which selects AspP as its complement.

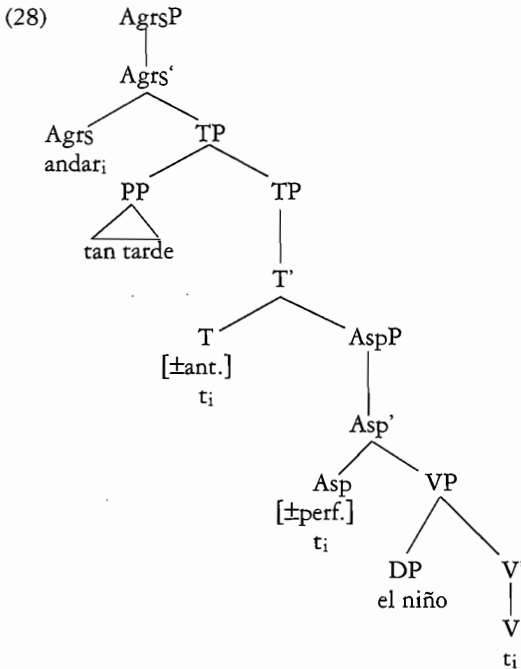
As a V, the infinitive is able to head a VP, so the possibility exists of a DP object in the accusative (*lo* in 1a). Since there is a TP projection, nominative Case-checking can take place (*tú* is in the nominative in 1a).¹⁹ Furthermore, if we assume a T category, we can derive the possibility of negating this kind of clauses, as illustrated in (13).²⁰ The possibility of temporal adjuncts also follows from it.

(18) In previous work (de Miguel 1992) I have defended the existence of an *event* argument (following Davidson 1967 and Higginbotham 1985, 1987), which contains the information relative to the kind of event denoted by a predicate. I have proposed that Aspect is the category in which the argument *event* is projected and I have tried to prove its relevance to some syntactic processes in Spanish. Other proposals to codify the information at issue exist, in particular that of Grimshaw (1990), who proposes a specific level of Event structure (distinct from θ -structure) for the lexical representation of aspectual distinctions. A brief summary of various proposals can be found in de Miguel (1992).

(19) Under conditions that I do not consider in this work but which crucially involve the presence of TP. The postposition of the subject (S) in these infinitive clauses, as opposed to the S-V order in the corresponding finite clause (cf. *el decirlo tú/el que tú lo digas*), must be related to the mechanism for licensing nominative subjects that has operated. More specifically, if we suppose that the nominal features of Agreement-Subject (Agr-S) and T are weak features, then the nominative DP does not need to move before LF. As the verb has raised to ASP and T to check its aspectual and temporal features, the V-S order in the clauses under study follows. But we could also presume that, in relation with the presence of T⁰, there is a C⁰ position available as a landing site for V in these clauses. If V has raised to C⁰, the V-S order also follows (as Elordieta 1993 proposes). If we assume this second hypothesis, it will be necessary to explain why the V has to raise to C⁰. We can suppose that *el* is an element which selects CPs with a [+finite] or [-finite] T and which binds this T making it strong and able to license its own subject. In fact, infinitival with lexical subjects are in general only possible as adjuncts or subjects, the only exception being the type A infinitives with an obligatory article as in (23a). Again, I will take this to be an issue for further study (see notes 6 and 13 above).

(20) That is if we assume, with Zanuttini (1990), Laka (1990) and others, that Negation is in relation with the presence of a T feature.

In (28) I present, in a simplified and, in some respects, provisional way, the structure proposed for (6a).



As for the type B infinitives, these are nominal and head a NP. I suggest that this NP is the complement of an Aspect head which carries the information about the event denoted by the predicate. As argued in the previous section, in nominal infinitives the event described bears an “activity” content: in other words, the Asp feature is specified as [-perfective]. Since this is a strong feature, movement of the V for feature-checking purposes is an overt syntax operation.

The presence of (preferably manner) adjectives modifying the nominal infinitive, as illustrated in (12), follows from the proposed activity value. I consider that these adjuncts are in AspP and that they provide information about the kind of event denoted by the verb: that is, they are in a relation with the (eventive) feature of the head Asp (but see Demonte 1991 about the relation between Asp and predicative APs). This is the reason why these structures have often been called “manner nominalizations”: since adjectives like *constante* ‘constant’, *continuo* ‘continuous’, or *dulce* ‘sweet’ in (12b) above modify Asp, the resulting interpretation is that of manner. But this is not the only reading; in fact, nominal infinitives admit other kinds of modifiers informing about the frequency, duration and location of the event, as illustrated in (23c-e) above. Moreover, if the nominal infinitives are strictly manner nominalizations, we must explain why a manner adjective like *aburrido* ‘boring’ is prevented from appearing in them (29a).²¹ The behavior of the nominal infinitive

(21) My thanks to I. Bosque (p.c.), for suggesting that I investigate in this direction.

with respect to *aburrido* is the same as that of other nominalizations, for instance, that of *construcción* when understood as a process nominalization (29b).

- (29) a. *El aburrido andar del niño
 the boring to-walk of-the child
 b. *La aburrida construcción de edificios
 the boring construction of buildings

Aburrido is prevented from appearing in both (29a) and (29b) because it must be predicated of subjects and the DPs of (29) contain no nominative subject. In contrast, the APs in (12) and (23d-e) are predicated of the event, so they are allowed in the activity or process nominalization.

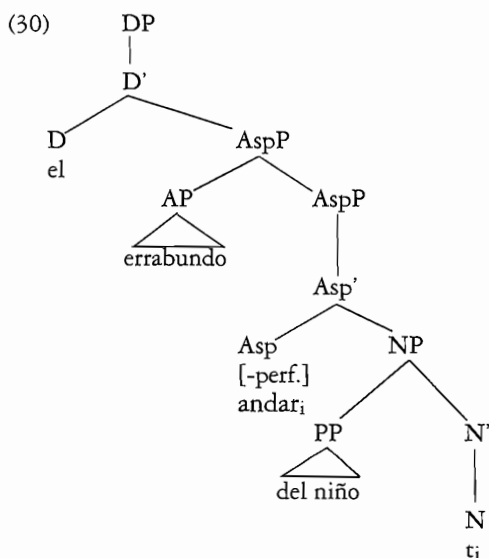
As I have said above, once the nominal status of the type B infinitives is admitted, the obligatoriness of D follows (see Longobardi 1994). The rest of the properties exemplified in (i)-(x) are also derived from the proposed nominal character: type B infinitives can cooccur with *el* but also with a demonstrative, a possessive or a quantifier. The reason is that they are DPs, which refer to specific objects, contrary to type A infinitives, which are specific in the sense of having specification for tense and aspect: that is, because they refer to a specific event, not to an object. As DPs, type B infinitives, when coordinated, trigger plural agreement on the main verb (see Odriozola & Zabala 1995). With regard to the apparently unexpected acceptability of this type of infinitives with an inherent or reflexive clitic pronoun, as illustrated in (9), this can be easily explained if we assume, with Zucchi (1993), that these kinds of clitics are not arguments of verbs and may not even require the presence of a VP node. As Raposo & Uriagereka (1994) suggest, inherent and reflexive clitics are not functionally (or syntactically) realized as an independent category (as accusative clitics are) but are internal to the VP: thus, they are inside the configurational frame in which the aspectual suffix checks its compatibility with the aspectual content of the predicate.²²

The complementary distribution of negation and of adverbial vs. adjectival adjuncts in the two types of infinitives, as well as the rest of the properties illustrated in (i) to (x), follow from the DP structure that the derivational affix projects in contrast with the sentential structure projected by the functional one.²³

A simplified structure for (7a) is given in (30):

(22) Actually, when I speak about the aspectual content of a V and its compatibility with the aspectual content of the derivational suffix under study, I am taking the whole VP to be the configurational frame where an event is aspectually specified, as has been extensively noted in the literature on Aspect. However, the morphological processes take place within the frame of the word. Morphologists, hence, must explain how derivational processes can interact with Aspect.

(23) The idea of forming different kinds of nominalizations through either lexical or syntactic means appears also in Picallo (1991). Odriozola & Zabala (1995) also propose for Basque that certain nominalizations are formed in the lexicon and others in the syntax. This possibility can of course be traced back to Chomsky (1970).



5. Some problematic cases

I now turn to some acceptable examples which seem to exhibit both verbal and nominal properties.²⁴ They are as in (31):

- (31) a. Ese desaforado beber cerveza de los adolescentes
 that unrestrained to-drink beer of the young
 'That unrestrained beer drinking of the young'
- b. Ese florecer de los claveles
 that to-flower of the carnations
 'That flowering of the carnations'

(24) I do not examine here cases such as:

- (i) Ese afilar de cuchillos
 that to-sharp of knives
 'That sharpening of knives' (Plann 1981)

It seems an isolated example. In fact, the possibility of similar examples is excluded, as we can see in (ii):

- (ii) a. *Ese romper de vasos b. *Ese leer de libros
 that to-break of glasses that to-read of books

It is interesting to note that, although it is unusual, example (i) is in fact predicted by our hypothesis: the object in the genitive exhibits an indefiniteness effect similar to the one noted in examples in (31)-(34) below in the text, as shown by the ungrammaticality of (iii):

- (iii) *Ese afilar del cuchillo
 that to-sharp of-the knife'

For the moment, I have no explanation as to how the Case-marking of this bare NP might take place (but see Oyharzábal 1993 and Odriozola & Zabala 1995); Demonte & Varela (1996) have suggested it could be a lexically derived subject, not an object. Anyway, the interesting thing here is that, whatever mechanism operates and whatever status the NP *cuchillos* has, the resulting nominal infinitive denotes again an activity event, which does not hold when the object is a DP: hence the ungrammaticality of (iii).

- c. Me molesta ese constante ir y venir de la gente.
me(dat.) bothers that constant to-go and to-come of the people
'That constant coming and going is irritating me.'
- d. Me encanta ese querer saberlo todo de Luis.
me(dat.) delights that to-want to-know-it(acc.) all of Luis
'I love the way Luis wants to know everything'
- (32) a. *Ese desafortado beber la cerveza de los adolescentes
that unrestrained to-drink the beer of the young
b. ?Ese desafortado beber cerveza de Juan
that unrestrained to-drink beer of Juan
'That unrestrained beer drinking of Juan's'
- (33) *Ese florecer del clavel
that to-flower of-the carnation
- (34) a. *Me molesta el ir/venir de la gente.
me(dat.) bothers the to-go/to-come of the people
b. *Me encanta el saberlo todo de Luis.
me(dat.)delights the to-know-it(acc.) all of Luis

Example (31) involves a nominal infinitive in which there is a direct object, a possibility excluded by my hypothesis which does predict, however, the ungrammaticality of (32a). The kind of counterexample in (31a) has been treated in more detail in previous analyses (see Bosque 1989; Fernández Lagunilla & Anula 1994; and Yoon & Bonet Farran 1991; as well as Salvi 1982 for Italian, among others). However, none of these analyses predicts that the range of permitted direct objects is restricted to bare NPs, as shown by the contrast between (31a) and (32a). This is a strong indication that there is lexical incorporation of the NP to the verb. The constraint that forbids transitive verbs from forming nominal infinitives has not been violated: because of the incorporated NP the predicate comes to denote an activity (durative, habitual, or repeated), as intransitive verbs do.

The marked acceptability of (32b) has to do with the fact that the DP subject in the genitive, *de Juan*, is singular and does not trigger the reading of repeated activity in the same way as the plural DP in (31a), *los adolescentes*, does. However, (32b) is possible in the sense of a characteristic property of the singular subject ("that unrestrained beer drinking which characterizes Juan"), as Zucchi (1993) has noted.

With regard to the contrast between (31b) and (33), (31b) contains an unaccusative verb with a genitive subject (*de los claveles*) which is also unexpected in our analysis. But the grammaticality disappears when the subject is singular, as shown in (33). The grammaticality of (31b), then, is related to the repeated, nonperfective activity reading conferred by the plural noun on the unaccusative verb, as in (31a) vs. (32b), and as in the unusual example of genitive object mentioned in note 24 above.

In (31c) we have two perfective unaccusative verbs and in (31d) a stative verb. I have claimed that these are not possible with type B infinitives, but (31c-d) are perfectly grammatical. However, they are not grammatical in other contexts, as shown in (34a-b). The ungrammaticality of (34a-b) confirms our hypothesis. In (31c), the presence of *constante* and the coordination of the events denoted by *ir* and

venir interact to give the predicate an aspectual value of iterativity or atelicity semantically compatible with the derivational suffix *-r*. In (31d), the presence of the modal *querer* gives the stative predicate a generic value compatible with the atelicity triggered by the suffix.

The examples in (31) suggest that it is not the verb itself that determines the possibility of accepting the derivational affix proposed here, but rather the lexical aspect of the predicate headed by the verb. Nonetheless, this hypothesis must be refined before we can propose a more explicit account of these problematic cases.

6. Summary

In this paper I have examined two kinds of infinitive structures which are very similar in appearance but which have a number of clearly differentiated properties. I have proposed that there are two homophonous affixes with different categorial status and, finally, I have suggested an aspectual explanation for the class of nominal infinitives, based on the semantic content of the derivational affix. With this analysis it becomes possible to account for the hitherto unexplained exclusion of some kinds of verbs from these structures.

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