Aspectual Interpretation in Spanish of Adverb-Modified Verbal Forms*

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Summary

García Fernández (2000a) showed that compound forms of Spanish verbs can express what in the literature is known as “Continuative Perfect”, and held that this aspectual variety focalises an event from its beginning until an internal point, without focalising its end. He further proposed a classification of aspectual varieties whose first and foremost division was that between conclusive and inconclusive events. Imperfect and Continuative were regrouped within the first division, Continuative being considered as an aspectual variety different from the Perfect. The aim of the present paper is, in the first place, to cover the possible morphological expressions of the Continuative and study which ones are shared with the Imperfect aspect. We will later establish the restrictions imposed upon them by the different Aktionsarten. We will furthermore analyze the relationships between the Continuative and the Imperfect aspect variety called “continuous”, and, lastly, we will provide an explanation for the obligatory use of certain adverbial complements in the Continuative’s expression.

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1. The Notion of Grammatical Aspect

In this paragraph we are going to introduce the notion of grammatical aspect that will be employed throughout the paper. Following, among others, Smith (1991) and Klein (1992, 1994), we will define the grammatical aspect as a relational category, more specifically, as the grammaticalization of the non-deictic relationship between two intervals. According to Klein (1992), aspect is the relationship between the Time of the Situation and Topic Time\(^1\). The Time of the Situation is the time during which the event denoted by the lexical part of the verb takes place. Topic Time, on the other hand, is the period during which a certain statement holds true in a given situation. According to Klein, this relationship may present, among others, the following possibilities:

**Imperfect**: Topic Time is included in the Time of the Situation.

In this aspectual variety an internal part of the situation is focalised, without focalising either its beginning or its end. In this way, any supposition about the end of a situation in Imperfect is a pragmatic inference, as grammar has nothing to say in this respect. So, in the sentence *Ayer Pedro ordenaba sus libros* (*Yesterday Peter ordered his books* - IMP (imperfect)) we only know that Pedro was ordering his books yesterday, but we do not know whether he is continuing with this task today or not.

**Perfective** or **Aorist**: Topic Time includes the end of the Time of the Situation and the beginning of the time that follows the Time of the Situation.

We will employ the term Aorist throughout this paper, following Bertinetto (1986: 198 and following); Klein called it Perfective. In this variety the whole event is focalised, the beginning as well as the end, as Smith (1991) points out, so that Topic Time coincides exactly with the Time of the Situation\(^2\). In this manner, in a sentence like *Ayer Pedro ordenó sus libros* (*Yesterday Peter ordered his books*), the whole event is stated, so that the subject finished ordering his books.

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\(^1\) The relationship between the Time of the Situation and Topic Time is not deictic, unlike grammar tense. Deictics are linguistic elements that take part of their meaning from the situation in which they are used; see Cinque (1976), among many others.

\(^2\) We do not follow Klein (1992) in the definition of Aorist, as it is not indicated here, as though it is in Smith’s, that in Aorist is focalised the end as well as the beginning of the event. See García Fernández (2000b: 50-51) on this same subject.
**Perfect:** Topic Time follows the Time of the Situation.

In this aspectual variety the results of an event are focalised. In order to do this, in the first place, the situation must be concluded, and, secondly, there must be something after the situation that can be focalised. A sentence that illustrates this aspectual variety is the following one: *Ayer Pedro ya había ordenado sus libros* (*Yesterday Peter had already ordered his books*), where it is stated that the result of the event *ordenar sus libros* was relevant yesterday, that is, the books were already ordered yesterday.

We can graph the different aspectual varieties Klein distinguishes if we represent, as appears in García Fernández (2000b: 49 and 50), the Time of the Situation by the – sign, the time that follows or precedes the Time of the Situation by the + sign and Topic Time between square brackets [ ] :

**TABLE I**

**Imperfect** (*Ayer Pedro ordenaba sus libros*)

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-----[----] -----++++++++++++
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**Aorist** (*Ayer Pedro ordenó sus libros*)

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+++++++[+--------+]++++++
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**Perfect** (*Ayer Pedro ya había ordenado sus libros*)

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------------+++++[++++]+++++
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In the following TABLE the morphological correspondence in Spanish of the above defined aspectual varieties is shown:

**TABLE II**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphological Expression</th>
<th>Imperfect Aspect</th>
<th>Aorist or Perfective Aspect</th>
<th>Perfect Aspect</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>present and imperfect</td>
<td>simple past and compound forms</td>
<td>compound forms</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Klein’s definition provides for the existence of other aspectual varieties, that is, it provides for the possibility of the two intervals in question, the Time of the Situation and Topic Time, relating to each other in other ways. In the next section we are going to maintain that, in Spanish, as in English, there are verbal forms that, in the circumstances we will later specify, express what in the literature is known as "continuative Perfect". This aspectual variety focalises or states an event from its beginning until an internal point, without focalising its end. We can graph it this way, following Klein’s system:

continuative Perfect

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++++++++++[+---------]------
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2. The continuative

2.1. The continuative and the Perfect

García Fernández (2000a) tried to prove that the compound forms of the Spanish verb can express what we have just called "continuative Perfect"\(^3\), that is, an aspectual variety that focalises or states an event from its beginning until an internal point, without focalising its end, as shown in the following examples:

(1) a. Ha vivido sola desde que llegó a España.
   She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'

b. Ha estado preocupado desde que se enteró del accidente.
   'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'

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\(^3\) We take the denomination "continuative" from Fenn (1987: 6), who attributes it to Kruisinga (1931). Bertinetto (1994) employs "inclusive" and Havu (1997: 226), "persistent". Once we establish that the continuative is an aspectual variety independent from the Perfect, we will employ the initial block capital. The aspectual varieties will be written with an initial capital; within each aspectual variety, the subvarieties such as experiential, resultative, habitual, etc. will be written in lower case. We now have to point out that, for reasons of space, we will limit ourselves to the study of past forms and set future forms aside. In the same fashion, we will set aside the negative sentences very often associated with the continuative; see García Fernández (2000a).
In many works dedicated to the English verb, the continuative is included in the Perfect varieties, resultative and experiential, as it coincides with them in being expressed by compound "to have" forms:

(2)  
   a. They have arrived. (RESULTATIVE)  
   b. We have already visited England. (EXPERIENTIAL)  
   c. We have known her for six years. (CONTINUATIVE)  

In the resultative Perfect of (2a), the results of a previous action are discussed; in our example, the one denoted by the verb *arrived*, so that this sentence would come to be equivalent to *they are here*. In the experiential Perfect we talk about the state implied by having a certain kind of experience, in a very broad sense; in our example, having visited England at least once. In the continuative Perfect, we discuss an event that began at a time point in the past and goes on without interruption until the present. As we can see, the (2a) and (2b) examples’ resultative and experiential have in common the fact of affirming the state of things, result or experience produced by a previously concluded event, whereas in the example (2c) we have an event that was started previously but is not completed. This difference separates the working of the continuative from resultative and experiential and brings it closer to the Imperfect aspect, characterized by not stating the end of events.

There are other facts that lead us to think that the continuative, in spite of being expressed by compound verb forms, is closely related to the Imperfect. We will consider them in the next section.

2.2. The continuative and the Imperfect

Some forms typically associated with the Imperfect aspect can also express the continuative aspectual variety; we will prove it, in the first place, with stative predicates, which are the ones that appeared in (1):

(3)  
   a. Vive sola desde que llegó a España.  
      'She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'  
   b. Está preocupado desde que se enteró del accidente.  
      'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'
In the two examples of (3), as occurred in (1), there is an event in the main clause that started to take place at a point in the past and continues taking place without interruption at the moment of speech. The point when the events denoted by the indicative present predicates of the main clauses starts is given by the event denoted by the subordinate predicates, which is, in (3a), the arrival in Spain and, in (3b), the news of the accident. That is, the examples (1) and (3) are synonymous. The possibility of this happening depends on the appearance of a temporal complement headed by the preposition desde. We will consider the following examples, where such a complement does not appear:

(4)  
a. Ha vivido sola.  
'She has lived alone'  
b. Ha estado preocupado.  
'He has been worried'

(5)  
a. Vive sola.  
'She lives alone'  
b. Está preocupado.  
'He is worried'

It is evident that (4a) is not synonymous with (5a) and neither is (4b) with (5b). Furthermore, the interpretation of the present perfect in (1) and in (4) is not the same. In (4) the events denoted by the predicates vivir sola and estar preocupado have started and concluded in the past with regard to the moment of speech, whereas this is not the case in (1).

Continuing with the morphological coincidence between Imperfect and continuative we introduced at the beginning of this section, we now wish to point out that the progressive form, that characteristically expresses the Imperfect progressive variety, can also be employed to express continuative:

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4. Some speakers consider that, in addition to having the same interpretation as the examples (3), the examples (1) allow the interpretation that the events denoted by the predicates ha vivido sola and ha estado preocupado are concluded before the moment of speech. We will not consider this interpretation, which is that of an Aorist or an experiential Perfect.
(6)  a. Está escribiendo desde las seis.
    'S/he has been writing since six'
    b. Está jugando al fútbol desde que ha llegado.
    'S/he has been playing football since s/he came'

(7)  a. Está escribiendo la carta desde que ha terminado de comer.
    'S/he has been writing the letter since s/he finished eating'
    b. Está haciendo la maleta desde las tres.
    'S/he has been packing her/his case since three'

We have established that forms characteristic of the Imperfect aspect may, in
determined constructions, express the same aspectual meaning of continuative as the
present perfect. We will now compare the continuative with the varieties of Imperfect
termed "progressive" and "habitual" in order to gain a better understanding of the
similarities between them.

Bertinetto (1986: 120-181) holds that the characteristic of the Imperfect is its basic
property of not stating the conclusion of the event denoted by the predicate in question.
We will illustrate the two varieties we are discussing and demonstrate how both cases fit
Bertinetto’s characterization:

(8)  a. María estaba preparando la cena.       (PROGRESSIVE)
    'Mary was-IMP preparing supper'
    b. Roberto solía ir al gimnasio todas las semanas.  (HABITUAL)
    'Robert used to go to the gym every week'

In the two sentences (8) we see that, in the first case, it is not stated that Mary has
finished preparing supper and that in the second one it is not stated that Robert does no
longer go to the gym every week. If we now give an example with the continuative
periphrasis <llevar + gerund>, we realize that the end of the situation is also not stated,
in this case, that Peter did no longer live with his aunt and uncle:

5. We are not going to discuss the Imperfect continuous variety now; we will deal with it in §4 of this
   paper, where its relationship with the continuative will be studied.
6. As we will see in § 2.3, this periphrasis is one of the possible morphological expressions of
(9) Pedro llevaba viviendo con sus tíos dos años.  (CONTINUATIVE)
'Peter had been living with his aunt and uncle for two years'

Starting from the two observations we have made, that is, that the continuative does not state the ends of the situations and that, in certain constructions, it can be expressed through forms associated with the Imperfect aspect, we conclude, in accordance with García Fernández (2000a), that the continuative has to be studied as an aspectual variety different from the Perfect, sharing with the Imperfect the characteristic of not stating the conclusion of the event.

Thus, we define the Continuative as a grammatical aspect variety that does not focalise the end of the situations it contains, but does focalise their beginning.

2.3. The Morphological Expression of the Continuative

One of the reasons why the Continuative has been paid less attention might be the variety of its possible morphological realizations. In the aspectual field the biunivocal relationship between semantic content and morphological realization is the exception and not the rule. In fact, Bertinetto (1986: 85) points out in this respect:

"L'Aspetto non è quasi mai una categoria rigorosamente manifestata sul piano morfologico. In molti casi, la valenza aspettuale deve essere individuata per inferenza, piuttosto che per diretta commutazione tra i Tempi".

In reference to the Continuative, we will now go on to enumerate the forms that can express it, in order to study in detail in the following sections the restrictions the different Aktionsarten impose upon each of them. Nonetheless, we should first point out that each one of the possible forms of expressing the Continuative has several Aktionsarten restrictions, which will be the subject of § 3. Summarizing the content of this section, we can anticipate that the Continuative can be expressed by an exclusively continuative verbal periphrasis, <llevar + gerund>, which is also defective and has only present and imperfect forms. Together with this, there are also the simple forms that express Imperfect aspect, that is to say, the present simple and imperfect and their respective compound forms and the corresponding forms of the progressive periphrasis.

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7. For this reason, we will write Continuative with a capital C.
Therefore, the Continuative is clearly associated with the morphological forms of present and imperfect, since these forms appear in all the expressions of this aspectual variety.

In the first place, the periphrasis < llevar + gerund > characteristically expresses the continuative value:

(10) a. Lleva una hora bailando en el escenario.
    'S/he has been dancing on the stage for an hour'
b. Llevábamos veinte minutos esperando a Nuria.
    'We had been waiting for Nuria for twenty minutes'

The examples (10) adjust perfectly to the definition of Continuative we have given; indeed, the quantified complements una hora and veinte minutos indicate, respectively, how long the dancing and the waiting last, so that the inception of the event is clearly being specified. If we take (10a) into consideration, for instance, the adverbial complement una hora points out that the dance started an hour before the speech time. On the other hand, it is evident that neither the dance is finished in (10a) nor the wait is finished in (10b), so that the event is open and continues taking place, exactly as established in the definition of the Continuative.

Secondly, we have already seen that some predicates can express the Continuative with the present perfect and the pluperfect:

(11) a. Ha estado preocupado desde que se enteró del accidente.
    'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'
b. Siempre había tenido dinero.
    'S/he had always had money'

Thirdly, the present and imperfect simple forms can express Continuative, in the circumstances we will determine in section 3:

(12) a. Está preocupado desde que se enteró del accidente.
    'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'
b. Estaba preocupado desde que se había enterado del accidente.
    'He had been worried since he had learned about the accident'
As we have already said in § 2.2 when discussing the relationship to the Imperfect, in addition, in certain contexts, for instance, with complements introduced by the preposition desde, the progressive periphrasis in present or in imperfect can also express Continuative. This fourth possibility is illustrated by the following examples:

(13)  a. Está ayudando a su padre desde hace una hora.
      'S/he has been helping her/his father for an hour'
   b. Estaba estudiando desde hacía una hora.
      'S/he had been studying for an hour'

Note that in the examples (13) we have two cases of Continuative and not Imperfect progressive. If we observe the definition of the progressive established by Bertinetto (1986: 120-131), we realize that it is not just a single instant that is being focalised, which would in fact be incompatible with the meaning of the preposition desde. We can prove this fact with a paraphrase of the periphrasis <llevar + gerund>. Note that the sentences (14) are adequate paraphrases of those of (13):

(14)  a. Lleva ayudando a su padre una hora.
      'S/he has been helping her/his father for an hour'
   b. Llevaba estudiando una hora.
      'S/he had been studying for an hour'

In the cases where the progressive periphrasis cannot be interpreted as Continuative this paraphrase is not possible, as shown by the (15a) to (15b) comparison. Setting aside the obligatory inclusion of the durative complement in (15b) to avoid the ungrammaticality of the sequence, it is evident that in (15a) we face a case where only a single instant is being focalised, as Bertinetto points out, whereas this does not occur in (15b):

(15)  a. Cuando llegamos, estaba estudiando.
      'S/he was-IMP studying when we arrived'
   b. #Cuando llegamos, llevaba estudiando *(una hora).
      'When we arrived, s/he had been studying (for an hour)'

A noteworthy fact pointed out by several scholars is that the progressive periphrasis has perfective forms in Spanish. This fact contrasts, on the one hand, with what occurs
in Italian, examples (16), where the progressive periphrasis cannot take any perfective form, and with what occurs with the periphrasis of habitual, examples (17), and with the Continuative, examples (18), which cannot take them in Spanish either:

(16) a. *{Sono / ero / fui / sarò} stato scrivendo tutto il giorno.
    b. *Stetti leggendo tutto il giorno.

The examples (16) belong to Bertinetto (1986: 233 and 234).

(17) a. *Ha solido ir al gimnasio todas las semanas.
   'S/he has used to go to the gym every week'
    b. *Solío ir al gimnasio todas las semanas.
   'S/he used to go to the gym every week'

(18) a. *He llevado aquí viviendo dos años.
   'I have been living here for two years'
    b. *Llevé viviendo aquí dos años.
   'I had been living here for two years'

The ungrammaticality of the examples (16), (17) and (18) is explained by the incompatibility between the aspectual meaning of Imperfect of the periphrases in question and the perfective meaning of the forms in which they appear conjugated.

English also possesses perfective forms of the progressive periphrasis. These forms express precisely the aspectual value of the Continuative, and not, as could be expected, Imperfect progressive:8

(19) a. I’ve been working in the garden all day.
    b. I’ve been trying to phone you all day.
    c. I’ve been thinking about it ever since.

The examples (19) are quoted from Fenn (1987: 6-7).

In the examples (19), we have the aspectual meaning we have termed Continuative: the events in question have begun in the past but have not finished by the speech time.

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8. McCoard (1978) and Fenn (1987) term this value "up to now".
Well, in Spanish, the progressive periphrasis in the perfective forms with the auxiliary *haber* also expresses Continuative, as happens in English. Let us consider some examples of this possibility:

(20)  

a. Ha estado comiendo desde que vino a casa.  
'S/he has been eating since s/he came home'  
b. Había estado trabajando desde las seis.  
'S/he had been working since six'

Note that, in both instances, as is characteristic in the Continuative, the events have begun in the past and have not finished with regard to a reference point, situated in the present in (20a) and in the past in (20b).

This explanation, however, does not account for the meaning of the simple past of the progressive periphrasis, which never has the continuative meaning. Based on Rohrer’s (1977: 123-128) observations taken from Squartini (1998: 44), we hold that the perfective forms of the progressive periphrasis are characterized by their detelicizing effect, that is, the *telos* some predicates possess is suspended by these periphrastic forms, so that accomplishments are transformed into activities. This characterization can be extended to all the perfective forms of the progressive periphrasis, that is, to compound forms with *haber* and to the progressive simple past.

Therefore, the basic value of all the perfective forms of the progressive periphrasis (those formed with the compound forms of *estar* and the one formed with the simple past of the auxiliary) is that of detelicizing the predicate in question. We illustrate this value through the contrast between the two examples (21); in (21a) the *telos* is stated, so the television set is repaired; of (21b), on the contrary, it cannot be concluded that it was:

(21)  

a. Juan arregló el televisor.  
'John repaired the television set'  
b. Juan estuvo arreglando el televisor.  
'John was repairing the television set'

In the compound forms of the periphrasis, the value of expressing Continuative is added to this. Note that this possibility is parallel to what happens with states, with which the compound forms with *haber* express Continuative, which means that it is a characteristic of the combination of *he* and *había* with the participle.
In this section we have introduced the aspectual variety of Continuative which focalises an event from its beginning until an internal point of its development without focalising its end, and we have seen its possible morphological expressions. In the following sections, we will see how the Continuative expresses itself in each of the Aktionsarten. We will now summarize in TABLE III what we have said about the different morphological expressions of the Continuative:

### TABLE III

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Expression of the Continuative</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;llevar + gerund&gt;</td>
<td>Lleva corriendo veinte minutos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Llevaba estudiando dos horas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect</td>
<td>Siempre ha vivido solo.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pluperfect</td>
<td>Había estado enfermo desde el final de la guerra.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present</td>
<td>Está enfermo desde el año pasado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperfect</td>
<td>Estaba divorciado desde hacía un año.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present progressive</td>
<td>Está limpiando desde esta mañana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperfect progressive</td>
<td>Estaba jugando desde que había llegado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present perfect progressive</td>
<td>He estado leyendo desde que he llegado.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pluperfect progressive</td>
<td>Había estado trabajando desde las tres.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 3. Restrictions of Aktionsarten in the Expression of the Continuative

It is accepted that the line of research termed Aristotelic-Vendlerian has been one of the most fruitful in modern semantics. Vendler (1957) establishes that there are natural classes of predicates from the semantic and syntactic point of view. This author distinguishes four types of Aktionsarten:

(22) a. states: \( Sabe \) ruso (S/he knows Russian).
    b. activities: \( Estudia \) en su habitación (S/he studies in her/his room).
    c. accomplishments: \( Arregló \) el frigorífico (S/he repaired the refrigerator).
    d. achievements: \( Murió \) a las once de la noche (S/he died at eleven p.m.).
e. semelfactives:  \textit{Llaman a la puerta (They are knocking at the door).}^{9}

The restrictions exerted by the different \textit{Aktionsarten} on the aspectual varieties we have studied in § 1 are very significant. To give just one example, a stative predicate which denotes an intrinsic property of an individual which is invariable, such as \textit{proceder de familia humilde (to come from a humble family)}, can only appear in Imperfect, as in (23a), but not in Aorist, example (23b), nor in Perfect, example (23c), since these aspectual varieties imply the end of the event denoted by the predicate, which is incompatible with the type of predicates represented by \textit{proceder de familia humilde}:

(23) a. Juan procedía de familia humilde.
   'John came-IMP from a humble family'
 b. *Juan procedió de familia humilde.
   'John came from a humble family'
 c. *Juan ya (ha/había) procedido de familia humilde.
   'John (has/had) already came from a humble family'

As was foreseeable, the same occurs in the case of the Continuative. In the following sections we will study in detail the restrictions which each \textit{Aktionsart} establishes in the expression of the Continuative.

3.1. States

States are a type of predicates, that, from the point of view of \textit{Aktionsart}, expresses states of things or characteristics of a subject that remain unchanged for the length of time they form the predicate. \textit{To know the truth, to exist or to remain} are just some examples of stative predicates.

As we have just said in the definition, these predicates imply the absence of change or progress in time, because they are not used to express an ongoing process, but a state of things. This is the reason why adverbial complements like \textit{sin cesar (incessantly)} or \textit{sin parar (non-stop)} are unacceptable, as shown in (24):

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9. This fifth group, as will be explained in § 3.4, did not appear in Vendler’s classification (1957). It has been other scholars, among them Bertinetto (1986) and Smith (1991), who have distinguished them as a group.
(24) a. *Pedro permanece junto a su mujer sin cesar.
   ‘Peter stays with his wife incessantly’
b. *Sabemos su nombre sin parar.
   ‘We know his name non-stop’

Further on we shall see to what extent these adverbial complements contribute to the interpretation of Continuative in the other varieties of Aktionsart.

Combined with complements or adverbial clauses introduced by desde, states can express Continuative aspect both in the present perfect and in the pluperfect, as we show in the following examples:

(25) a. Ha vivido solo desde que se divorció.
   ‘He has lived alone since he divorced’
b. Había estado enfermo desde la muerte de su padre.
   ‘He had been ill since his father’s death’

These predicates can also express this aspectual value using the simple forms of present and imperfect, as can be observed in the sentences (26):

(26) a. Vive solo desde que se divorció.
   ‘He has lived alone since he divorced’
b. Estaba enfermo desde la muerte de su padre.
   ‘He had been ill since his father’s death’

As we already saw in § 2.2, both in (25a), with the predicate in present perfect, and in (26a), in present, we are dealing with an event that began in the past and continues at the time of speech. In both sentences, the event denoted by the predicate vivir solo has two time points available for referential purposes: one in the past, when he divorced, and another at the time of speech. The same happens in sentences (25b) and (26b). In both cases, the subject’s state of illness starts at a point in the past, his father’s death, and goes on until a reference point situated in the past.

The possibility of the states in present and imperfect of expressing Continuative has to be related to the fact that they cannot appear either in the progressive periphrasis or in the continuative one <llevar + gerund>, as we will now illustrate. We will later see that the possibility of present and imperfect expressing Continuative in other Aktionsarten does not exist or is severely limited.
We will now give examples of the incompatibility between stative predicates with the continuative periphrasis *<llevar + gerund>*\(^1\), to which we have referred in the preceding paragraph:

\[(27)\]  
\[\text{a. } *\text{Lleva permaneciendo con ella dos meses.} \]
\[\quad \text{'S/he has been remaining with her for two months'} \]
\[\text{b. } *\text{Llevaba estando en casa dos horas} \]
\[\quad \text{'S/he had been being at home for two hours'} \]

States are incompatible with the progressive periphrasis *<estar + gerund>*\(^2\) which, as we saw in § 2.3, can also express Continuative\(^3\). Thus, the possibility of expressing the said aspectual variety in this way is excluded in the case of states. We will show in the following sentences the incompatibility of these predicates with the imperfective forms of the periphrasis, examples (28), and with the perfective forms, examples (29):

\[(28)\]  
\[\text{a. } *\text{Estoy teniendo tres hijos.} \]
\[\quad \text{'I am having three children'} \]
\[\text{b. } *\text{Estaba sabiendo la verdad.} \]
\[\quad \text{'S/he was-IMP knowing the truth'} \]

\[(29)\]  
\[\text{a. } *\text{He estado estando enfermo.} \]
\[\quad \text{'I have been being ill'} \]

\(^1\) It is the presence of *estar* what produces the ungrammaticality of the sequence, as *llevar* accepts stative predicates in non periphrastic constructions: *Lleva de pie dos horas*.

\(^2\) Unless they are relexicalized as in the following examples:

\[(i)\]  
\[\text{a. } *\text{Está siendo tonto.} \]
\[\quad \text{'He is being silly'} \]
\[\text{b. } *\text{Está siendo inteligente.} \]
\[\quad \text{'He is being clever'} \]

Note that in the preceding sentences the two stative predicates are dynamically reinterpreted with the meaning "behaving in a certain way".
b. *Había estado permaneciendo con ella.
'S/he/I had been remaining with her'.

3.2. Activities

Activities are durative predicates that express processes lacking telos or intrinsic ends, and this is the main difference with regard to accomplishments, which will be studied in § 3.3. Unlike states, these predicates do express progression in time, but this progression does not conclude, as happens in accomplishments, as it is not oriented towards a determined goal, but it ceases instead. Some examples of this Aktionsart are: *to write, to swim, to walk*, etc.

---

12 We have to point out, before concluding this section, that not all the predicates generally classified as stative are incompatible with the periphrasis <estar + gerund> and <llevar + gerund>. See the following examples:

(i) a. Están viviendo en Madrid desde que se conocieron.
   'They have been living in Madrid since they met'
   b. Llevan viviendo en Madrid dos años.
   'They have been living in Madrid for two years'

(ii) a. ??Está habitando en Madrid.
   'S/he has been inhabiting in Madrid'
   b. ??Lleva habitando en Madrid dos meses.
   'S/he has been inhabiting in Madrid for two months'

Whereas the examples (i) with vivir are perfectly acceptable, those of (ii), where habitar appears, are not. The example (25a), where we have the present perfect of vivir with continuative meaning, shows that we are facing a stative predicate, as the other types of predicates, as we shall see, do not allow this possibility. It is, nevertheless, true, that it could be argued that inasmuch as it designates a series of events -working, having familiar and social relationships, etc.- there is in vivir a certain dynamism. Several authors have made reference to the fact that syntactic tests that distinguish predicate classes from the Aktionsart viewpoint are not always reliable. It is easy to find, as shown in these examples, sentences that cast a doubt upon the determinant character of such tests. See De Miguel (1999: 3018 and 3044) and Morimoto (1998: 22) in this respect.
These predicates, in contrast to what occurs with states, cannot express Continuative either with present perfect or pluperfect, as we show in the following sentences:

(30) a. ??Ha escrito desde las seis.
    'S/he has written since six'
    b. ??Jugaba al fútbol desde que había llegado.
    'S/he had played football since s/he had come'

In these cases, however, as Squartini (1998: 54-55) points out, it is possible to attain the continuative reading if there is an adverbial complement imposing the continuity of the predicate. Observe the contrast between the examples (30) and (31):

(31) a. Ha escrito {sin descanso / sin interrupción} desde las seis.
    'S/he has been writing {ceaselessly / uninterruptedly} since six'
    b. Había jugado al fútbol {sin parar / sin cesar} desde que había llegado.
    'S/he had been playing football {non-stop / uninterruptedly} since s/he had come'

Activities cannot express Continuative in the present or imperfect forms either, as we prove in the following sentences:

(32) a. ??Escribe desde las seis.
    'S/he has written since six'
    b. ??Jugaba al fútbol desde que había llegado
    'S/he has played football since s/he had come'

This restriction does not extend to actitudinals. Bertinetto (1994) has proved that actitudinals are stative predicates and we have seen in the last section that states can indeed express Continuative with the simple forms of present and imperfect:

(33) a. Escribe desde joven.
    'S/he has written since s/he was young'
    b. Jugaba al fútbol desde pequeño.
    'He had played football since he was young'
Observe that the main difference between the examples (32) and (33) is that in (32) the type of complement of the preposition desde blocks the actitudinal interpretation and imposes a "present" interpretation of the predicate.

It is, nonetheless, possible to attain the continuative reading with the simple forms of present or imperfect if there is an adverbial complement that imposes the continuity of the predicate, as we saw with reference to compound forms. Note the contrast between the examples (32) and (34):

(34) a. Escribe {sin descanso / sin interrupción} desde las seis.
   'S/he has written {without stopping /uninterruptedly} since six'
   b. Jugaba al fútbol {sin parar / sin cesar} desde que había llegado
   'S/he had played football {non-stop / ceaselessly} since s/he had come'

Unlike stative predicates, activities are compatible with the continuative periphrasis <llevar + gerund>, as we see in these examples:

(35) a. Pepe lleva corriendo veinte minutos.
   'Joe has been running for twenty minutes'
   b. Juan llevaba estudiando en su habitación dos horas.
   'John had been studying in his room for two hours'

Lastly, this class of predicates, unlike the states, is compatible with the progressive periphrasis <estar + gerund>. Thus, the activities can express Continuative, without restriction, with the present and imperfect progressive and the present perfect and pluperfect progressive. We see this, respectively, in sentences (36) and (37):

(36) a. Está escribiendo desde las seis.
   'S/he has been writing since six'
   b. Estaba jugando al fútbol desde hacía un rato.
   'S/he had been playing football for a while'

(37) a. Ha estado escribiendo desde las seis.
   'S/he has been writing since six'
   b. Había estado jugando al fútbol desde que había llegado.
   'S/he had been playing football since s/he had come'
We have seen that the perfective forms of the progressive periphrasis have detelicizing value. Of course if the predicate is atelic, as in activities, the value cannot be detelicizing. In the case of activities in the forms with the periphrasis with haber the meaning is, then, only the Continuative one.

3.3. Accomplishments

Accomplishments are also durative predicates, as are activities and states, but they are oriented towards a determined aim or telos: write the letter, run two kilometers or walk to the park are some examples of this class of predicates.

As happened with activities, with which accomplishments share the characteristic of dynamism, the present perfect and the present cannot express Continuative, as we show in the sentences (38) and (39) respectively:

(38) a. ??He hecho las maletas desde que he llegado.
   'I have packed my cases since I have come'
   b. ??Ha planchado las camisas desde las tres.
   'S/he has ironed the shirts since three'

(39) a. ??Hago las maletas desde que he llegado.
   'I have packed the cases since I have come'
   b. ??Plancha las camisas desde las tres.
   'S/he has ironed the shirts since three'

On the other hand, accomplishments and activities differ in their behaviour with adverbial complements of the type of sin cesar (ceaselessly, uninterruptedly). Let us consider the following examples:

(40) a. He hecho las maletas sin cesar.\(^{13}\)
   'I have packed the cases ceaselessly'
   b. He hecho las maletas sin cesar desde que he llegado.
   'I have packed the cases ceaselessly since I have come'

---

\(^{13}\) We have avoided the adverbial complement sin parar, which can be interpreted as 'sin descansar'.
(41)  a. Hace las maletas sin cesar.
    'S/he packs the cases ceaselessly'
   b. Hace las maletas sin cesar desde las seis.
    'S/he has been packing the cases ceaselessly since six'

Conversely to what happened with activities, in the examples (40) and (41) it is impossible that we are dealing with one single event *hacer las maletas* which is prolonging; this is due to the fact that accomplishments are not prolongable events, precisely because they are directed towards a goal. They are, on the other hand, repeatable, and for this reason the adverbial complement applies to cycles, that, repeating themselves indefinitely, convert the predicate into an activity.

Accomplishments, as activities, are compatible with the continuative periphrasis *<llevar + gerund>*:

(42)  a. Lleva haciendo las maletas dos horas.
    'S/he has been packing the cases for two hours'
   b. Llevaba corrigiendo el examen una hora.
    'S/he had been correcting the exam for an hour'

These predicates can also appear in the progressive periphrasis *<estar + gerund>* , both to express progressive, as shown in the examples (43), and to express Continuative, as appears in (44):

(43)  a. Está haciendo las maletas.
    'S/he is packing the cases'
   b. Estaba corrigiendo el examen de sus alumnos.
    'S/he was-IMP correcting her/his pupils’ exam'

(44)  a. Está haciendo las maletas desde las seis.
    'S/he has been packing the cases since six'
   b. Estaba corrigiendo el examen de sus alumnos desde hacía dos horas.
    'S/he had been correcting her/his pupils’ exam for two hours'

In these three cases, as these aspectual varieties do not affirm the end of the situations, the *telos* is not reached. That is to say, neither in (42a), nor in (43a), nor in (44a) is it stated that the cases were packed. In parallel, in the (b) examples in (42), (43) and (44) it
is not stated that the exam was corrected.

Lastly, we will deal with the progressive periphrasis in its perfective forms. In this case, as happened with activities, the results achieved are grammatical:

\[
\text{(45) a. He estado haciendo las maletas desde que he llegado.} \\
\quad \text{I have been packing the cases since I have come}\]

\[
\text{b. Había estado limpiando el coche desde las seis.} \\
\quad \text{'S/he/I had been cleaning the car since six'}
\]

We have to remember here that Rohrer (1977: 123-128) described perfective forms of the progressive periphrasis as detelicizing. For this reason, in (45), in spite of having two perfective forms, the telos of the accomplishments hacer las maletas and limpiar el coche is not reached, as the accomplishments in question are interpreted as activities. In the examples (45), the value of the periphrasis is detelicizing and continuative; on the other hand, in examples such as (21b), Juan estuvo arreglando el televisor, it is only detelicizing, as the continuative value is associated to the compound forms with haber.

### 3.4. The semelfactives

In this section we are going to deal with predicates such as to cough, to sneeze, to knock on the door..., which are events without duration, similar in this to achievements, but that differ from them in lacking telos, or intrinsic goals.

This class of predicates was termed "punctual" by Bertinetto (1986: 90), and "semelfactive" by Smith (1991: 55-58). Vendler (1957), as we pointed out in note 9, did not distinguish them as a group and in his classification punctual predicates were always telic.

These predicates, because of their own meaning, often present an iterative reading, of several repeating events. In these cases, their meaning and their syntactic behaviour is similar to those of activities: they behave like durative predicates that lack an intrinsic goal. Semelfactives, with regard to the expression of the Continuative, present a behaviour similar to that of activities. In the strictly punctual interpretation, they cannot take the Continuative precisely because of their non-durative character. From now on, we will study the expression of the variety of Continuative in the iterative reading of these predicates.
In the same fashion as activities, semelfactives cannot express the Continuative with the present perfect or the pluperfect, as we see in the following examples:

(46) a. ??Ha tosido desde las tres.
    'S/he has coughed since three'
b. ??Habían llamado a la puerta desde las seis.
    'They had knocked on the door since six'

It is, however, possible to achieve the continuative reading with these verbal forms if there is an adverbial complement imposing the continuity of the predicate. Note the contrast between the examples (46) and (47):

(47) a. Ha tosido{sin descanso / sin interrupción} desde las tres.
    'S/he has coughed {without pause / uninterruptedly} since three'
b. Habían llamado a la puerta {sin parar / sin cesar} desde las seis
    'They had knocked on the door {non-stop / ceaselessly} since six'

Like activities, they also cannot express Continuative with the present or imperfect:

(48) a. ??Tose desde las tres.
    'S/he has coughed since three'
b. ??Llamaban a la puerta desde las seis.
    'They had knocked on the door since six'

Once again, the presence here of an adverbial complement that imposes the continuity of the predicate allows the continuative interpretation:

(49) a. Tose {sin descanso / sin interrupción} desde las tres.
    'S/he has coughed {without pause / uninterruptedly} since three'
b. Llamaban a la puerta {sin parar / sin cesar} desde las seis.
    'They had knocked on the door {non-stop / ceaselessly} since six'

The *llevar + gerund* periphrasis is, however, compatible with this class of predicates, as we see in these examples:
(50) a. Pedro lleva tosiendo media hora.
   'Peter has been coughing for half an hour'
   b. Llevaban llamando a la puerta desde las seis.
   'They had been knocking on the door since six'

Lastly, a syntactic characteristic of this class of predicates is their compatibility with the progressive periphrasis <estar + gerund>. Because of this, semelfactives can express Continuative, without restriction, in present and imperfect progressive and in present perfect and pluperfect progressive, as shown, respectively, in sentences (51) and (52):

(51) a. Está tosiendo desde las tres.
   'S/he has been coughing since three'
   b. Estaban llamando a la puerta desde las seis.
   'They had been knocking on the door since six'

(52) a. Ha estado tosiendo desde las tres.
   'S/he has been coughing since three'
   b. Habían estado llamando a la puerta desde las seis.
   'They had been knocking on the door since six'

3.5. Achievements

Achievements, like accomplishments, are telic predicates, but lacking duration. They do not consist of a process culminating in a telos, but only of the telos itself. They express a change of state. Examples of these are to enter, to exit, to die, etc. Achievements are, in general, incompatible with the Imperfect. This is due to the fact that the Imperfect focalises an intermediate phase of the situations and achievements are punctual predicates. Some achievements can, however, be preceded by an optional previous preparatory phase and in these cases can take the progressive periphrasis:

(53) a. El niño se está durmiendo.
   'The boy is falling asleep'
   b. El tren está llegando.
   'The train is arriving'
Achievements, due to their non durative character, do not admit the Continuative, just as we saw when studying the semelfactives. They can only express this aspectual variety when they present an iterative reading. We are going to test the first of our statements with the following group of sentences:

(54) a. *Ha llegado desde las tres.
   'S/he has come since three'

b. *Llega desde las tres.
   'S/he has come since three'

c. *Lleva llegando cinco minutos.
   'S/he has been coming five minutes'

d. *Está llegando desde hace cinco minutos.
   'S/he has been coming for five minutes'

e. *Ha estado llegando desde las tres.
   'S/he has been coming since three'

In the cases where they present an iterative reading, given that the event becomes durative, the expression of the Continuative is indeed possible. The behaviour of achievements is in such instances similar to that of semelfactives we have seen in § 3.4, and, thus, similar to that of activities too. We will test this with the following sentences:

(55) a. Ha llegado gente sin parar desde las tres.
   'People have been arriving non-stop since three'

b. Llega gente sin cesar desde las seis.
   'People have been arriving ceaselessly since six'

c. Llevan llegando invitados desde las ocho de la tarde.
   'Guests have been arriving since 8 p.m'

d. Está llegando gente desde que se ha publicado el anuncio.
   'People have been arriving since the advertisement was published'

e. Ha estado llegando gente desde las siete de la mañana.
   'People have been arriving since 7 a.m.'

We confirm, thus, in (55) that achievements, if they appear iterated, can express Continuative with the present perfect (55a) and the present (55b) if there is an adverbial complement like sin parar or sin cesar imposing the continuity of the predicate. It is also possible to express this aspectual variety with the periphrasis <llevar + gerund>
(55c) and with the progressive periphrasis both in the imperfective (55d) and perfective (55e) forms. Its behaviour, as we see, is identical to that of semelfactives in their iterative reading and activities.

Lastly, we have to point out that, in parallel to what we saw in regard to stative predicates in note 11, achievements can be relexicalized as activities and, in these cases, the expression of the Continuative aspect is indeed possible. We will test this in the following example:

(56) El abuelo lleva una semana muriéndose.

'The grandfather has been dying for a week'

The grammaticality of this sentence is not due to the iteration of the event, as we have seen in (55), but to the fact that the interpretation of the predicate *morirse* does not correspond to that of an achievement, that is, to a punctual telic predicate, but to an activity.

To conclude this third section, we summarize in TABLE IV the compatibility and incompatibility of the five classes of predicates with the different expressions of Continuative aspect.
## TABLE IV

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>States</th>
<th>Activities</th>
<th>Accomplishments</th>
<th>Semelfactives</th>
<th>Achievements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Present perfect pluperfect</td>
<td>Present imperfect</td>
<td>Present progres. imperfect progr.</td>
<td>Present perfect. progr. pluperfect progr.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>States</strong></td>
<td>- Ha vivido solo desde que se divorció. - Había estado enfermo desde la muerte de su padre.</td>
<td>- Tiene miedo desde que ocurrió el incendio. - Estaba nervioso desde aquel encuentro.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Activities</strong></td>
<td>Only with actitudinal predicates or with certain adverbial complements.</td>
<td>Only with actitudinal predicates or with certain adverbial complements.</td>
<td>- Pepe lleva corriendo veinte minutos. - Juan llevaba estudiando en su habitación dos horas.</td>
<td>- Pedro está cocinando desde las tres. - Los jugadores de fútbol estaban entrenando desde las nueve de la mañana.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Accomplishments</strong></td>
<td>Only with certain adverbial complements.</td>
<td>Only with certain adverbial complements</td>
<td>- Lleva haciendo las maletas dos horas. - Llevaba haciendo el examen una hora.</td>
<td>- Está haciendo las maletas desde las seis. - Estaba corriendo el examen de sus alumnos desde hacía dos horas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Semelfactives</strong></td>
<td>Only interpreted as activities. - Ha tosido {sin descanso / sin interrupción} desde las tres.</td>
<td>Only interpreted as activities. - Tose {sin descanso / sin interrupción} desde las tres.</td>
<td>Only interpreted as activities. - Pedro lleva tosiendo media hora.</td>
<td>Only interpreted as activities. - Pedro está tosiendo desde las tres.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Achievements</strong></td>
<td>Only in the iterative reading of the event. - Ha llegado gente sin parar desde las tres.</td>
<td>Only in the iterative reading of the event. - Llega gente sin cesar desde las seis.</td>
<td>Only in the iterative reading of the event. - Llevan llegando invitados desde las ocho de la tarde.</td>
<td>Only in the iterative reading of the event. - Está llegando gente desde que se ha publicado el anuncio.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4. The Continuative and the Imperfect continuous

We will devote this fourth section of our paper to the aspectual variety termed "continuous". In the first place we will define it in relation to the other varieties of Imperfect we have made reference to at the beginning of this paper; secondly, we will discuss the similarities and differences between the Imperfect continuous and the Continuative.

We have already pointed out that Bertinetto (1986: 162-181) characterizes the Imperfect by its basic property of not stating the conclusion of the predicate in question. We will illustrate the three varieties we are dealing with and realize how the three cases adjust to Bertinetto’s characterization. We repeat here the sentences (8) that illustrated the progressive and habitual Imperfect varieties:

(57) a. María estaba preparando la cena.       (PROGRESSIVE)
    'Mary was-IMP preparing supper'

b. Roberto solía ir al gimnasio todas las semanas.   (HABITUAL)
    'Robert used to go to the gym every week'

c. Durante la conferencia les iba pidiendo a todos que firmasen.  (CONTINUOUS)
    'I went-IMP round asking everyone to sign during the conference'

According to Bertinetto (1986: 171), the continuous is distinguished from the progressive in that the former does not entail the individualization of one single focal instant, whereas the latter does. In the case of the habitual, this is distinguished from the continuous (and the progressive) in that it entails a multiple situational environment, that is, the repetition of the event in several instances. In the continuous the event can be repeated, but the situational environment is always the same14.

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14. We employ Bertinetto’s classification here (1986: 119), according to which, the continuous is, together with the habitual and the progressive, one of the three varieties of the Imperfect aspect. Comrie (1976: 25) employs the term "continuous" to refer to a subdivision of the Imperfect aspect opposed to the habitual and encompassing the progressive and the non progressive. For Comrie (1976: 12) the progressive is associated to the non stative predicates, whereas the "non progressive continuous" is associated to the stative predicates. Bertinetto (1986: 182-190) acknowledges the strong relationship between the stative predicates and the continuous aspect, but contemplates the possibility of the states appearing in the progressive variety.
Among other morphological forms we will presently discuss, the following periphrases intervene in the expression of the Imperfect continuous: \(<ir + \text{gerund}>, <\text{andar} + \text{gerund}>\) and \(<\text{continuar} + \text{gerund} >\).\(^{15}\) We illustrate them in (58):

(58) a. Pedro va contando a todos lo que le ocurrió a su hermano.
   'Peter goes around telling everyone what happened to his brother'

b. Creo que la policía anda vigilando a Pedro.
   'I think the police is watching Peter'

c. El director continúa pidiendo a los alumnos su colaboración.
   'The principal continues requesting the pupils’ collaboration'

The Imperfect continuous can also be expressed by the present and the imperfect, as shown in the examples (59), and by the present and imperfect progressive, as exemplified in the sentences (60):

(59) a. La niña llora sin cesar.
   'The girl cries ceaselessly'

b. Durante la reunión me miraba con insistencia.
   'S/he looked-IMP at me insistently during the meeting'

(60) a. La niña está llorando sin parar.
   'The girl is crying non-stop'

b. Me estaban observando sin interrupción.
   'They were-IMP observing me uninterruptedly'

This fact brings the Imperfect continuous closer to the Continuative. We have indeed seen how, under certain circumstances, the forms we have just enumerated can express Continuative aspect. On the other hand, the perfective forms associated with the expression of the Continuative cannot express continuous. This is due to the obligatory use of the adverbial complement for the expression of the Continuative, a fact noted by Iatridu et al. (2000: 196-205)\(^{16}\). If we return to the examples (1) and compare them


\(^{16}\) See, for the same remark in regard to the continuative interpretation of the compound forms of the Italian verb, Bertinetto (1991: 61).
again with those in (4), we can realize that, in the absence of an adverbial complement, *ha vivido sola* y *ha estado preocupado* have perfective meaning and, in the presence of the adverbial complement, continuative meaning, so that these forms cannot in any case express Imperfect continuous:

(1)  
   a. Ha vivido sola depuis *que* llegó a España.  
   'She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'
   b. Ha estado preocupado desde *que* se enteró del accidente.  
   'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'

(4)  
   a. Ha vivido sola.  
   'She has lived alone'
   b. Ha estado preocupado.  
   'He has been worried'

Another interesting difference between the Continuative and the Imperfect continuous refers to the iterativity or non iterativity of the event. Characteristically, in the Continuative we are talking about the development of a single event that extends from a point in the past up to the time of speech. In the Imperfect continuous, the indefinite repetition of the event *hacer las maletas* turns the predicate into an activity.

One of the syntactic traits that characterizes activities is their compatibility with the adverbial complements introduced by the preposition *durante*, as opposed to the incompatibility with those introduced by *en*, due to the *non-telic* character of these predicates. As both of the predicate groups mentioned in the preceding paragraph are interpreted as activities, their syntactic behaviour has to be the same as that of such predicates. We will prove that it is indeed so in the following examples:

(i)  
   El niño ha estado tosiendo *durante / *en* una hora.  
   'The boy has been coughing {for / in } an hour'
however, the iteration of an event denoted by a predicate can be expressed. This is what Bertinetto (1986: 169-172) refers to when talking about "indeterminate iterativity" in this aspectual variety. As the author explains, it is indeterminate in regard to the number of repetitions of the event, but within a single situational environment, as we have established. The following examples illustrate this difference between both aspectual varieties:

(61) a. Pedro {dice / va diciendo} por ahí que no tiene dinero. (CONTINUOUS)  
    'Peter {says / goes around saying} that he has no money'

    b. Pedro vive solo desde hace dos años. (CONTINUATIVE)  
    'Peter has been living alone for two years'

The sentence (61a) expresses the iteration of the event denoted by the predicate decir. On the contrary, (61b) expresses the development of a single event (vivir) during two years.

5. The Obligatory Use of the Adverbial Complement

We have recently pointed out that Iatri du et al. (2000: 196-205) have proved that the presence of an adverbial complement is necessary in order to obtain the aspectual variety of "universal Perfect"\(^{18}\), the name with which they designate what we term Continuative. We have been able to establish, through the examples of Continuative we have set, that the presence of an adverbial complement is indeed necessary in order to obtain this aspectual variety. In this last section, our aim is to explain the reason why the presence of a complement is necessary.

(ii) a. Ha hecho las maletas sin cesar {durante / *en } dos horas.  
    'S/he has packed the cases ceaselessly {for / in } two hours'

    b. Hace las maletas sin cesar {durante / *en } dos horas.  
    'S/he has packed the cases ceaselessly {for / in } two hours'

\(^{18}\) The denomination "universal" is due to the universal type of quantification the Continuative introduces, according to these authors, as opposed to the existential quantification of the experiential Perfect.
In the Continuative aspectual variety we have studied, there are two different time points of the event available for referential purposes. In the case of the examples (1) and (3) in the first section, one in the past and the other in the present. Let us repeat both pairs of examples again:

(1)  
  a. Ha vivido sola desde que llegó a España.  
      'She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'  
  b. Ha estado preocupado desde que se enteró del accidente.  
      'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'

(3)  
  a. Vive sola desde que llegó a España.  
      'She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'  
  b. Está preocupado desde que se enteró del accidente.  
      'He has been worried since he learned about the accident'

When stating that the event has to be available for referential purposes at two different time points, we are saying that in a representation of the Temporal Structure of a verbal form inspired in Reichenbach’s theory (1947), the point of the event has to be present twice. We will represent, in the first place, in (62) the temporal structures of the present when it has Present time value and of the present perfect when it has Antepresent value and compare them in (63) with the structure they would receive when aspectually interpreted as Continuatives:

(62)  
Present (Vivo / I live)  S,R,E  
Antepresent (He vivido / I have lived)  E - S,R

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19. Remember that, in Reichenbach’s formulae, E stands for point of the event, R for reference point, and S for moment of speech. The dash represents the anteriority relationship and the comma that of simultaneity, so that the formulae (62) could be translated as follows:

(i) Present (Amo) **moment of speech simultaneous to reference point simultaneous to point of the event.**

(ii) Antepresent (He amado) **point of the event previous to reference point simultaneous to moment of speech.**
(63) Present Continuative (\{Vivo / He vivido\} desde) E - S,R,E\textsuperscript{20}

The representation (63), where the point of the event appears simultaneously in the past, at the left of the moment of speech, and in the present, at the same time as the moment of speech, explains why sentences with a present or a present perfect without an adverbial complement and the same forms with an adverbial complement introduced by \textit{desde} make statements about different moments of the time line. We are going to return to some examples that appeared in the first sections:

(64) a. Vive sola.  
'She lives alone'

b. Vive sola desde que llegó a España.  
'She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'

(65) a. Ha vivido sola.  
'She has lived alone'

b. Ha vivido sola desde que llegó a España.  
'She has lived alone since she arrived in Spain'

In (64a) a statement about the present is made, whereas in (64b) the statement concerns both the present and the past at the same time. In parallel, in (65a) a statement about the past is made, whereas in (65b) the statement concerns both the past and the present. The obligatory use of the adverbial complement is, thus, due to the fact that no form of the conjugation makes statements about two different moments of the time line. The role of the adverbial complement is that of modifying the time structure reduplicating the point of the event, so that a statement about two different moments of the time line can be made. We can say that the Continuative grammatical aspect is unique for four reasons: the first reason, descriptive, is that it implies imperfective interpretations of the compound forms; the second reason, also

\textsuperscript{20} The Temporal Structure of the imperfect and the pluperfect in the interpretation of Continuative in examples such as (10b) and (11b) would be the following:

\textit{Past Continuative: E - E,R – S}
descriptive, is that it brings together semantically the simple forms of present and imperfect with their respective compound forms; the third reason, theoretic, is that it is the only aspectual variety that forces a modification of the original time structure of the form that expresses it and the fourth reason, derived from the preceding one, is that this modification is obligatorily linked to the presence of an adverbial complement.

To ensure that the two points of the event of the representation (63) do indeed belong to the same event, we can employ the idea of the existence of a subeventive\(^{21}\) structure, which would give it the following representation:

\[(66) \text{ Present Continuative } E_1 - S,R,E_{n-1}\]

In the representation (66) the subscript 1 signals the initial segment of the event, and the subscript n-1 signals that the segment is different from the final one, thus, a central segment of the event in question. Note that the meaning of an adverbial complement like \textit{desde hace dos años} is exactly that of specifying the time interval between \(E_1\) and \(E_{n-1}\).

On the other hand, we wish to point out that our proposal that the event be available for referential purposes does not affect the analysis of sentences such as the following:

\[(67) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } \text{Estuvieron unidos desde } 1900 \text{ hasta } 1930.
& \text{'They were together from 1900 to 1930'} \\
\text{b. } \text{Paseé por el parque de cuatro a cinco.}
& \text{'I strolled in the park from four to five'}
\end{align*}\]

Note that, in these cases, the verbal form, a simple past that aspectually expresses Aorist, provides the initial and final limit for the events denoted by the predicates, respectively, by \textit{estuvieron} and \textit{paseé}. Bear in mind that in § 1 we have defined the Aorist as that grammatical aspect variety with which the whole situation is focalised, from its beginning until its conclusion. The delimitative adverbial complements \textit{desde 1900 hasta 1930} and \textit{de cuatro a cinco} are limited to specifying such limits. It is not that the event is available in two different places for referential purposes, only that its

\(^{21}\) We owe this suggestion to Brenda Laca (p.c.). See Pustejovsky (1991) and Giorgi and Pianesi (1995), among others; this idea has been applied to Spanish by Fernández Lagunilla and De Miguel (1999) and by De Miguel and Fernández Lagunilla (2000).
beginning and end are defined. Thus, the formula corresponding to simple past in a Reichenbachian model would be the following:

(68) Simple pastE,R - S

What occurs with the Continuative is that the aspectual structure imposes an alteration on the time structure of the verbal form, which is modified by the adverbial complement. Thus, no form of the conjugation can express Continuative on its own.

The idea that the point of the event is available for referential purposes at two different moments accounts for some facts of consecutio temporum that affect time clauses introduced by the preposition desde. García Fernández (2000b: chapter 13) notes that subordinate adverbial time clauses obey the consecutio temporum rule according to which the verb of the main clause and that of the subordinate one have to share part of the temporal information. An empiric consequence of the rule is that no verbal form in the present can be modified by a subordinate adverbial time clause with a verbal form in the past, unless the clause is introduced by desde. We can test the validity of this statement in the following examples, taken from the same author (p. 342):

(69) a. *Juan canta cuando llegó.
   'John sings when he arrived'
   b. *Lee mientras estaba en el bar.
      'S/he reads while s/he was-IMP in the bar'

(70) a. *Juan canta antes de que Carlos llegara.
      'John sings before Charles came'
   b. *María barre después de que Carlos entrara.
      'Mary sweeps after Charles entered'

(71) a. Tu hermano está triste desde que Andrés se fue.
      'Your brother has been sad since Andrew went away'
   b. *Ana estudia hasta que amaneció.
      'Ana studies until it dawned'

As can be observed, with the time simultaneity connectors cuando and mientras, with the anteriority connectors antes and después and with the delimitative connector hasta we obtain ungrammatical sequences; only the sequence with the connector desde is
grammatical.

The analysis we have put forward perfectly explains the behaviour of desde in examples such as the one in (71a). We will see how. Let us suppose a Rule for Time Connectors accounts for the ungrammaticality of the examples (69), (70) and (71b) establishing that a Present cannot be modified by a time clause containing a Simple past, that is to say, establishing that the following structure is ungrammatical:

\[(72) \quad *\text{Present } S,R,E \text{ temporal connector } \text{Simple past } E,R - S\]

The sentence (71a) is apparently an exception to the Rule for Time Connectors simply because the Time Structure corresponding to está is not that of a Present, but that of a Present Continuative (E - S,R,E), so that we do not have a Present modified by a Simple past, but a Present Continuative, with a Time Structure different from that of a Present, modified by a Simple past. Note that in the Present Continuative there is a part of the event situated before the moment of speech, in the same way as in the Simple past. This shared temporal information, which we represent in (73), accounts for the grammaticality of (71a):

\[(73) \quad \text{Present Continuative } E_1 - S,R,E_{n-1} \text{ temporal connector Simple past } E,R - S\]

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22. We deem it interesting to point out here that Hornstein (1977: 544) finds himself in trouble when analyzing such sentences as Sally has respected Sam since he won the marathon, because the employment of his Rule for Temporal Connectors incorrectly provides for an ungrammatical structure.

In Hornstein (1990: 205, note 13) the problem is avoided by simply attributing causal interpretation to the sentences in question. Note that the hypothesis that aspect is here the determinant factor in the grammaticality of Hornstein’s sentence works properly, as we are clearly facing an example of Continuative Perfect.

We also wish to point out that Ritchie (1979: 114) avoids dealing with since because of the problems it raises.

6. Conclusion

After covering the different morphological expressions of the Continuative and establishing the restrictions imposed by the different *Aktionsarten*, we have put forward a theoretical explanation for the fact that the presence of an adverbial complement is obligatory in order to obtain this aspectual variety. This explanation consists of affirming that the event has to be available for referential purposes at two different moments. With this proposal, account can be given, in an independent way, of the fact that the sentences introduced by *desde* do not follow the behaviour of the other temporal connectors in respect to the *consecutio temporum*. 
References


