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Tener and traer: Verbs of possession in Spanish

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This paper analyzes possession verbs in Spanish. Drawing from Myler (2016), the current analysis proposes that the possessive verb *tener* is the transitive counterpart of *ser*. Another possessive verb, *traer*, is the transitive counterpart of *estar* and thus combines with stage-level predicates. In these constructions, the possessive reading originates in the predicate. This analysis departs from prior analyses that derive *tener* and *traer* from the incorporation of a comitative preposition, *con* (Ruvalcaba 2020). It also compares the Spanish data with data from the Bantu language Mashi (Finholt 2024) which has a similar pair of possession verbs and copular counterparts. The comparison shows that Spanish is less restricted than Mashi when it comes to the syntactic contexts in which one finds a *tener* and *traer*-like distinction. Drawing from Fábregas et al. (2023) it is proposed that *tener*, like *ser*, is the elsewhere form while *traer*, like *estar*, is spelled out in a marked structure, namely when there is a terminal coincidence feature or head in the structure. In addition, *tener* and *traer* can take small clause predicates (e.g., causative *have* constructions etc.). It is shown that small clauses embedded under *traer* are only allowed stage-level predicate readings. Altogether, these observations provide further support for the argument that possessive *traer* is the transitive counterpart of *estar* while *tener* is the transitive counterpart of *ser*.



1. Introduction: Simple copulas and complex copulas

Spanish has two well-known copular forms, *ser* and *estar*, each with its own unique syntactic and semantic characteristics. For instance, *ser* but not *estar* can take predicates like *americano* (1a) which denotes a property of the subject. This inherent property reading is also possible when *ser* has a predicate like ‘red’ (1b).

- (1) a. Juan *es*/**está* americano.
 Juan *is*_{INDIV}/*is*_{STAGE} American
 ‘Juan is American.’
- b. Sus ojos *son* rojos
 his eyes *are*_{INDIV} red
 ‘His eyes are red.’ (the color of the irises in his eyes is red)

Alternatively, *estar* but not *ser* accepts predicates like *cansado* in (2a) which expresses the state in which the subject finds himself at a particular time or place. This same ‘current state’ reading can be seen in (2b) with the predicate ‘red.’ Unlike (1b), predicates of *estar* like (2b) cannot be interpreted as inherent properties of the subject.

- (2) a. Juan **es*/*está* cansado.
 Juan *is*_{INDIV}/*is*_{STAGE} tired
 ‘Juan is tired.’
- b. Sus ojos *están* rojos.
 his eyes *are*_{STAGE} red
 ‘His eyes are red.’ (his eyes are bloodshot)

Due to contrasts like (1–2) some scholars (Schmitt 1992; Leonetti 1994) have proposed that *ser* takes individual-level predicates while *estar* takes stage-level predicates (Milsark 1974; Carlson 1977). In other words, *ser* takes individual level predicates which assert a property of an individual (1) while *estar* takes stage-level predicates which have to do with the stages of the individual (2).

Similarly, Gumiel-Molina et al. (2015) explain that *estar* combines with adjectives with a within-individual comparison class. These compare the subject to counterparts of itself. For instance, (2b) is evaluated with respect to the typical or prior state of ‘his eyes.’ In contrast, *ser* combines with adjectives with a between-individual comparison class. These make a comparison of the subject “with respect to a class of comparison comprised of individuals sharing some property with the subject of predication, which determines the standard value” (2015). Thus, in (1b) the predicate implies a comparison with a different person’s eyes. Other work, however, has shown that *ser* and *estar* do not always correlate neatly with the individual and stage level distinction (Fábregas 2012).

The difference in meaning between *ser* and *estar* has also been linked to viewpoint aspect (Luján 1981). This is based on data like (2a) where *estar* is used for ‘being tired,’ a temporary or ‘perfective’ condition. In contrast, being American (1a) is an ongoing or ‘imperfective’ condition, so it requires *ser*. Gallego & Uriagareka (2016) also described *estar* constructions as perfective and *ser* as imperfective. Their analysis attributed this aspectual difference to a preposition, or some other contextually anchoring spatio-temporal head called X, that incorporates into the copula. Thus, *estar* is often seen as a complex form including *ser* plus an additional element.

In contrast, Arche (2012) and Arche et al. (2017) have argued that *ser* and *estar* cannot be reduced to a difference of viewpoint (or situation) aspect. They mention, for example, that both copulas are compatible with perfective or imperfective aspect (3).

- (3) a. Marta {era/ fue} guapa.
 Marta {ser-PAST.IMPf.3PS/ ser-PAST.PFVE.3PS} pretty
 ‘Marta was pretty.’
- b. Marta {estaba/ estuvo} guapa.
 Marta estar-PAST.IMPf.3PS/ estar-PAST.PFVE.3PS pretty
 ‘Marta was pretty.’

For Arche (2012), the sense of temporality one finds with *estar* constructions may be connected to the fact that their meaning is linked to external circumstances or situations, while *ser* predicates have a sense of permanence because they are not linked to external circumstances. Arche (2012) derives *estar* from a non-central coincidence head, namely an ellative head like *from* (Hale & Keyser 2002). This ellative head is said to explain some of the aspectual characteristics of *estar* because it captures the fact that “when a property holds of an individual with *estar* [it] is as a result or consequence of some previous eventuality...” (2012: 127). An analysis of the way in which the ellative head achieves this ‘resultative’ reading is not developed in detail.¹ In turn, Arche et al. (2017) provide additional evidence showing that viewpoint aspect cannot solely explain the *ser-estar* distinction.² They observe that *estar* is linked to utterance time, similar to Arche’s (2012) observation that *estar* constructions are linked to external circumstance. Like Arche (2012), they attribute the temporal boundedness of *estar* to the coincidence value of some aspectual or prepositional head in the structure.

¹ One idea is that the external circumstance to which *estar* is linked makes contact but does not overlap or contain the eventuality that led to it. This is similar to how the ground and the figure do not overlap with non-central coincidence prepositions like *from* or *to* (Hale and Keyser 2002).

² Contrary to previous claims, they claim that *ser* that tends to be more compatible with ‘perfective’ readings. This is because, in passive constructions and adjectival predicate constructions, *ser* can denote a continuous or habitual (eventive) reading while *estar* cannot express either habitual or continuous readings regardless of the predicate.

One recurring idea regarding *estar* is that it is more complex than *ser*. Like Gallego and Uriagareka (2016) Arche and colleagues (Arche 2012; Arche et al. 2017) see *estar* as a complex element derived from the presence of an additional head or element, P, and this head is responsible for the temporal/aspectual characteristics present in *estar* and absent in *ser*. This head is also said to explain why *estar* appears to be linked to a particular external circumstance or some specific spatiotemporal location. In this sense, *estar* is more marked than *ser*. Indeed, Fábregas et al. (2023) argue that, unlike *ser*, *estar* is more marked because it contains an interpretable terminal coincidence feature that can check the uninterpretable aspect feature of a P or Asp head that merges above a PredP: [_{AspP} Subject [_{Asp⁰}_[uT] [_{PredP} ...[Pred⁰ [Predicate]]]]]. In this analysis, *ser* appears when there is no head with an uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature in the structure. *Ser* can also appear when such a prepositional/aspectual head is present, but its features are checked by another head. Thus, *estar* is present when it needs to license some terminal coincidence head in the structure, and *ser* is the elsewhere copula.

Recent studies have also looked at other ‘copular’ forms in Spanish, such as possession verbs, to see if these are also sensitive to the so-called stage and individual level contrast. This line of inquiry emerges from the abundance of research that treats possession verbs like *tener* or *have* as copulas. The claim has been traced back to Benveniste (1966), and it proposes that *have* is a complex copula, namely a copula with an additional element. This can be a dative P (Belvin & den Dikken 1997; Torrego 1999), a locative P (Freeze 1992) an abstract P (Harley 1995; 2002), a comitative P (Avelar 2004; 2009; Levinson 2011), a P that projects a DP (Kayne 1993) an Appl head (Kim 2011) or a variety of heads (Boneh and Sichel 2010). More recently, Myler (2016; 2018) has proposed that *have* type verbs are basically transitive copulas. That is, *have* is inserted into v_{BE} when v_{BE} is embedded below a transitive Voice head.

If *have*-type verbs are essentially complex or transitive copulas, and if copulas are argued to have different forms depending on whether they merge with stage or individual level predicates, then one would expect that possession verbs may also have different forms, one for individual level predicates and the other for stage level predicates. Following Gallego and Uriagareka (2016) Ruvalcaba (2020) suggested that *tener*, like *ser*, was Spanish’s individual level possession verb while *traer* was Spanish’s stage level possession verb. This claim builds on the observation that *traer* appears to be ambiguous between a dynamic verb of motion and a stative verb of temporary possession (4b) in some varieties. The possessive reading of this verb was acceptable among the speakers consulted by Ruvalcaba (2020) all of whom were from northern Mexico or the southwestern U.S. The current analysis draws from the data in Ruvalcaba (2020) as well as new grammaticality judgements from speakers of Mexican Spanish varieties. Thus, the data may not be licit for all Spanish speakers.³

³ One speaker from Paraguay found possessive *traer* unacceptable. Future typological work may provide a clearer picture of which regional varieties allow this form.

Ruvalcaba (2020) argues that possessive *traer* contrasts with *tener* in the same way that *estar* contrasts with *ser*. This opposition is reflected in the different types of possessive relations each verb can express. For example, in (4a) *tener* can express an ownership reading. The meaning of (4a) could be that Lupe is wealthy, namely that the predicate is expressing a property about Lupe as an individual. However, with *traer* in (4b) this reading is not possible. The reading in (4b) is one where Lupe has money on her, not that she is wealthy. One can follow it with a phrase that explicitly negates the ownership reading. Thus, the act of having money (4b) is referring to a situation or some external circumstance rather than a property of Lupe.

- (4) a. Lupe tiene mucho dinero, ??pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} much money but not is hers
 “Lupe has a lot of money, but it isn’t hers.”
- b. Lupe trae mucho dinero, pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{STAGE} much money but not is hers
 “Lupe has a lot of money, but it isn’t hers.”

Finally, in (5a) one finds that *traer* is incompatible with a characterizing part-whole relations. This resembles the ‘permanence’ or individual level-ness of *ser* constructions.

- (5) a. Lupe tiene / *trae dos brazos.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} / has_{STAGE} two arms
 ‘Lupe has two arms.’

Section 2 discusses problems with Ruvalcaba’s (2020) interpretation of data like (4–5). For instance, *tener* can actually take both individual and stage level predicates.

Additionally, similar stage and individual level contrasts among possessive verbs have been noticed in the Bantu language Mashi (Finholt 2024). An interesting finding in the Mashi data is that the distribution of Mashi’s possession verbs is conditioned by tense and modality. In other words, the possession verb that takes an individual-level predicate is different from the one that takes stage-level predicates, as in (4), but this distinction is only made in the present tense and in the indicative mood. The question of whether this occurs in Spanish as well is discussed in Section 3.

Apart from previous research on these constructions, this paper will present new data to motivate a new derivational account of the *tener* and *traer* distinction. This new account proposes that *tener* and *traer* are the transitive counterparts of *ser* and *estar*, as proposed for *have* by Myler (2018). This helps to explain the wide range of meanings possible with *tener*, which is analyzed as the elsewhere possessive copula, as has been argued for *ser* (Fábregas et al. 2023). In this way, the current analysis manages to preserve and strengthen Ruvalcaba’s (2020) intuition that *tener* and *traer* correspond to *ser* and *estar* while also accounting for data not explained by the previous analysis. This novel data includes sentences with complex predicates (Section 5).

2. An overview of *tener* and *traer*: insights and limitations

The verb *tener* can express a range of relations. One of these relations is ownership or legal possession (6a). For instance, in (6a) Lupe is a car owner, and in (6b) she is wealthy. A phrase where the ownership reading is contradicted by a conjoined phrase ('but it's not hers') degrades the sentence. Ruvalcaba (2020) treats this as evidence that *tener*, like *ser*, is limited to individual level predicates.

- (6) a. Lupe tiene carro nuevo, ??pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} car new but NEG is hers
 'Lupe has a new car, but it isn't hers.'
- b. Lupe tiene mucho dinero, ??pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} much money but NEG is hers
 'Lupe has a lot of money, but it isn't hers.'

In contrast, *traer* can express temporary possession, and it is not restricted to individual level predicates. This is evidenced by the fact the ownership or wealth readings can be negated by the conjoined clause in (7a–b).

- (7) a. Lupe trae carro nuevo, pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{STAGE} car new but NEG is hers
 'Lupe has a new cars, but it isn't hers.'
- b. Lupe trae mucho dinero, pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{STAGE} much money but NEG is hers
 'Lupe has a lot of money, but it isn't hers.'

Again, Ruvalcaba (2020) argues that the ownership reading of *tener* (6) is like the imperfective reading of *ser* constructions. Likewise, the temporary possession of *traer* (7) is like the perfective or temporary readings of *estar*. This supports the idea that *tener* is derived from *ser* and *traer* is derived from *estar*.

An issue with this contrast is that sentences like (6) can be licit if additional context is provided. For example, the temporal (8a) and locative (8b) modifiers in the following sentences make the sentences acceptable again. This suggests that, when context is provided, *tener* can have stage level predicates and express temporary relations. In other words, *tener* is not restricted to permanent or individual-level predicate readings.

- (8) a. Lupe tiene carro nuevo toda esta semana, pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has car new all this week but NEG is hers
 'Lupe has a new car all this week, but it isn't hers.'
- b. Lupe tiene mucho dinero en la bolsa, pero no es suyo.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} much money in the bag but NEG is hers
 'Lupe has a lot of money in her bag, but it isn't hers.'

Ruvalcaba's (2020) idea that *tener* is restricted to individual level predicates likely stems from the fact that it is more compatible with individual level predicates than *traer*, but it is not restricted solely to this type of meaning.

If one examines the data provided in Ruvalcaba (2020), one can see that *tener* can take all the predicates that *traer* can, but *traer* cannot take all the same predicates that *tener* can. For instance, *tener* can express kinship (9a) and part-whole relations (9b) but *traer* cannot.⁴ *Tener* is also compatible with predicates like *diabetes* (9c) which express long term ailments, but *traer* is not. On the other hand, *traer* can merge with a noun that refers to a more temporary ailment or condition, like 'headache' or 'cold' in (9d), and *tener* can too. As noted above, *traer* can express temporary control or possession (7) and *tener* can too (8). This suggests that *tener* is less restricted to certain meanings than *traer*, and this conflicts with the analysis of *tener* as a verb that takes individual level predicates and only expresses permanent or characterizing relations.

- (9) a. Lupe tiene / *trae hermanas/hijos.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} / has_{STAGE} sisters/ kids
 'Lupe has sisters/ kids.'
- b. Lupe tiene / *trae 2 piernas.
 Lupe has_{INDIV} / has_{STAGE} 2 legs
 'Lupe has 2 legs.'
- c. Pedro tiene / *trae diabetes.
 Pedro has_{INDIV} / has_{STAGE} diabetes
 "Pedro has diabetes."
- d. Pedro tiene / trae dolor de cabeza/resfriado.
 Pedro has_{INDIV} / has_{STAGE} pain of head/ cold
 "Pedro has a headache/ cold."

To summarize, (8–9) suggest that *tener* is not necessarily restricted to a permanent or imperfective meaning as suggested in Ruvalcaba (2020). On other hand, *traer* appears to be restricted to temporary possession, and this resembles the temporal or non-permanent qualities that have been observed for *estar*.

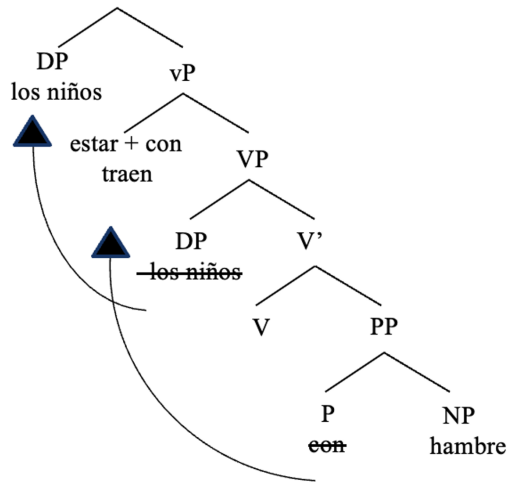
Another limitation of Ruvalcaba's (2020) analysis of *tener* and *traer* involves its claim that these verbs are the result of the incorporation of the preposition *con* into the copula, a claim that stems from Avelar (2004; 2009) and Levinson (2011). For *tener*, Ruvalcaba proposes that the preposition incorporates into *ser*. For *traer*, it incorporates into *estar*.⁵ Ruvalcaba follows

⁴ A reviewer points out that sentences like (9b) are potentially licit with an alienable possession reading where Pedro is in possession of two legs from a toy or a statue at utterance time. This can be analyzed as any other instance of temporary possession. An account of how *traer* expresses temporary possession is developed in section 4.

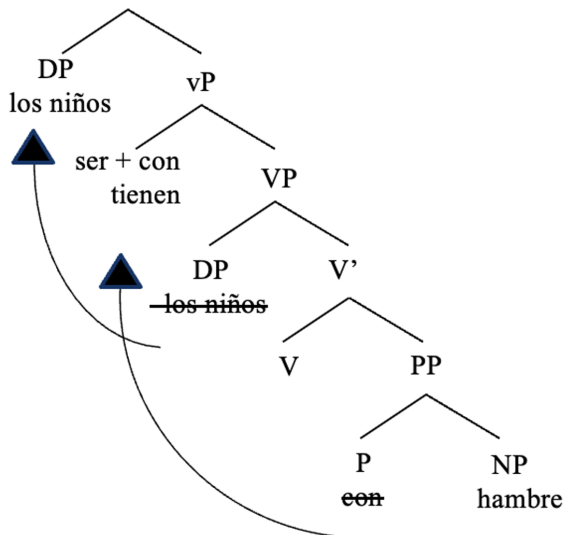
⁵ Following Gallego and Uriagareka's (2016) of *estar*, Ruvalcaba proposes that *estar* is formed through the incorporation of some element called X that "participates in the aspectual-Case/agreement systems" (2020: 137). Thus, Ruvalcaba claims that *traer* is the result of the incorporation of two heads (*con* and X) into v_{BE} .

Levinson (2011) in assuming that the possessor is introduced by a V head.⁶ These derivations are illustrated in simplified trees in (10–11).

- (10) Los niños traen hambre.
 the children have_{STAGE} hunger
 ‘The children are hungry.’



- (11) Los niños tienen hambre.
 the children have_{INDIV} hunger
 ‘The children are hungry.’



⁶ Ruvalcaba (2020) also assumes that preverbal subjects are Clitic Left-Dislocated (CLLD) topics (Ordóñez & Treviño 1999; Benincà & Poletto 2004). Thus, the subject that V introduces is a co-referent pro. For the sake of clarity, the subject DP in (10–11) is shown as generated in the specifier of VP, as the position of the subject is not central to this analysis.

As evidence for the structures in (10–11), he points to constructions where *traer* appears in its decomposed form. For example, the constructions in (12) are argued to be instances of a *traer* structure in which the preposition did not incorporate into the copula. Just like their *traer* counterparts in (9), these so-called *estar con* constructions can express temporary control or possession (12a) and abstract possession (12b). In addition, like *traer* sentences, *estar con* constructions appear to be restricted to temporary relations, as shown by (12c–d).

- (12) a. Los comisarios están con dinero y tienen que gastar-lo.
 the commissioners are_{STAGE} with money and have that spend-CL.ACC
 ‘The commissioners have money and need to spend it.’
- b. Los niños traen dolor de cabeza / fiebre.
 the children have_{STAGE} pain of head / fever
 ‘The children have a headache.’
 ‘The children have a fever.’
- c. *Los niños están con diabetes.
 the children are_{STAGE} with diabetes
 ‘The children have diabetes.’
- d. *Está con muchos hijos/ hermanas.
 is_{STAGE} with many sons/ sisters.
 ‘He/ she has a lot of kids/ sisters.’

The comparison between *traer* (9) and *estar con* (12) constructions demonstrates that they have similar semantic restrictions. This parallel is thus used as evidence for an analysis like (10). Given that both *tener* and *traer* are both thought to have an incorporated *con* (10–11), one would expect a similar ‘decomposed’ counterpart for *tener*, namely a ‘*ser con*’ type construction. However, as shown below, this is not the case.

If *traer* decomposes into *estar con*, then *tener* should be able to decompose into *ser con* constructions. Nevertheless, *ser con* constructions are limited. They cannot express ownership (13a) nor short or long-term ailments (13b–c). In contrast, *tener* can express all these relations (7–9). The sentence in (13e) shows *ser con* allows some part-whole relations, but not all (13d), while *tener* can express both types of part-whole relations (9a–b).

- (13) a. *Los comisarios son con dinero.
 the commissioners are_{INDIV} with money
 ‘The commissioners have money.’
- b. *Los niños son con dolor de cabeza / fiebre.
 the children are_{INDIV} with pain of head / fever
 ‘The children have a headache.’
 ‘The children have a fever.’

- c. *Los niños son con diabetes.
the children are_{INDIV} with diabetes
'The children have diabetes.'
- d. *Es con muchos hijos/ dos piernas.
is_{INDIV} with many sons/ two legs.
'He/ she has a lot of kids/ sisters.'
- e. La forma tradicional de este trago es con tequila.
the form traditional of this drink is_{INDIV} with tequila
'The traditional form of this drink has tequila.'

The data in (13) demonstrates that *ser con* constructions do not share as many parallels with *tener* constructions as one saw between *traer* and *estar con* constructions.

The unavailability of a productive *ser con* construction is unexpected since there is nothing in Ruvalcaba's (2020) analysis that prevents its productivity. More specifically, Ruvalcaba (2020) explains that *estar con* constructions are formed when a functional prepositional layer, small *p* (similar to little *v* but in the prepositional domain), merges with a PP headed by *con*. This functional layer above the PP blocks incorporation of the comitative P, *con*, into the copula, thus allowing *v_{BE}* to be spelled out as *estar*. If the *p* is absent, the P *con* must incorporate into the copula, as in (10), yielding *have*. Ruvalcaba does not mention anything about the *ser* structure that prevents it from merging with a pP structure headed by the same *p* that intervenes between *con* and the copula in *estar con* constructions. In other words, there is nothing structural that restricts *ser con* constructions from being as productive as *estar con* constructions.

Ruvalcaba (2020) also explains that the *p* that blocks incorporation in *estar con* constructions denotes an underspecified relation. Thus, its presence (or absence) has no effect on the meaning of the sentence; the possession reading comes from the comitative preposition itself. In other words, the same 'ingredients' that make up a *tener* sentence are present in *ser con* constructions; the only difference is that the latter includes a meaningless functional *p* that maintains the copula and the P separate. Thus, within Ruvalcaba's analysis, all of the sentences in (13) should be acceptable. This casts doubt on the notion that *tener* is composed of *ser* and *con*.⁷ This observation combined

⁷ I am not arguing that the unavailability of *ser con* constructions somehow leads to the idea that *traer* and *estar con* must be unrelated. As a reviewer points out, it could be that the derivation of *tener* does not include *con* but the derivation of *traer* does include it. Instead, I claim that Ruvalcaba's analysis, which attempts to unify *tener*, *ser con*, *traer*, and *estar con* constructions, predicts the acceptability of data that is not acceptable. These inaccurate predictions are a problem for said unified account. Moreover, the idea that *traer* does not share a base structure with *estar con* constructions is supported by a different dataset. This data involves discrepancies between *traer* constructions and *estar con* constructions. For instance, there are constructions allowed with *estar con* constructions that are not allowed with *traer* constructions (see the discussion surrounding example (33) below). There are also constructions that are allowed by *traer* but are not allowed with *estar con* (see example (45) and surrounding discussion). It is also important

with the fact that *tener* is not restricted to individual level predicate readings present a challenge to Ruvalcaba’s original analysis of the *tener* and *traer*.

Subsequent sections show that this data is better explained when one abandons the idea that a preposition *con* incorporates into various copular structures (i.e., *ser* and *estar*) to form *tener* and *traer*. A more productive analysis is one where *tener* is a transitive, elsewhere copula (Myler 2018) that is expounded in non-marked contexts, similar to Fábregas’s (2023) analysis of *ser*. In contrast, *traer* can be analyzed as a transitive copula that is spelled out in ‘marked’ syntactic contexts, namely contexts where there is terminal coincidence head in the structure.

3. A comparison between Spanish and Mashi

In his analysis of Mashi’s possession constructions, Finholt (2024) finds that there is a verb, *dwiire*, that takes stage level predicates (14a) and a different verb, *jira*, that takes individual level predicates (14b). For instance, the sentence in (14b) refers to the state of a car within a particular spatiotemporal location or context, while (14a) refers to a characterizing property of cars. Similarly, Finholt points out that in sentences like (14c), the verb that takes stage-level predicates, *dwiire*, can express a meaning in which someone is holding the child. In contrast, the verb *jira* can only express an infelicitous reading where the child is interpreted to ‘live in his arms.’

- (14) a. Context: You’re naming all the things you know are true about cars.
 Oo-mutugari gu-jira bi-gondo bi-nne
 AUG-3.car 3SM-have_{PERM} 8-tire 8AGR-four
 ‘The car has four wheels.’
- b. Context: You see a car driving down the road with only three wheels. Shocked that it is driving with a missing wheel, you point and exclaim:
 Oo-mutugari gu-dwiire bi-gondo bi-sheho
 AUG-3.car 3SM-have_{TEMP} 8-tire 8AGR-three
 ‘The car has three wheels’
- c. Johne a-dwiire. /#jira oo-mw-ana omu-boko
 John 1SM-have_{TEMP} /have_{PERM} AUG-1-child 18LOC-5.arm
 John has a child in his arms.

to note that Ruvalcaba’s claim that *tener* is derived from a copula and *con* is based on analyses and data from other languages, like Icelandic, English (Levinson 2011) and Brazilian Portuguese (Avelar 2004; 2009). If one treats *tener* as simplex and *traer* as complex, one would have to explain why Spanish’s verb *tener* is unique in comparison to its counterpart in other languages while *traer* is not. In justifying distinct derivations for each possession verb, one would also have to explain why the derivation of one cannot be extended to explain the other. Thus, the absence of a productive *ser con* is a serious limitation of Ruvalcaba’s general analysis, but it is not direct counterevidence for the claim that *traer* and *estar con* are derivationally related.

This contrast is similar to the *tener-traer* distinction described above. In Spanish, *traer* is restricted to a context like (14b).⁸ Similarly, *tener* tends to appear in construction that express permanent possession. Nevertheless, as described above *tener* is not restricted to individual-level predicates or readings, and, as such, it would be licit in both of the contexts in (14a–b). Likewise, *tener* would be licit in a context like (14c). This data (14) suggests that *jira* is more restricted than *tener*.

Apart from having two possession verbs that appear to line up with the individual vs. stage-level opposition, Mashi also has two copulas that seem to behave in the same way. In other words, Mashi has two copulas that resemble *ser* and *estar*. As (15) shows, *li* is the copula that takes stage-level predicates like ‘sick’ (15a), while *ba* is the copula that takes individual-level predicates like ‘tall’ (15b).

- (15) a. *Maria a-✓li/#ba mu-lwala*
 Mary 1SM-be-li/be-ba 1AGR-sick
 ‘Mary is sick.’
 b. *Johne a-#li/✓ba mu-liri*
 John 1SM-be-li/be-ba 1AGR-tall
 ‘John is tall.’

Similar to Ruvalcaba’s (2020) analysis, Finholt (2024) proposes that the possession verb in Mashi that expresses temporary possession *dwiire* is derived from combining a comitative preposition with the structure of a stage-level copula *li*. The other possession verb *jira* is derived from combining a comitative preposition with the structure of an individual level copula *ba*.

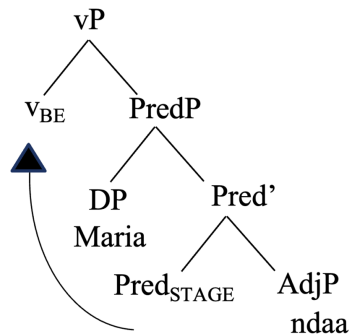
The details of Finholt’s analysis are illustrated in (16). Instead of proposing an X head as the source of the stage-level reading, as was done by Gallego and Uriagareka (2016) and Ruvalcaba (2020), Finholt adopts Myler’s (2018) notion of a PredP with a head that encodes individual or stage level semantics.⁹ Moreover, with the stage-level possession verb *dwiire*, instead of a V below v_{BE} , the subject is introduced in the specifier of a PP. The PP proposed in this analysis follows Harley’s (1995; 2002) notion of an abstract preposition P_{HAVE} which incorporates into *be* to yield *have*. In Mashi, however, Finholt (2024) argues that P_{HAVE} is spelled out as a comitative prepositions, similar to Avelar (2004; 2009), Levinson (2011) and Ruvalcaba (2020).

⁸ An example of this in Spanish is included in (ia):

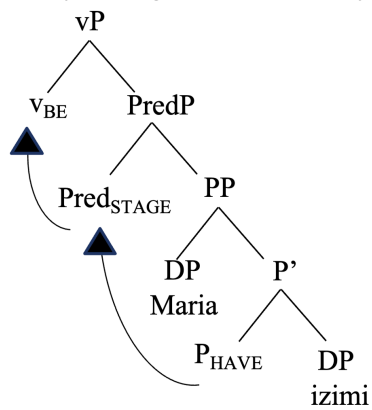
- (i) a. *Hace unos meses, este carro tenía las cuatro llantas nuevecitas.*
 make some months this car had the four tires new
Ahora nomás trae_{TEMP} tres llantas, y todas están parchadas.
 now only have.3.SG three tires and all are_{TEMP} patched
 ‘A few months ago, this car had brand new tires. Now, it’s only got three, and they’re all patched.’

⁹ Myler attributes this structure to ideas presented by Rahul Balusu in New York in 2014.

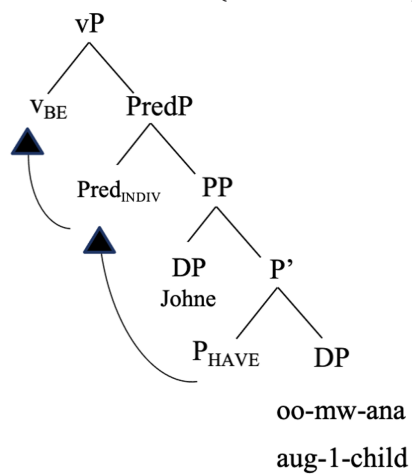
- (16) a. Maria a-li ndaa
 Mary 1SM-be_{TEMP} 1AGR.pregnant
 'Maria is pregnant.'



- b. Maria a-dwiire izimi
 Mary 1SM-have_{TEMP} 9.pregnancy
 'Mary is pregnant.' (Lit., 'Mary has pregnancy')



- c. Johne a-#dwiire /jira oo-mw-ana
 John 1SM-have_{TEMP}/have_{PERM} AUG-1-child
 'John has a child (John is a father).'



In short, Finholt’s (2024) analysis is similar to the one proposed in Ruvalcaba (2020). Indeed, Myler (2018) also mentions that the $\text{Pred}_{\text{stage}}$ head, like the one seen in (16a–b), is similar to other heads argued to derive stage level copulas (e.g., *estar*) such as Gallego & Uriagareka’s (2016) X head. Due to these similarities, if one applied Finholt’s (2024) analysis of Mashi to Spanish, one would run into the same problems already discussed for Ruvalcaba (2020).

Finholt’s (2024) Pred head which only takes individual level predicates accounts for Mashi’s *jira*, but it would overly restrict *tener*. Moreover, like Ruvalcaba (2020), Finholt (2024) supports an incorporation analysis by pointing to possession constructions in Mashi that include an overt copula (*li* or *ba*) as well as a comitative preposition (the spellout of P_{HAVE}).¹⁰ As mentioned above, however, the lack of a productive *ser con* construction suggests there is no underlying P_{HAVE} in Spanish’s *tener* verbs.¹¹ Moreover, it is unclear in Finholt’s (2024) analysis why P_{HAVE} incorporates into v_{BE} in some contexts and why it fails to incorporate in other contexts (where it surfaces as a comitative preposition). Apart from this, extending Finholt’s analysis to Spanish makes certain predictions about Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar*, namely that they emerge from the meaning of the Pred head. The problem with this assumption is that it conflicts with data of *ser* and *estar* that shows it does not neatly correspond to the individual vs. stage level opposition (Fábregas 2012). Additionally, it would not capture the notion that *estar* appears to be the more complex or marked form and that *ser* appears to be a more simplex and unmarked form, as has been argued by Gallego and Uriagareka (2016), Arche et al. (2017), Fábregas (2023) among others.¹²

An interesting aspect of Mashi is that the individual-level and stage-level contrast only happens in the present indicative context. This is true for copular constructions (16a) and possession constructions (16b). Finholt (2024) explains that in past tense, the temporary or stage-level copula *li* is used in all copular constructions, even when expressing properties of an individual. Similarly in possession constructions in the past tense, the stage-level possession verb *dwiire* is used in all cases, temporary or not. Furthermore, in subjunctive cases, the individual-level copula *ba* is overgeneralized. Similarly, for possession constructions in the subjunctive, the individual-level possession verb, but in its decomposed form, is used for all types of possession relations. By decomposed, Finholt refers to an individual-level copula and a comitative preposition (*na*, ‘with’). Finholt (2024) derives these patterns from the rules of exponence he proposes for Mashi (17).

¹⁰ One example he provides is (ia):

(i) a. Bi-kuhunire o-be na oo-mutugari
 8SM-require 2SG-be_{PERM} COM AUG-3.car
 ‘It is required that you have a car’ (Finholt 2024)

¹¹ Discrepancies between *traer* and *estar con* constructions discussed below suggest that there is no P_{HAVE} in possessive *traer* verbs either.

¹² A reviewer notes that overextension of *estar* by heritage Spanish learners (Cuza et al. 2021) may suggest that *ser* is the default form.

- (17) a. [v_{BE}] → *jira* / Mood_[+indic] + T_[+pres] _____ Pred_{INDIV} + P_{HAVE}
 b. [v_{BE}] → *ba* / Mood_[+indic] + T_[+pres] _____ Pred_{INDIV}
 c. [v_{BE}] → *dwiire* / Mood_[+indic] _____ Pred + P_{HAVE}
 d. [v_{BE}] → *li* / Mood_[+indic] _____ Pred
 e. [v_{BE}] → *ba*
 f. [P_{HAVE}] → *na*

These rules allow Finholt (2024) to capture the distribution of the ‘temporary possession’ verb *dwiire* and the ‘permanent possession’ verb *jira*. In this analysis, given the overgeneralization of *dwiire* in irrealis moods, it is seen as the elsewhere possession verb. Likewise, the *ba* copula is the exponent of the individual level copula (in the present indicative context) and there is a homophonous copula that is inserted elsewhere (in non-indicative contexts), regardless of which Pred head (stage or individual level) is present in the structure. These rules thus explain what form, whether copular or possession verb, will be used in which context.

The sensitivity of the individual-level and stage-level distinction in Mashi to tense and mood brings up the question of whether this is also true in Spanish. An interesting aspect of Spanish is that the individual-level and stage-level distinction is preserved in past tense, specifically in imperfective context. This is demonstrated in (18). In the sentences in (18), one can see that *traer* cannot express possession in the preterite (*trajo*) but it can express possession with imperfect(ive) past (*traía*). Because both are past tense, it suggests that the perfective aspect of *trajo* may be what prevents the stative possession reading.

- (18) a. Lupe traía / #trajo carro nuevo.
 Lupe had_{STAGE}.IMPERF / had_{STAGE}.PERF car new
 “Lupe has a new car.”
 b. Lupe traía/#trajo mucho dinero.
 Lupe had_{STAGE}.IMPERF / had_{STAGE}.PERF much money
 “Lupe has a lot of money.”
 d. Lupe traía#/trajo dolor de cabeza.
 Lupe had_{STAGE}.IMPERF / had_{STAGE}.PERF pain of head
 “Lupe has a headache.”

Indeed, as one reviewer points out, stative verbs lack stative perfective readings. For example, (19a) lacks a stative reading. One may be able to get a dynamic reading from (19a) where somehow Juan went from a non-English speaker to an English speaker in the span of a moment. Likewise, (19b) lacks a stative reading of *admirar*, which is to hold in high esteem. Perhaps one may be able to get a stative reading in sentence like (19a–b) if one assumes that Juan is dead, but it is odd when uttered out of the blue.

- (19) a. ?Juan supo inglés.
 Juan knew.PERF English
 ‘Juan knew English.’
- b. ?Juan admiró a sus abuelos.
 Juan admired.PERF to his grandparents
 ‘Juan admired his grandparents.’

The data in (19) suggests that the perfective aspect of the preterite is not incompatible solely with *traer* but with stative verbs in general.

Interestingly, modifiers like ‘as a child’ or ‘all his life’ can repair the data in (19). Thus, the stative verbs that appeared to be incompatible with perfective tense in (19) are acceptable in (20).

- (20) a. Juan supo inglés de niño, pero ya se le olvidó.
 Juan knew.PERF English from child but already CL.REFL CL.DAT forgot
 ‘Juan knew English as a child, but now he has forgotten it.’
- b. Juan admiró a sus abuelos toda su vida.
 Juan admired.PERF to his grandparents all his life
 ‘Juan admired his grandparents all his life.’

The same appears to be true for *traer*. The sentences that were illicit in (18) can be repaired in (21) shows with the addition of the phrases ‘for a long time’ in (21a) and ‘in her youth’ in (21b).¹³

- (21) a. Por mucho tiempo, Lupe traía/trajo carro nuevo.
 for mucho time, Lupe had_{STAGE}.IMPERF/ had_{STAGE}.PERF car new
 ‘For a long time, Lupe (always) had a new car.’
- b. En su juventud, Lupe traía/trajo mucho dinero,
 in her youth, Lupe had_{STAGE}.IMPERF/ had_{STAGE}.PERF much money
 ‘In her youth, Lupe (always) had money on her.’

In short, this data suggests that, unlike *dwiire* in Mashi, Spanish’s *traer* can express stative possession in the past tense.

Mashi’s copulas and possession verbs also lose the individual/stage-level distinction in irrealis moods. It is common knowledge that Spanish maintains the copular distinction across various moods. An example of the subjunctive is included in (22a). Like the copulas *ser* and *estar*, the possession verbs *tener* and *traer* also maintain the distinction in the subjunctive (22b).

¹³ Interestingly, Arche et al. (2017) point out that *estar* passives in present tense also resist a habitual reading in the present tense without modification.

- (22) a. No creo que estén / sean grandes.
 NEG believe that is_{STAGE}.SBJV / is_{INDIV}.SBJV big
 ‘I don’t believe they are big.’
- b. No creo que tengan/traigan carro.
 NEG believe that have_{STAGE}.SBJV / have_{INDIV}.SBJV car
 ‘I don’t believe they have a car.’

Thus, one can see that Spanish’s verbs are also less restricted than the verbs and copulas in Mashi when it comes to mood.

In conclusion, there are several similarities between Mashi and Spanish. Mashi has copulas that resemble *ser* and *estar*, or *ba* and *li* respectively; the latter (*estar* and *li*) seem to be temporally bound or take stage level predicates. Mashi also has possession verbs that resemble *tener* and *traer*, or *jira* and *dwiire* respectively; the latter verbs (*traer* and *dwiire*) have similar restrictions as the so-called stage level copulas. There were also many differences between the two languages. Mashi’s possession verb, *jira*, is restricted to individual level predicates. Its Spanish counterpart, *tener*, is not; it takes stage level predicates when adequately contextualized. Additionally, the distribution of *dwiire* and *jira* only aligns with the stage/individual level opposition in the present tense and indicative mood. In contrast, the distribution of *tener* and *traer* can be found in the past tense and subjunctive mood. As is discussed above, these differences make it difficult to extend Finholt’s analysis of Mashi to account for the Spanish data of *tener* and *traer*.

4. A new way of deriving *tener* and *traer* from *ser* and *estar* structures

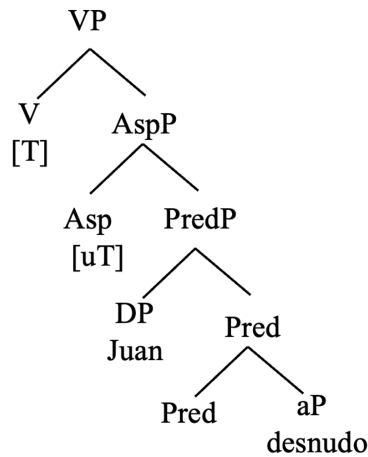
To account for the data discussed so far, the current analysis proposes that *tener* is the elsewhere possession verb and *traer* is a possession verb that is used in marked contexts. This idea stems from an analysis of *ser* and *estar* by Fábregas et al. (2023). They propose that some of the qualities of *estar* can be traced to a terminal coincidence head. In other words, *estar* is spelled out in ‘marked’ structure that contains a terminal coincidence head. In environments with no terminal coincidence head, *ser* is used. The tree in (23) provides an illustration of this idea.¹⁴ This tree shows that an Asp head with an uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature ([uT]) merges with PredP. For this Asp to be licensed, another head with a terminal coincidence feature [T] merges higher in the structure. In (23), the head with [T] is the copular head represented as V.

¹⁴ While Fábregas et al. (2023) derives the presence of *estar* from the presence of this uninterpretable feature, he proposes another structure in earlier work (Fábregas 2012) where the subject of PredP is actually a situational variable. I leave the question of whether a situational variable is present in the PredP for future analyses.

(23) Juan está desnudo.

Juan is_{TEMP} naked

‘Juan is naked.’



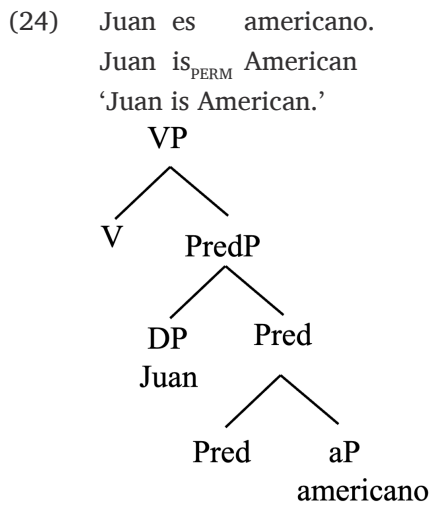
Fábregas et al. (2023) argue that *estar* has a [T] feature and *ser* does not. Consequently, whenever an Asp[uT] is present in the structure, it will 1) introduce a bounded or temporal reading, and 2) require *estar* to be present so it can be licensed. Whenever the Asp[uT] head is not present in the structure, or if said feature is checked by another head, then *estar* will not be required and V will be spelled out as the default *ser*.

The idea that the *ser-estar* opposition and its semantic contrasts are related to the central-terminal coincidence opposition has been proposed in other analyses (Brucart 2010; Arche 2012; Arche et al. 2017). All these analyses propose that both or one of the copulas are derived from a head, specifically a preposition, that has a central coincidence (e.g., *in*, *on*, *with*) or terminal coincidence (e.g., *to*, *into*, *from*) feature.¹⁵ For Arche et al. (2012) and Fábregas et al. (2023), *estar* is derived from the presence of a terminal coincidence head that *ser* lacks. This would make *estar* a ‘marked’ or more complex form, not unlike the complexity of *estar* proposed by Gallego & Uriagareka (2016). As described above, Fábregas et al. claim that this “markedness might reflect an extra prepositional specification of terminal coincidence, a feature that imposes a presupposition of boundedness, association to an external situation, etc...” (2023: 41). As such, this notion can also be extended to *traer*. In other words, if a terminal coincidence feature

¹⁵ These analyses stem from Hale and Keyser’s analysis that connected the inability and ability of certain prepositions to express stasis or static relations in small clauses (e.g., “with the baby in/*to/*into bed, we can relax”) to telicity and central/terminal coincidence oppositions. More specifically, they point out that prepositions that can express this stative relation in small clauses “share the property of expressing the relation of central coincidence, holding between the figure...and the place.” (1984; 2002: 218). The prepositions that cannot express this relation can, in contrast, express a relation of change or non-stativity called “terminal coincidence.” In this way, they link stativity to a property of certain heads, namely prepositions such as *in*, *on*, *with*, and non-stativity to a property of other prepositional heads like *to*, *from*, *into*.

explains the temporal or bounded features of *estar*, one could argue that it could also explain similar characteristics in the possessive verb *traer*.

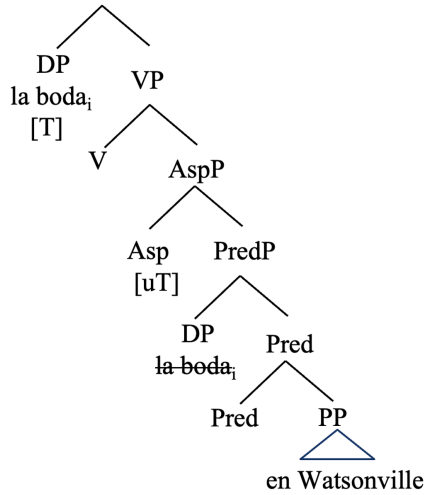
Within this approach, there is no intrinsic meaning of permanence for *ser*. Nevertheless, it tends to be used in constructions that denote permanence because such constructions lack a terminal coincidence feature, the same feature that is linked to temporality or presuppositions of boundedness or ties to an external circumstance. This unmarked *ser* structure is illustrated in (24). In contrast to the structure in (23), example (24) shows the lack of an Asp head with the uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature. As a consequence, V would be spelled out as *ser*.



In other cases, a different head (not the copular head) checks the uninterpretable feature in Asp. As such, *ser* is not necessarily restricted to a specific permanent or ‘individual-level’ reading. This is because *ser* is an underspecified form that appears when *estar* is not needed. An example of this is seen in (25). In this case, the uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature is checked by *la boda*, an eventive subject (Brucart 2010; Fábregas 2012; Fábregas et al 2023).¹⁶ Other examples like (25), where *ser* is not restricted to individual-level predicates, are discussed in Fábregas et al. (2023).

¹⁶ A reviewer points out that *la boda está en Watsonville* (the wedding is_{STAGE} in Watsonville) is possible if one imagines it as a “roving wedding.” To account for this sentence, one would have to propose a structure where the [uT] on Asp is checked by V, hence the expression of *estar*. This may be connected to the ‘roving’ interpretation, a reading that sounds like the proposition is temporary and/or linked to external circumstances. One interpretation, for instance, is that the wedding is currently at one particular point, but that it moved (or has undergone a process to get) there. In other words, it is the result of a prior process (movement). One could argue that, in this interpretation, the meaning of noun *boda* is interpreted more like an entity rather than an event. Thus one could propose that in this case, *boda* lacks a [T] feature, thus leaving it up to V to check the [uT] on Asp. However, I leave this question for future research.

- (25) La boda es en Watsonville.
 the wedding is_{PERM} in Watsonville
 ‘The wedding is in Watsonville.’



As mentioned above, *tener* is compatible with a range of interpretations, including permanent or individual level predicate interpretations. However, like *ser*, it is not restricted to these readings, and it can also denote temporary possession.¹⁷ In contrast to Ruvalcaba’s (2020) claim that *ser* and *tener* were restricted to permanent or individual level predicates, an alternative approach where *ser* and *tener* are analyzed as elsewhere forms allows us to account for instances where they do not take individual-level predicates.

Another feature that a revised analysis of *tener* and *traer* needs to account for is the lack of a ‘decomposed’ *tener* construction. Although Ruvalcaba’s account also predicts the existence of *ser con*, as a decomposed version of *tener*, none are presented in his analysis. In response, the current analysis argues that *tener* and *traer* are not formed by a comitative preposition.¹⁸ Instead, the current analysis argues that *tener* and *traer* are the transitive forms of *ser* and *estar*. This analysis follows the independently supported analysis of *have* verbs developed in Myler (2016). For Myler, *have* is the exponent of a v_{BE} in contexts where it is embedded below a transitive Voice head. The rule of exponence for *have* (26b) and the structure (26a) is shown below. As one can see, *have* is spelled out when v_{BE} is below a so-called expletive Voice head. This refers to a type of Voice that 1) has phi features, 2) introduces a subject

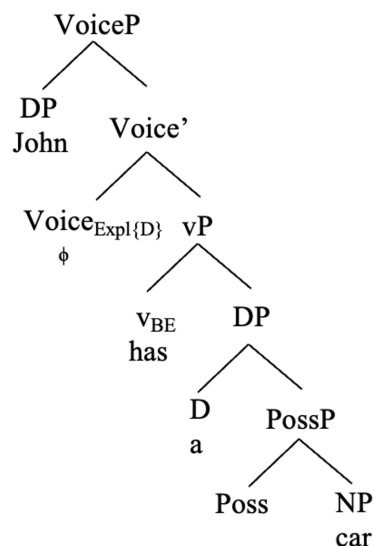
¹⁷ Indeed, *tener* can take event subjects (ia) whereas *traer* cannot (ib).

- (i) a. La boda tiene mucha gente /mucho ambiente
 The wedding has much people/much environment
 ‘The wedding has a lot of people/a good vibe.’
 b. *La boda trae mucha gente / mucho ambiente
 The wedding has_{TEMP} much people/much environment
 ‘The wedding has a lot of people/a good vibe.’

¹⁸ Inconsistencies between *traer* and *estar con* constructions are discussed below.

in its specifier ($\{D\}$), and 3) fails to discharge a thematic role for this subject. It is important to note that, in this analysis, the transitivity of the Voice head derives the allomorph *have*, but the possession relation itself is introduced by a Possessor Phrase (PossP) lower in the structure; one process is largely independent of the other. In other words, Myler (2016) draws from previous analyses (Szabolcsi 1983; Kayne 1993; Partee 1999) in his claim that the possession relation stems from a PossP within the copular predicate. The copular predicate is essentially a possessive DP (e.g., ‘John’s car’) without a possessor. The lack of a possessor argument is demonstrated in (26a). As such, an unsaturated or ‘unsatiated’ relation is ‘passed up’ the structure until the transitive Voice head merges with vP and takes a subject. Thus, the subject in the specifier of expletive Voice is interpreted as the sentential subject and it also gets the thematic role introduced by the possessor head (Poss) in the DP.

(26) a. John has a car.



b. $v_{BE} \leftrightarrow \text{HAVE} / \text{Voice}_{\{D\}}, \phi \text{ —}$

If one were to propose an analysis like the one in (26) for Spanish, one could derive *tener* or *traer* without the presence for a comitative *con* preposition. This would explain why there is no link between *tener* and *ser con* constructions; there is no *con* in *tener*.

Myler (2016) pointed out that the *con* was unnecessary in the derivation of *have* within Levinson’s (2011) analysis. Since Ruvalcaba (2020) uses Levinson’s structure in his analysis of Spanish, Myler’s (2016) points are particularly relevant. Myler pointed out that the presence of a V that introduces the subject in Levinson’s (2011) account of *have* makes it an essentially transitive construction. Thus, *con* is not needed:

...the suggestion that P Incorporation is what triggers the spell-out of *be* as *have* is not necessary. One could equally well claim that it is the presence of *v* (which is independently necessary for Case-assignment, on Levinson’s assumptions) that triggers the realization of *be* as *have*. This would equate to the claim that *have* is the transitive form of *be* (Myler 2016: 391).

¹⁹ For Myler, the presence of a specifier is determined by the presence of a feature on the head, namely {D}. In the case of *have* constructions, the Poss head lacks this feature: Poss{ }.

- (29) a. $v_{BE} \leftrightarrow \text{ESTAR} / __\text{Asp}_{[uT]}$
 b. $v_{BE} \leftrightarrow \text{SER} / \text{elsewhere}$

Based on this analysis of *estar*, one could propose that *traer* is the spell-out of a *v* below an expletive Voice head, like *tener*, but also above a head with an uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature, like *estar* (30).²⁰ Note that the terminal coincidence feature on *v* and the presence of a transitive Voice are independent aspects of this derivation, and their only tie is that they create an environment in which *traer* is exponed.

- (30) a. $v_{BE} \leftrightarrow \text{TRAER} / \text{Voice}_{\{D\}, \phi} __\text{Asp}_{[uT]}$

This captures the fact that *traer* appears in more restricted environments, namely those with particular temporal properties introduced by $\text{Asp}_{[uT]}$. This rule, and the one for *tener*, also captures the fact that the heads are not restricted to a particular modality or tense like possession verbs are in Mashi. The proposed structure for *traer* is illustrated in (31). Here, I adopt Finholt's practice of glossing *traer*-like verbs with *have*_{TEMP}.

- (31) Juan trae un carro.
 Juan has_{TEMP} a car
 'Juan has a car.'
-
- ```

graph TD
 VoiceP --> DP1[DP
Juan]
 VoiceP --> VoicePrime[Voice']
 VoicePrime --> VoiceExpl[Voice_{Expl{D}}
φ]
 VoicePrime --> vP[vP]
 vP --> vBE[v_{BE}
[T]
traer]
 vP --> AspP[AspP]
 AspP --> Asp[uT]
 AspP --> DP2[DP]
 DP2 --> D[D
un]
 DP2 --> PossP[PossP]
 PossP --> Poss[Poss]
 PossP --> NP[NP
carro]

```

<sup>20</sup> Fábregas (2012) analyzes the copula as some functional head, *F*, and not *v*. One could propose that *traer* is the spell out of whichever head or combination of heads in this domain as long as they 1) contain a feature related to boundedness [T] and 2) are also spelled out as a copula in intransitive contexts. In addition, the head in question must denote an identity function for the sentential subject to be interpreted as the possessor. There is also the possibility that *traer* is the spellout of a  $v_{BE}$  with a terminal coincidence *P* (e.g., *de* or 'from') incorporated into it. Whichever approach one chooses, *con* is unnecessary. Indeed, a preposition like *con* is categorized as a central coincidence head by Hale and Keyers, and these are related to stative or unbounded eventualities.

The Asp with the terminal coincidence feature below *v* could also vary, or it could be different types of terminal coincidence P's present, like *de* (from) or *a* (to) etc. This could explain other verbs Ruvalcaba (2020) claims are ambiguous between dynamic and stative possession verbs (32a–b).

- (32) a. Llevan mucha hambre.  
           take.3.PL much hunger  
           ‘They are very hungry (currently).’  
       b. Las ventanas del baño no llevaban mosquitera.  
           the windows of.the bathroom not take.IMPERF screen  
           ‘The bathroom windows didn’t have screens.’

Alternatively, one could propose that the *v* is distinct in (32).<sup>21</sup> A more in-depth account of other stative possession verbs will be set aside for future research.

Lastly, there is the question of how to derive *estar con* constructions. While the current analysis does not assume that *traer* and *estar con* constructions are related, it aligns with Ruvalcaba’s analysis (2020) that *estar con* constructions are derived from a pP structure (36).<sup>22</sup> The subjects in these constructions are introduced by a functional *p* that merges with a PP headed by *con*, as shown in (33). Additionally, the possessor relation can be encoded in the *p* or it can emerge from the accompaniment semantics of *con*.<sup>23</sup> The only difference between the current analysis and the one proposed by Ruvalcaba (2020) is that now there is an uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature that triggers *estar*.

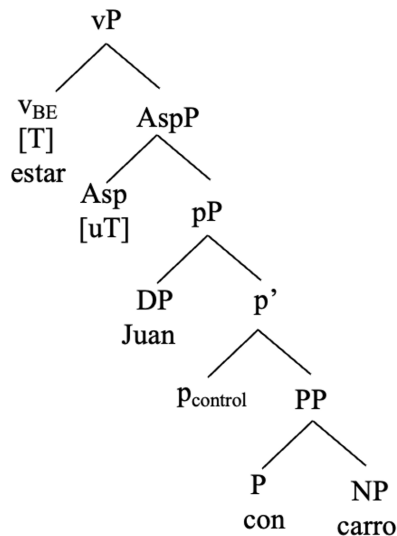
<sup>21</sup> For instance, one could propose something like a stative *go* verb in the sense of Jackendoff (1983; 1990). Jackendoff described static ‘go’ in English as an extent verb that combines with a stative eventuality.

<sup>22</sup> Prepositions have been argued to be complex items that decompose into a functional *p* and a P (Svenonius 2010; Levinson 2011). This is compared to verbs where there is functional *v* layer above the VP. The *p* introduces a ‘Figure’ argument, like *the students* in *the students in the rooms*: [pP[PP]]. Svenonius describes little *p* as a category which “introduces a figure in neo-Davidsonian fashion (parallel to Kratzer’s (1996) voice head in the verb phrase)” (2010). To account for constructions in Icelandic similar to *estar con* constructions like (36), Levinson (2011) analyzes the preposition *með* (‘with’) as a pP structure. She proposes that the possessive semantics of *með* are entailed by the *p*. For her, the possessive or ‘control’ relation denoted by *með* stems from both the accompaniment semantics of P and a ‘control’ semantics of a particular *p* called *p<sub>CONTROL</sub>*.

<sup>23</sup> See Myler (2016: 393–394) for a modification of Levinson’s proposed denotations for the heads involved in pP (*p<sub>control</sub>* and P, *með*, ‘with’) in Icelandic. These revised denotations can also be extended to the Spanish data discussed by Ruvalcaba (2020).



- (33) Juan está con carro.  
 Juan is<sub>TEMP</sub> with car  
 ‘Juan has a car (at the moment).’



To reiterate, the current analysis does not treat *traer* and *estar con* as derivationally related. The former gets its possessive reading from a PossP and the latter gets it from the *p* and *P* heads in the *pP*. The fact that the possessive meaning has different sources in each construction can help to explain some of the discrepancies between the two constructions. As one reviewer notes, some *traer* constructions (e.g., *\*los niños traen diabetes*, the children have diabetes) are less acceptable than their *estar con* counterpart (i.e., *\*/?los niños están con diabetes*, the children are with diabetes). It is possible that the difference in the level of acceptability of these two constructions may be due to their unique structures.

Here again, it is important to note that terminal coincidence heads vary (Hale and Keyser 1984; 2002). If a different *Asp* or *P* headed *AspP*, one could have a different type of terminal coincidence being expressed. Arche describes two subclasses of non-central coincidence prepositions: allative and ellative. The former includes *to*, *up to*, *onto*, *into* and is associated with a future/prospective reading (2012: 124). The latter includes *from*, *out of*, *of*, and is linked to past/perfect readings. Indeed, *estar* is believed to be formed from the ellative type by Arche (2012). As mentioned for *llevar* constructions (32) it is possible that *v* may be spelled out as a different form according to the type of terminal coincidence feature it merges above. For instance, as a reviewer points out, there is another construction that resembles *estar con* construction with the verb *venir* (‘to come’) as shown in (34a). Another construction one could add is the *andar con* sentence in (34b).

- (34) a. Juan viene con carro / dolor de cabeza / \*casa / \*diabetes  
 Juan comes with car / pain of head / house/ diabetes  
 ‘Juan has a car (at the moment).’  
 b. Juan anda con carro / dolor de cabeza / \*casa / \*diabetes  
 Juan is with car / pain of head / house/ diabetes  
 ‘Juan has a car (at the moment).’

Here, as in the cases with *estar con* constructions, the preposition *con* is the source of the possessive meaning. Thus, one could propose a structure similar to (33). As mentioned above, the difference in verbs could be attributed to different Asp or P heads below *v*, each expressing a different type of terminal coincidence. More precise details of such an analysis are left for future work.

## 5. The *tener-traer* distinction and complex predicates

Additional evidence of the *ser-tener* and *estar-traer* parallels can be found in sentences with complex predicates. Small clauses are known to be restricted by the matrix verb. Jiménez-Fernández (2012) mentions that Spanish verbs *considerar* (to consider) and *esperar* (to expect) each restrict for a particular type of small clause. Specifically, the former restricts for an individual level predicate in the small clause and the latter restricts for a stage level predicate in the small clause. This is illustrated in (35–36). As one can see, the verb *considerar* (‘to consider’) combines with a small clause that has an individual-level predicate (35a) but not with small clauses that have a stage level predicate (35b). Jiménez-Fernández (2012) also shows that the opposite is true for the verb *esperar* (36a–b).

- (35) a. Considero [a Jimena inteligente].  
 consider.1SG to Jimena intelligent  
 ‘I consider Jimena intelligent.’  
 b. \*Considero [a Jimena triste].  
 consider.1SG to Jimena sad  
 ‘I consider Jimena sad.’  
 (36) a. Espero [el coche reparado para esta tarde].  
 expect.1SG the car repaired for this afternoon  
 ‘I expect the car fixed by this afternoon.’  
 b. \*Espero [el coche veloz para esta tarde].  
 expect.1SG the car fast for this afternoon  
 ‘I expect the car fast by this afternoon.’

The verbs *tener* and *traer* can also take small clause complements. Interestingly, the choice of *tener* or *traer* influences the reading of the small clause.

Some varieties of Spanish can express inalienable relations between the subject and object without a possessive pronoun.<sup>24</sup> For instance, the translation for the English *Mary raised her hand* would literally be *Mary raised the hand*. In the sentences in (37a,c,e) the subject of the matrix clause and the subject of the small clause are inalienably related. In these cases, the small clause predicate expresses a property or a state of the small clause subject, namely the subject's eye color or condition. Whether it is a property or a state can be determined by whether the main verb is *tener* or *traer*. The examples in (37b,d) include comparable copular sentences to demonstrate the similarities of these two constructions. One can see that with *estar* and *traer*, the readings are restricted to states rather than intrinsic properties of the individual. Thus, having red eyes can only mean that they are bloodshot with *traer* (37c) or that the individual is wearing contact lenses. This is comparable to the *estar* construction (37d). In contrast, *tener*, allows the adjective *rojos* to function as an individual-level predicates where the person's eyes are naturally red (37a).<sup>25</sup> This meaning can be interchangeable with *ser* constructions (37b). The meanings of *tener* sentences can also have temporary or stage level readings. This aligns with the current analysis which treats *tener* as the elsewhere possessive verb. In contrast, *traer* cannot express a reading where the color refers to the person's natural eye color. With a different color (37e) the bloodshot reading is not possible, and the only meaning available is that Juan recently put on contact lenses that changed the color of his eyes.

- (37) a. Juan tiene los ojos rojos  
       Juan has the eyes red  
       'Juan has red eyes.' (the irises of his eyes are red)
- b. Sus ojos son rojos.  
       his eyes are<sub>INDIV</sub> red  
       'His eyes are red.' (the irises of his eyes are red)
- c. Juan trae los ojos rojos.  
       Juan has<sub>TEMP</sub> the eyes red  
       'Juan has red eyes.' (they are bloodshot)
- d. Sus ojos están rojos.  
       his eyes are<sub>STAGE</sub> red  
       'His eyes are red.' (they are bloodshot)
- e. Juan trae los ojos verdes.  
       Juan has<sub>TEMP</sub> the eyes green  
       'Juan has green eyes.'

<sup>24</sup> A reviewer mentions that some varieties of Spanish use the possessive pronoun. In the variety relevant to this analysis, the lack of a possessive pronoun is more natural.

<sup>25</sup> Since people cannot naturally have red colored eyes, one could imagine that this is felicitous in a fictional or imaginary context.

The presupposition of change in (37e) is similar to the way in which *estar* constructions can presuppose a different or changed state (Romero 2009, as cited in Fábregas 2012). For example, (38a) means that a property of the house is the color white. The sentence in (38b) can express a similar meaning, but it presupposes that the house was previously a different color. This may be linked to Arche et al.'s (2017) claim that *estar* is tied to utterance time.<sup>26</sup>

- (38) a. La casa es blanca.  
           the house is<sub>INDIV</sub> white  
           'The house is white.'
- b. La casa está blanca.  
           the house is<sub>STAGE</sub> white  
           'The house is white (now).'

A similar pattern is observed for *traer* in (37c) and in the data in (39). For example, when *traer* is present, having black hair in (39c) it implies that Juan colored it black, but it may have been a different color in the past,<sup>27</sup> similar to the *estar* construction (39d).<sup>28</sup> With *tener* (39a), the small clause predicate can refer to the property of the individual, Juan, like *ser* in (39b). For this reason, the meaning is one where black is the natural color of his hair. Additionally, *tener* is not incompatible with the reading where Juan colored his hair either. This aligns with our analysis of *tener* as the elsewhere possessive verb.

- (39) a. Juan tiene el pelo negro.  
           Juan has the hair black  
           'Juan has black hair.' (black is his natural color)
- b. Su pelo es negro.  
           His hair is<sub>INDIV</sub> black  
           'His hair is black.' (black is his natural color)

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<sup>26</sup> Alternatively, the comparison class of the adjective may determine the meaning in (38), as proposed by Gumiel-Molina et al. (2015). Here the inner structure of the adjectival predicate is one that makes it an absolute adjective, or an adjective with a within-individual comparison class. In this sense, the predicate compares the subject to counterparts of itself.

<sup>27</sup> This is shown with an inanimate subject in (a). Here, the sentence presupposes that most cars did not have electric engines in the past.

(i) a. Muchos carros ahora traen motor eléctrico.  
           many cars now have<sub>TEMP</sub> motor electric  
           'Many cars now have electric engines.'

<sup>28</sup> Further evidence for the stage-level predicate reading of *traer* can be seen with focus fronting (a).

(i) a. Juan, hasta el pelo verde trae ahora.  
           Juan, even the hair green have<sub>TEMP</sub> now  
           'Juan, even his hair green he has now.'

- c. Juan trae el pelo negro.  
 Juan has<sub>TEMP</sub> the hair black  
 ‘Juan has red eyes.’ (he has it colored black)
- d. Su pelo esta negro.  
 His hair is<sub>STAGE</sub> black  
 ‘His hair is black.’ (his hair colored black)

Given the underspecification of *tener*, the temporary reading of *tener* constructions can stem from a variety of sources, including the surrounding context and discourse. This contrasts with a similar reading in *traer* sentences, which stems from the terminal coincidence feature below v. Thus, the obligatory temporary reading and the presupposition of change one finds only in *estar* and *traer* constructions further support the idea that they are derivationally related.

Additionally, one can see that in (40) the predicate of the embedded small clause can express a property of the small clause subject. In other words, *tener* allows the small clause to have an individual-level predicate reading (40a). The opposite is true with *traer*. With *traer* in (40b) the reading is one where the object, Pedro, is currently a cook, but that is not necessarily his profession. In other words, it refers to their current state.

- (40) a. Juan tiene a Pedro de cocinero.  
 Juan has to Pedro of cook  
 ‘Juan has Pedro as his cook.’
- b. Juan trae a Pedro de cocinero.  
 Juan has<sub>TEMP.</sub> to Pedro of cook  
 ‘Juan has Pedro being a cook for him.’ (Pedro’s real job is something else)

In contrast to (37a,c,e), the data in (40) have complex predicates with an embedded PP. Another instance of small clauses with PP predicates are those in (41).

The predicates of the small clauses in (41) appear to refer to a state of the students in cases when *traer* is used, but they can have a reading where the locative PP can be a property of the students when *tener* is used. With *tener*, Juan can be in a different city (41a). For example, he can be the director or founder of a study abroad program in Tucson that helps students travel abroad for their studies. In this way, he is indirectly responsible for their presence in Tijuana, and the locative phrase can express a property about the students, namely that they are study abroad students located in Tijuana. In contrast, in (41b) Juan has the students with him at utterance time. They are not necessarily study abroad students. In this case, ‘in Tijuana’ refers to the state of the students; they are under Juan’s care in Tijuana at utterance time or at some specific spatio-temporal location.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>29</sup> One reviewer points out that this construction may not be acceptable to everyone. One possibility is that these sentences sound odd out of the blue. For instance, the sentence in (a) may sound better.

- (41) a. Juan tiene a los estudiantes en Tijuana.  
 Juan has to the students in Tijuana  
 ‘Juan has the students in Tijuana.’ (he keeps/sends them there).
- b. Juan trae a los estudiantes en Tijuana  
 Juan have<sub>TEMP</sub> to the students in Tijuana  
 ‘Juan has the students in Tijuana.’ (he’s got them there with him)

The link between the state denoted by *traer* (41b) and utterance time resembles the connection between *estar* and utterance time, as described by Arche et al. (2017). Note, also, that these sentences do not necessarily express possession. As will be discussed in more detail below, the subjects of these sentences (40–41) appear to have a causative reading, a thematic role not observed in previously discussed constructions.

The data in (42) are more straightforward causative *have* constructions. One can see that *traer* constructions behave like *estar* with respect to their incompatibility with perfective aspect or habituality (see Arche et al. 2017 for discussion on this incompatibility). In (42) *tener* and *traer* take a small clause with a VP predicate. One can see that bare plural objects are preferable for *traer* (42a,c). A definite object like ‘a dozen tamales’ degrades the sentence (42b,d). Nevertheless, a definite object is fine with *tener*.

- (42) a. Juan tiene/trae a los estudiantes haciendo tamales.  
 Juan has/ has<sub>TEMP</sub> to the students making tamales  
 ‘Juan has the students making tamales.’
- b. Juan tiene/?trae a los estudiantes haciendo una docena de tamales.  
 Juan has/ has<sub>TEMP</sub> to the students making a dozen of tamales  
 ‘Juan has the students making a dozen tamales.’

- 
- (i) a. Ayer, el profesor Juan y sus estudiantes estaban en la Ciudad de México. Ahora,  
 yesterday the profesor Juan and his students were<sub>STAGE</sub> at The city of Mexico. Now  
 Juan los trae en Tijuana  
 Juan CL.ACC.PL have<sub>TEMP</sub> in Tijuana.  
 ‘Yesterday, Professor Juan and his students were in Mexico City. Now, Juan’s got them in Tijuana.’  
 (he’s got them there with him)

Another possibility is that some speakers disallow certain PPs as secondary predicates below *traer* (especially if they denote a not so temporary state-of-affairs of being located in a city). Yet another possibility is that, for some speakers, *traer* subjects cannot be agentive. For instance, one commonly used phrase (b) has a non-agentive subject.

- (i) a. Este postre nos trae en las nubes  
 This dessert CL.1.PL have<sub>TEMP</sub> in the clouds  
 ‘This dessert has us on cloud 9.’

Also, it’s interesting to note that the reviewer accepted the data in (42) where a more agentive verb is present (‘clean,’ ‘make’) in the complex predicate. It is possible that this variation is related to some interaction between agency (the type of Voice head) and aspect (the effects of the terminal coincidence feature). For now, I leave a syntactic account of dialectal differences for future research.

- c. Juan tiene/trae a los estudiantes limpiando baños.  
 Juan has/ has<sub>TEMP</sub> to the students cleaning bathrooms  
 ‘Juan has the students cleaning bathrooms.’
- d. Juan tiene/?trae a los estudiantes limpiando el baño.  
 Juan has/ has<sub>TEMP</sub> to the students cleaning the bathroom  
 ‘Juan has the students cleaning the bathroom.’

If one agrees with Arche et al. (2017) that *estar*, with regards to viewpoint aspect, tends to be continuous, and if one assumes that *traer* is derived similarly to *estar*, then the behavior of *traer* in (42) would be expected. This is because the bare plural allows a repetitive or ongoing action, such as (42a) where the students are making an unspecified number of tamales; they are just involved in the ongoing action of tamale making. When one has a definite object, the action has an endpoint that may conflict with the aspectually continuous nature of *traer*. Nevertheless, definite small clause predicates are more acceptable with *tener*. This adds to the *ser-tener* and *estar-traer* parallels. Moreover, similar to *estar* constructions and *traer* sentences with simple predicates, examples like (42d) are more acceptable when further context is provided. For example, the sentence in (43) is the same as (42d) except that this time additional information is included. Now, the clause is linked to external circumstances, namely a particular spatiotemporal location that contrasts with a prior state.

- (43) a. Ayer Juan los hizo limpiar la cocina, y ahora  
 yesterday Juan CL.ACC.PL made clean the kitchen, and now  
 María trae a los estudiantes limpiando el baño.  
 Maria have<sub>TEMP</sub> to the students cleaning the bathroom  
 ‘Yesterday, Juan made them clean the kitchen, and now Maria has the students cleaning the bathroom.’

This, like the other complex predicate examples, further demonstrate the *ser-tener* and *estar-traer* parallels. In addition, the structural analysis proposed in the previous section can be extended to these constructions.

One way to account for *traer* sentences like (43) is to propose that the Asp head with a terminal coincidence feature merges with a small clause or PredP, as shown in (44). As explained previously, the terminal coincidence feature on *v* licenses the uninterpretable feature on the Asp head. To capture the causative reading, one can propose that there is a Voice head that introduces an external argument ({D}) with a causer role. This contrasts with the expletive Voice head for *tener* and *traer* with simplex predicates which did not assign a thematic role to its external argument (28, 31). Nevertheless, the Voice head in (44) is still transitive and, consequently, *traer*, is spelled out. If the *v* lacked an interpretable terminal coincidence feature, it would be spelled out as *tener*. Thus, the same sentence with *tener* would

differ from (44) in the sense that the *tener* construction would lack an AspP (as well as a v with a terminal coincidence that licenses the Asp head). A similar structure can be proposed for the causative readings one finds with PP predicates (40–41). However, with respect to the inalienable sentences in (37a, c) and (39a, c), an analysis like (44) is possible but with a different Voice head, namely the expletive voice head which does not assign a thematic role to the argument it introduces.

The current analysis does not make a strong claim about why the matrix verb is sensitive to the predicate of the lower small clause. Jiménez-Fernández (2012) proposed a topicalization analysis to account for the stage vs. individual level predicate interpretation of small clauses. In said analysis, small clauses with individual level predicates are simple structures consisting of only the subject and predicate. As such, the subject of the small clause moves into the specifier of a Topic Phrase [<sub>TopicP</sub> subject<sub>i</sub> [Topic [<sub>PredP</sub> subject<sub>i</sub> [ predicate]]]]. In contrast, small clauses with stage level predicates are said to be more complex, and so these sentences allow the small clause subject or some other element in the structure to occupy the topic position [<sub>TopicP</sub> X [Topic [<sub>PredP</sub> ...X...]]]. Another potential explanation is that the lower small clause head incorporates into v. Here, one could follow den Dikken's (2006) proposal that the minimal domain of a head movement chain ( $\alpha$ , t) "includes the maximal projection of the raised head (which is included in the minimal domain of the host  $\beta$  of the raised head  $\alpha$ " (den Dikken 2006: 114). Thus, in (44) the complement of the trace is equidistant from the complement of v since v hosts the trace's antecedent. Thus, the VP in (44) is no different than typical objects of *tener* or *traer*. As such, one could propose that the temporal restrictions of *traer* with simplex complements are linked to predicate of the small clause.<sup>30</sup> Beyond this, a more complete analysis of this process is left for future research.

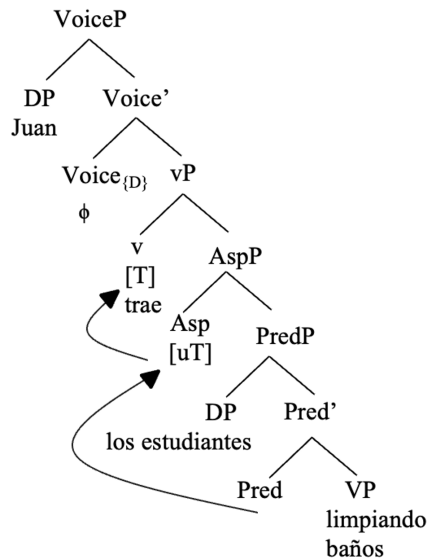
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<sup>30</sup> A reviewer asks if a similar restriction is possible with relative clauses like (a). In these cases, *traer* does not follow the same restriction pattern discussed above as it appears to disallow relative clauses with *ser* and *estar*. In these cases, there is no incorporation of *ser* and *estar* into the matrix clause verb. In contrast, in an example provided by the reviewer, *tener* appear to prefer *ser* relative clauses but not *estar* clauses. However, with additional context, it is possible that *tener* can appear with both (c). In (c) one could imagine a group of people designing an advertisement flyer for a local optometrist. They want the poster to feature a patient on the poster, but they cannot decide which would be the ideal patient. During their conversation, they begin to recap the reasons why they have discarded some patients they had previously considered. In this context (c) appears to be felicitous. Thus *tener* also fails to follow the same pattern as discussed above. As such, it seems the verb is not sensitive to the predicate in a relative clause.

- (i) a. \*Juan trae los ojos que están/son negros/rojos.  
       Juan have<sub>TEMP</sub> the eyes that are/are black/red  
       'Juan has eyes that are red.'
- b. \*Juan tiene los ojos que ??están/son negros/rojos.  
       Juan has the eyes that are/are black/red  
       'Juan has eyes that are red.'



- (44) Juan trae a los estudiantes limpiando baños.  
 Juan has to the students cleaning bathrooms  
 ‘Juan has the students cleaning bathrooms.’



Whichever way one captures the sensitivity of *tener* and *traer* to the embedded predicate, the data presented so far brings to light new questions about analyses like the ones proposed by Ruvalcaba (2020) and Finholt (2024). If one takes a look at *estar con* constructions, one can see they cannot express a causative reading. For example in (45a–b) Juan is simply accompanying the students in their chores.

- (45) a. #Juan está con los estudiantes limpiando baños.  
 Juan is<sub>STAGE</sub> with the students cleaning bathrooms  
 ‘Juan has the students cleaning bathrooms.’  
 b. #Juan está con los estudiantes haciendo tamales.  
 Juan is<sub>STAGE</sub> with the students making tamales  
 ‘Juan has the students cleaning bathrooms.’

In Ruvalcaba’s (2020) analysis, the verb *traer* is essentially *estar* without a comitative preposition incorporated into it. In other words, the Voice head has nothing to do with whether *traer* or

- 
- c. Juan es el de los ojos que estuvieron demasiado lagrimosos durante la sesión de fotos  
 Juan is. the of the. eyes that were<sub>STAGE</sub> too teary during the session of photos  
 Pedro tuvo los/unos ojos que estuvieron/fueron demasiado rojos.  
 Pedro had the/some eyes that were<sub>STAGE</sub>/were<sub>INDIV</sub> too red.  
 ‘Juan is the one with the eyes that were too teary during the photo shoot. Pedro had the eyes that were too red.’

*estar* is spelled out. In such an analysis, it is unclear why *traer* can have causative reading with complex predicates but *estar* cannot. In other words, the lack of *with* incorporation cannot account for its incompatibility with causative readings.<sup>31</sup> In the current analysis, *estar* cannot express a causative reading because when there is a causative Voice in the structure (44), *v* is spelled out as *traer* or *tener*.

To further support the presence of a causative Voice head in (44), one can see that the subject of *traer* and *tener* can be non-agentive. For example, in (46a) one has an inanimate subject ‘house.’ This is licit in a context where prospective buyers are visiting an open house, and the house of interest turns out to be constructed like a maze. Likewise, the sentence in (46b) has an inanimate subject, yet it is interpreted as the causer of the state denoted by the small clause.

- (46) a. La casa nos trae todos confundidos.  
           the house CL.1.PL have<sub>TEMP</sub> all confused  
           ‘This house has us confused’  
       b. El mar los trae todos mojados.  
           the ocean CL.3.PL have<sub>TEMP</sub> all wet  
           ‘The ocean had them all wet’

The verb *tener* would be equally acceptable in (46a–b). As such, one can see that there is a clear causer role in these sentences. One would therefore be able to extend an analysis like (44) to these sentences. Here again, one would have a Voice head that introduces a causer subject. This contrasts with *tener* or *traer* sentences with simplex predicates where an expletive Voice head merges with *vP* and introduces a subject but does not discharge a thematic role. Since the Voice heads for simplex and complex predicates are both transitive, *tener* or *traer* can be inserted into *v* in both cases.

This analysis has shown that the *tener* and *traer* verbs are sensitive to the predicate of a small clause complement. This further demonstrated the nuanced differences between *tener* and *traer*. The data aligned with what was observed for *tener* and *traer* sentences with simplex predicates. First, *traer* functions like *tener* in that it can take a small clause complement without expressing a dynamic ‘bring’ reading. Moreover, in contrast to *tener*, *traer* is limited to sentences with complex predicate that are temporally bound and linked to external circumstances. The verb *tener* is not restricted, which aligns with its analysis as the elsewhere possession verb. The section also discussed so-called causative *have* constructions in Spanish where the matrix subject is the causer of the state of affairs denoted by the PredP. These are derived by a transitive Voice head, namely a causative Voice head, that merges with *vP*. This contrasts with the expletive Voice head proposed for non-causative sentences.

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<sup>31</sup> It should be noted that these can express an experiencer reading when the embedded verb has a dative clitic: *limpiándole, haciéndole*. See Myler (2016) for more discussion on the dative clitic in Spanish experiencer constructions.

## 6. Discussion and Conclusion

This paper has proposed a new way of explaining the possession verbs *tener* and *traer* in the Spanish spoken in northern Mexico and the southwestern U.S. This explanation captures the parallels between these verbs and the *ser* and *estar* copulas. It showed that, contrary to the claims made in Ruvalcaba (2020), *tener* is not restricted to individual level predicates. Instead, following the analysis of *ser* by Fábregas et al. (2023), the current analysis argued that *tener* is the elsewhere possession verb. In contrast, it showed that *traer* is temporally bound and linked to external circumstances, as has been argued for *estar*. This is due to the presence of an uninterpretable terminal coincidence feature that must be licensed by a head with an interpretable terminal coincidence feature. The head with this feature is spelled out by *estar* in intransitive contexts and *traer* in transitive contexts. Likewise, the v without the feature is spelled out as *ser* in intransitive contexts and *tener* in transitive contexts (when the vP is a complement of an expletive Voice head).

This analysis accounts for the data discussed in Ruvalcaba (2020) in addition to the new data with complex predicates in Section 5. Moreover, it explains some aspects of the data that are not explained in analyses like those proposed in Ruvalcaba (2020) and Finholt (2024) both of which propose that the possessive verbs are copulas with a comitative preposition incorporated into them. For instance, the current analysis accounts for the discrepancies between *traer* and *estar con* constructions, such as the inability of the latter to express a causative reading with a small clause complement as well as the differing levels of acceptability between each construction despite having the same predicate. It also accounts for the absence of *ser con* constructions which is predicted by the idea that *tener* consists of *ser* and *con*, as well as by the analysis of *estar con* sentences, which are more productive, as decomposed *traer* constructions. All this is due to the fact that *con* is not involved in the derivation of *tener* or *traer*. These verbs are derived from a transitive Voice head.

Section 3 discussed the parallels and differences between Spanish and Mashi. For example, it showed that Mashi, like Spanish, has a copula, *li*, that is restricted to stage-level predicates. Like *traer*, Mashi also has a possession verb, *dwiire*, that appears to be restricted to temporary possession or a possession relation that is tied to external circumstances. In contrast, Mashi has a copula, *ba*, that is restricted to individual level predicates. This is related to Spanish *ser*, which tends to appear with individual-level predicates, although this is due to the fact that it cannot license a terminal coincidence feature in the structure (Fábregas et al. 2023). Likewise, Mashi has a possession verb, *jira*, that is restricted to individual-level predicates. This is similar to *tener* which can appear with individual level predicates, such as kinship, part-whole relations, ownership, and other forms of permanent possession. However, it was shown that *tener* does not appear to be as restricted as *jira*, its Mashi counterpart. This is because *tener* is an elsewhere possession verb. In Finholt's (2024) analysis, Mashi's individual-level copula, *ba*, and possession verb, *jira*, are spelled out in the syntactic context where there is a PredP headed by a Pred head that only takes individual level predicates. In the current analysis, the individual and stage level

distinction is not assumed to be encoded in the Pred head. Instead, it proposes that *estar* and *traer* constructions are spell-out in marked structures where a terminal head feature or head present. Both *ser* and *tener* are analyzed as elsewhere forms.

If Mashi's individual level forms, *ba* and *jira*, are indeed categorically restricted to individual level predicates, then it is possible that these are derived by the presence of a central coincidence feature or head in the structure. Hale and Keyser connected the ability of certain prepositions to express stasis or static relations in small clauses (e.g., "with the baby in/\*to/\*into bed, we can relax") to atelicity and central coincidence. They stated that prepositions that can express this stative relation in small clauses "share the property of expressing the relation of central coincidence, holding between the figure...and the place." (1984; 2002: 218). In this way, they link stativity to a property of certain heads, namely prepositions such as *in*, *on*, *with*. Likewise, Brucart (2010) argued that *ser*, because it tends to appear to individual level predicates, was spelled out in the presence of a central coincidence feature. While the current analysis assumes that *ser* is a neutral element, it is possible this explanation applies to Mashi. In other words, Mashi's copula, *ba*, is spelled out in the presence of a central coincidence feature. This would account for the difference between *ser* and Mashi's copula. This can also explain the restrictions demonstrated by Mashi's permanent possession verb, *jira*, which are not found with Spanish *tener*.

Finally, the analysis showed that Spanish lacks some of restrictions Mashi had with respect certain inflectional contexts. For instance, the distinction between the individual and stage level copulas (*ba* and *li*) as well as the individual and stage level possession verbs (*jira* and *dwiire*) was only made in the present tense and indicative mood. Spanish, on the other hand, allowed the *ser-estar* and *tener-traer* distinctions beyond this tense and mood. It was shown that Spanish differentiated between these forms in the subjunctive and past tense. While the preterite appeared to disallow the distinction between *tener* and *traer*, it was shown that this was resolved when the sentence was sufficiently contextualized.

While several questions remain about possession in Spanish and Mashi, the aim of the current analysis is to not only offer potential answers but to also open up new lines of inquiry. Future analyses will need to provide a more in-depth account of the aspectual and pragmatic properties of *estar* and *traer*. Likewise, a more systematic account is needed to describe the contexts that allow *tener* to have temporary readings in some cases and permanent readings in others. Finally, a more detailed analysis is needed of the heads involved in possession verbs as well as their connection to the stage versus individual level readings of complex predicates. However, it is hoped that the current analysis has presented enough observations and interesting questions to advance our understanding of Spanish possession verbs.

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## Abbreviations

|         |                |
|---------|----------------|
| 1       | First person   |
| 2       | Second person  |
| 3       | Third person   |
| AGR.    | Agreement      |
| AUG.    | Augment        |
| CL.     | Clitic         |
| COP.    | Copula         |
| DET.    | Determiner     |
| IMP.    | Imperative     |
| IMPERF. | Imperfective   |
| NEG.    | Negation       |
| N/NOM.  | Nominative     |
| PAST.   | Past tense     |
| PERF.   | Perfective     |
| PERM.   | Permanent      |
| PL.     | Plural         |
| POS.    | Possessive     |
| SG.     | Singular       |
| SM.     | Subject marker |
| SBJV    | Subjunctive    |
| SUJ.    | Subject        |
| TEMP.   | Temporary      |

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## Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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