

## Causality by Adjuncts: Spanish *de*-PP

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In event structure approaches (Van Valin 2005), causation has been traditionally viewed as a notion embodied in a single operator: CAUSE. Diverse empirical investigations, however, have shown that distinctions can be made, for example, in terms of direct, sociative, and indirect causation, and that each of these correlate systematically with lexical, morphological, and periphrastic causatives (Shibatani & Pardeshi 2002). In the same vein, we contend that specific types of causation can be recognized by looking at how causers are realized in syntax. Specifically, we analyze the nature of the causal relation expressed by the Spanish adjunct prepositional phrase *de* ‘of/from’. Our claim here is that the causal meaning of *de*-PP resides in the introduction of an ‘internal’, ‘immediate’, ‘unintentional’, and ‘inactive’ (DeLancey 1984) Effector called ‘C-Source’. These features are displayed by (1).

- (1) Un joven tiritó de frío en el agua.  
‘A young man shivered from the cold in the water.’

The verb *tiritar* ‘shiver’ is an intransitive verb denoting the manner of motion of an Actor. Spanish does not have a direct and lexical causative version of this verb; thus, *de*-PP dodges this constraint by positing a C-Source that is ‘unintentional’ (indeed, an inanimate entity), ‘internal’ (the cold is here a body sensation of the Actor), ‘immediate’ (it is the closest causal factor) and ‘inactive’ (it denotes a body sensation, that is, a state). The uniqueness of C-Source is made apparent by its co-occurrence with other causal factors on the same causal path, as in (2). Crucially, C-Source is internal, inactive and the most immediate of all the causes, as stated in (3).

- (2) La maestra hizo tiritar de miedo a los niños con sus historias.  
‘The teacher made the kids shiver from fear with her stories’

- (3) Agent (teacher) > Instrument (stories) > C-source (fear) > effect event (shiver)

The causative alternation with psych verbs highlights the disparity between C-Sources and Agents in terms of intentionality. In (4) the clown can be intentional, but not the one in (5); here the responsibility for the change of an emotional state is kept on the Experiencer by C-source.

C-Source also contrasts with other PP causers. The *con*-PP like in *La puerta se cerró con el viento* ‘The door closed with the wind’ introduces an ‘external’ force that cannot be realized by *de*-PP, as seen in *\*La puerta se cerró del viento*. A *por*-PP version of (5) can bear an intentional interpretation of the clown like in *El niño se asustó por el payaso* ‘The child got frightened by the clown.’

- (4) El payaso asustó al niño a propósito.  
'The clown frightened the child.'
- (5) El niño se asustó del payaso.  
'The child got frightened because of the clown.'

The above data has at least two broad implications. First and foremost, it calls for a fine-grained modulation of the CAUSE operator in the event structure to account for all the differences among the various syntactic realizations of causal relations. Second, it could in turn provide a principled explanation for the choice of the different prepositions as realizations of causers.

## References

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