

## On the non-temporal conditionals in Spanish: Semantics of self-licensing contexts

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The aim of this paper is to examine the counterfactual conditionals in self-licensing contexts. Against Laca (2010), who proposes a unitary analysis, we argue that two different types of counterfactual self-licensed conditionals are to be distinguished: modals, on the one hand, and factive-emotive on the other.

Spanish grammars (RAE-ASALE 2009) describe the conditional as a dependent category since there is a need to imply explicitly or implicitly a hypothetical context:

(1) Pedro se compraría un coche nuevo (si tuviese garaje).

‘Pedro would bought a new car (, if he had a garaje)’.

(2) Pedro estaría en la playa (si pudiese).

‘Pedro would be in the beach right now (, if he could)’.

Contrary to the previous description, conditional morphology (CM) in sentences (3) and (4) does not need to recur to any implicit nor explicit counterfactual antecedent to be understood.

(3) A mi jefe le gustaría {comprarse/que Juan se comprara} un coche nuevo.

‘My boss wishes John bought a new car’

(4) Mi jefe lamentaría {comprarse/que Juan se comprara} un coche nuevo.

‘My boss would regret that Juan bought a new car’

As von Fintel and Iatridou (2008) show, *gustar* + CM is ambiguous between a canonical conditional and a self-licensing conditional. Hence, along with (3) and (4) above, (5) and (6) are also possible:

(5) A mi jefe le gustaría que Juan se comprara un coche nuevo, **si** fuese peor que el suyo.

‘My boss would like that John bought a new car only if it were worse than his’

(6) a. Mi jefe lamentaría que Juan se comprara un coche nuevo, **si** fuese mejor que el suyo.

‘My boss would regret John buying a new car, only if it were better than his’

Under Laca's (2010:19) hypothesis, the ungrammaticality of (7) is also unexpected, since *gustar* 'like' *tener ganas* 'fancy, go for' and *apetecer* 'fancy, feel like' "order some alternatives higher than others":

(7) \*{Tendría ganas de ~ Me apetecería} estar de vacaciones.

Intended: I would fancy being on holidays.

Finally, Laca's hypothesis fails to explain why the conditional is self-licensed with volitionals. In fact, as (7b) and (7b) show, it is not: "suppressing the assumption as to the possibility of the complement clause" does not license *per se* the conditional. Both are volitional but *gustaría* expresses a desire about the actual world whereas *tendría ganas* expresses a desire about a possible world and it is not acceptable in this context. The scalar hypothesis is right, but only partially. We will argue that the two mechanisms are to be kept apart:

A) WITH FACTIVES. CM does not change the meaning of the verb –it still has factive meaning although suspended due to the fact that another possible world different from the one of the enunciation is introduced- and is lexically licensed.

B) WITH MODALS. CM introduces a scalar meaning (Laca (2010), von Stechow and Iatridou (2008)) and modals + CM are interpreted as priority modals (Portner 2009). With respect to *gustar*, it will be argued that *gustar* is a priority modal, hence, lexicalized. CM cancels factivity turning *gustar* into a volitional verb that expresses a desire about the actual world. Observe that a similar phenomenon obtains with French *aimerait* lit. 'would like':

(8) a. Mon patron **aimerait** que Jean s'achète une voiture neuve. (= (3))

b. \*Si Jean s'achetait une voiture neuve, mon patron aimerait cela. (cfr. (5))

*Tener ganas* and *apetecer* not being factive and expressing already an assertion about the real world only allow for the regular interpretation of the CM. With verbs that inherently express preference (*preferir* 'prefer', *convenir* 'to be advisable') CM either it is interpreted regularly or it is redundant: *Convendría que fueras* 'It would be advisable for you to go'.

## References

LACA, B. 2010, "On the temporal orientation of intensional subjunctives in Spanish", in R.-M. Dechaine, C. Delmas, J. Guéron (eds.), *Hommage to Carlota Smith*. PORTNER, P. (2009), *Modality*, Oxford: OUP. REAL ACADEMIA ESPAÑOLA-ASALE, 2009, *Nueva gramática de la lengua española*, Madrid, Espasa. VON FINTEL, K. & IATRIDOU, S. 2008, «How to say *Ought* in Foreign: the Composition of Weak Necessity Modals», en Guéron, J. & J. Lecarme (eds). 2008, *Time and Modality*, Nueva York, Springer.