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Negation and Spanish zero event deverbal nominalizations

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This paper addresses the interaction of the negative particle *no* with Spanish zero event deverbal nominalizations. Firstly, it is shown that these nouns are compatible with *no*. Secondly, following a series of grammatical tests, the interpretation(s) that arise with <*no* + zero event deverbal nominalization> are studied. To this respect, it is brought to light that these nouns do not pattern with verbal predicates, because unlike what happens with the latter, the former do not give rise to the inhibited eventuality reading. Thirdly, it is proposed that this interpretation is not available with zero event deverbal nominalizations because negation blocks the lexicalisation via Phrasal Spellout of the noun's syntactic configuration in this case.

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1 Introduction

The literature has extensively focused on the interaction of negation with the verbal domain. Authors such as Stockwell et al. (1973: 250–251), Dowty (1979: sect. 7.9), Higginbotham (1983; 1994; 2000), Horn (1989: 51–55), de Swart (1996), Cooper (1998), Przepiórkowski (1999) or de Swart & Molendijk (1999: 5) have paid attention to the interpretations that arise when *not* interacts with the VP, especially in English (1).

- (1) a. John did not stop at the traffic light.
b. Mary has not paid taxes.

For sequences such as the ones in (1), two readings have been distinguished. The first one has received the name of *sentential negation* or *negative event(uality) reading*, and it is the one that arises by default. It consists in denying that the content described by the predicate matches what has happened in the real world. A sentence such as (1a) is then paraphrased in this case as ‘The eventuality¹ which consists in John stopping at the traffic light did not take place’. Its propositional content will be true if in the extralinguistic world John did not stop at the traffic light. The second reading has received the name of *negative* or *inhibited event(uality) reading*. In this case the interpretation that arises is one in which it is described that an eventuality has taken place. This eventuality consists in the refrainment of the external argument from carrying out the corresponding affirmative eventuality. Thus, (1a) is then paraphrased as ‘An eventuality took place. This eventuality consists in John refraining from stopping at the traffic light’. In this regard, linguists have addressed (i) the grammatical contexts under which these readings arise; (ii) whether negation modifies the lexical aspect of verbal predicates or not; (iii) the formulation of different analyses that account for the interpretations that emerge, and the properties displayed by verbal predicates in these cases.

As for Spanish, the language which is under scope in this paper, an extensive description about the availability of these two readings in sequences such as the one in (2) can be found in Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020).² Furthermore, taking Cooper’s (1998) semantic approach as a point of departure, these authors propose a syntactic analysis based on the scope of negation that explains the availability of these interpretations, as well as the aspectual properties of Spanish verbal predicates when preceded by *no*.

¹ In this paper, the term *eventuality* encompasses both dynamic and non-dynamic predicates (Bach 1986), so that it is used to refer to events and states. The term *event* is then saved for dynamic eventualities, this is, activities, accomplishments and achievements.

² These authors refer to the sentential negation reading as *negated eventuality reading* and to the negative event(uality) reading as *inhibited eventuality reading*. Their terminology will be adopted in this article.

- (2) El ministro no dimitió.
 the minister NEG resigned
 ‘The minister did not resign.’

On the contrary, when it comes to the nominal domain, whereas the co-occurrence of negative prefixes such as *des-* ‘dis-’ with Spanish nouns has been described in depth (3) (see Gibert Sotelo 2017 and references therein), the co-occurrence with the negative particle *no* has not drawn so much attention. For instance, it has been attested by Sánchez López (1999: 2566–2567) or RAE-ASALE (2009: ch. 48) that *no* can precede a nominalization (4), however, the following questions remain unanswered: Are all types of nominalizations compatible with negation or only some of them? What are the interpretation(s) the nominalization gives rise to when it is preceded by the negative particle *no*? Does negation somehow modify the nominalization’s aspectual properties?

- (3) desamor ‘lack of affection’, descontrol ‘chaos’, desempleo ‘unemployment’, desgana ‘apathy, lack of interest’, desvergüenza ‘shamelessness’...

- (4) (Sánchez López 1999: 2566)
 la no comparece-ncia de los diputados
 the NEG appear.INF-ance of the deputies
 ‘the non-appearance of the deputies’

In this paper the previous questions are addressed with respect to one type of nominalization: zero eventive nominalizations, this is, those nominalizations which do not possess a nominalizer affix (e.g. *ataque* ‘attack’, *desembarco* ‘disembarkment’, *uso* ‘use’). Since these nominalizations have not received so much interest from the literature in comparison to those that possess a derivative suffix (e.g. *asiste-ncia* ‘attendance’, *conserva-ción* ‘conservation, preservation’), studying their behaviour when they co-occur with *no* (5) will contribute to better understanding their properties and configuration.

- (5) a. La DGT multó el no uso del cinturón de seguridad.
 the DGT fined the NEG use of.the seatbelt of security
 ‘The DVLA fined the non-use of the security seatbelt.’
 b. El no descenso de los precios preocupa a los españoles.
 the NEG drop of the prices worries ACC the Spanish.people
 ‘The non-drop of the prices worries the Spanish people.’

This paper is structured as follows. In section 2 the aspectual behaviour of Spanish zero nominalizations is examined. Then, in section 3 the co-occurrence of the negative particle *no* with those zero nominalizations that derive from a verb and denote an event is studied. Specifically, by means of a series of grammatical tests, the reading(s) that arise with <*no* + zero

event deverbal nominalization > are compared with the ones the literature has attested for <no + verbal predicate >. It will be shown that whereas verbal predicates give rise to the inhibited event(uality) reading, this interpretation is not available with zero event deverbal nominals. In section 4 an analysis based on Phrasal Spellout that can explain the unavailability of this reading is set out. In section 5 the predictions made by the proposed analysis are discussed. Finally, section 6 is devoted to conclusions.

2 Spanish zero nominalizations: types and aspectual behaviour

From a morphological perspective, two types of nominalizations can be distinguished. The first group consists of those nominalizations in which a nominalizer affix and a thematic vowel can be tracked (6a). The nominalizations in (6a) have been obtained by means of attachment of the derivative suffixes *-ción*, *-ncia* and *-miento* to the verbs *accept(ar)* ‘(to) accept’, *comparec(er)* ‘(to) appear’ and *crec(er)* ‘(to) grow’, respectively, whereas *-a-*, *-e-* and *-i-* correspond to thematic vowels. The second group consists of those nominals whose base can be morphologically related to a verb, but in which neither a nominalizer affix nor a thematic vowel can be tracked, i.e. zero nominalizations (6b). In (6b), *atraco* ‘robbery’, *empaste* ‘tooth filling’ and *envío* ‘shipment’ can be related to the corresponding verbs *atraca(r)* ‘(to) rob’, *empasta(r)* ‘(to) fill’ and *envía(r)* ‘(to) ship’, but there is no nominalizer or thematic vowel phonologically present: the affixes *-a-*, *-e-*, *-o* are instances of what the literature has called *noun marker*³ (Corbett 1991; Harris 1991; Ultra-Massuet 1999; Ultra-Massuet & Arregui 2005).

- (6) a. *accept-a-ción* ‘acceptance’, *comparec-e-ncia* ‘appearance’, *crec-i-miento* ‘growth’...
 b. *atraco* ‘robbery’, *empaste* ‘tooth filling’, *entrega* ‘delivery’, *envío* ‘shipment’, *siembra* ‘sowing’...

³ As Fábregas (2014) explains, in parallel fashion to what happens with thematic vowels, noun markers are not real lexical categorizers (i), since they need to attach to a nominalizer. This is the reason why the example in (iia) is ruled out, whereas (iib) is grammatical. If *-a-*, *-e-*, *-o* and *-ø* were proper nominalizer affixes in Spanish, they would be able to attach to a verbalizer such as *-eC-* and change the category of the word (iia). Because they are not lexical categorizers, but noun markers, they are attached once the word has been turned into a noun by means of a proper nominalizer affix, such as *-nci-* (iib).

- (i) a. *atraco* -a- -r
 rob- TV INF
 b. *atraco* -o
 rob- NM
 (ii) a. **comparec-* -eC- {-a/-e/-o/-ø}
 appear- VBZ NM
 b. *comparec-* ec- -e- -nci- -a
 appear- VBZ TV NMZ NM

Whereas the first group of nominalizations has been analysed from different perspectives and frameworks by numerous linguists (Grimshaw 1990; Picallo 1991; Alexiadou 2001; Borer 2012; 2013; Fábregas 2016; Lieber 2016, just to mention a few), zero nominalizations have not received so much attention. Lately, these nominals have been studied in more detail from a syntactic perspective by linguists such as Borer (2003; 2013), Alexiadou & Grimshaw (2008), Harley (2008), Wechsler (2008), Newmeyer (2009), Iordăchioaia (2020a; b) or Iordăchioaia et al. (2020) for English, and by Fábregas (2014; 2016) for Spanish. Specifically, this author proposes that Spanish zero nominalizations fall into the following two classes (7).

- (7)
- a. Class A: *acierto* ‘right answer’, *aliño* ‘dressing’, *baile* ‘dance’, *baja* ‘fall’, *conserva* ‘tinned food’, *corte* ‘cut’, *disfraz* ‘costume’, *empaste* ‘tooth filling’, *insulto* ‘insult’, *obra* ‘act’, *regalo* ‘gift’, *soplo* ‘exhale’, *tiro* ‘shot’...
 - b. Class B: *ataque* ‘attack’, *atraco* ‘robbery’, *cambio* ‘change’, *colapso* ‘collapse’, *conquista* ‘conquest’, *cierre* ‘closing’, *desembarco* ‘disembarkment’, *entierro* ‘burial’, *entrega* ‘delivery’, *envío* ‘shipment’, *pago* ‘payment’, *siembra* ‘sowing’...

These two groups are established based on the results obtained from a series of grammatical tests, which show that there exist differences regarding the syntactic and semantic behaviour of these nouns, as well as regarding their derivation process.⁴ From an empirical perspective, these differences essentially rely on whether the nominal denotes an eventuality or not. Under a neoconstructionist approach, this empirical information correlates with whether the nominal is verb-derived or not and, therefore, with the (non-)presence of verbal projections within its syntactic structure. In the following section, some of these tests are presented. The results obtained will lead to conclude that nominals from class B refer to an eventuality, whereas those from class A do not. Furthermore, as Fábregas (2014; 2016) claims, these results point towards the following. Whereas nominals from class B properly derive from a verb (e.g. *envi(ar)* ‘(to) ship’ > *envío* ‘shipment’), nominals from class A do not, so that verb and noun are independent from each other (e.g. *bail(ar)* ‘(to) dance’ ~ *baile* ‘dance’). In broad syntactic terms, as it will be shown at the end of section 2.1, this means that nominals from class B are syntactically built with the merge of N with the VP. On the contrary, the syntactic structure of those from class A lacks verbal projections.

2.1 An eventuality: aspectual tests

Among the tests which show that nominals from class B are verb-derived and refer to an eventuality, whereas those from class A do not, we find the co-occurrence with temporoaspectual modifiers. Nominalizations which are verb-derived and possess a derivative suffix can co-occur

⁴ For English, authors such as Iordăchioaia (2020a; b) and Iordăchioaia et al. (2020) propose a different classification of zero nominalizations based on both the lexical aspect of the verbs they are related to and on what these nominals refer to —an event, a result state, an object, an agent...—.

with modifiers introduced by the prepositions *durante* ‘for’ and *en* ‘in’, which measure the temporal extension of an eventuality (8a). On the other hand, nouns that denote an eventuality, but which are not verbally derived, i.e. simple event nouns, cannot co-occur with these modifiers (8b).

- (8) a. la permanencia por parte de Luis en la empresa durante dos años
 the continue.INF-ance by part of Luis in the company for two years
 ‘Luis’ permanence in the company for two years’
- b. *la boda durante doce horas
 the wedding for twelve hours
 ‘the wedding for twelve hours’

Regarding zero nominals, the contrast between examples in (9) and (10) illustrates that zero nouns from class B are compatible with these modifiers, whereas zero nouns from class A are not. From this result it then follows that the former, but not the latter, are verb-derived and denote an eventuality.

- (9) a. *el aliño de la ensalada en un minuto
 the dressing of the salad in one minute
 ‘the dressing of the salad in one minute’
- b. *el empaste del diente durante una hora
 the filling of the tooth for one hour
 ‘the filling of the tooth for one hour’
- (10) a. el cierre de la tienda por parte de la dueña en dos meses
 the closing of the shop by part of the owner in two months
 ‘the closing of the shop by the owner in two months’
- b. el ataque a la ciudad por parte del ejército enemigo durante varias semanas
 the attack to the city by part of the army enemy for several weeks
 ‘the attack to the city by the enemy army for several weeks’

The second test has to do with frequency modifiers, which quantify the occurrence of an eventuality. Deverbal nominalizations with a nominalizer and which refer to an eventuality are compatible with these modifiers (11a), whereas simple event nouns, even though they refer to an eventuality, reject them, because they are not verb-derived (11b).

- (11) a. la frecuente aceptación de propuestas por parte del director
 the frequent accept.INF-ance of proposals by part of the manager
 ‘the frequent acceptance of proposals by the manager’

- b. *la frecuente fiesta
the frequent party
'the frequent party'

Again, when zero nominals co-occur with these modifiers, those from class A give rise to an ill-formed sequence (12), whereas a grammatical sequence is obtained with those from class B (13). Thus, only nominals from class B possess a verbal base and denote an eventuality.

- (12) a. *el frecuente aliño de ensaladas
the frequent dressing of salads
'the frequent dressing of salads'
- b. *el frecuente disfraz de bruja
the frequent costume of witch
'the frequent witch costume'
- (13) a. el frecuente cierre de puestos en el mercado por parte de los comerciantes
the frequent closing of stalls in the market by part of the shopkeepers
'the frequent closing of stalls at the market by the shopkeepers'
- b. la frecuente firma de documentos por parte del embajador
the frequent signing of documents by part of the ambassador
'the frequent signing of documents by the ambassador'

The third test is related to the presence of argument structure. As Fábregas (2014: sct. 2.3) highlights, Spanish is a language which has a limited range of prepositions that can be used with non-derived nominals. Thus, simple event nouns are incompatible with prepositions such as *por* (*parte de*) 'by (part of)' or *hacia* 'towards', as shown in (15). On the contrary, deverbal nominalizations license them (14).

- (14) a. la acepta-ción de la propuesta por parte del director
the accept.INF-ance of the proposal by part of the manager
'the acceptance of the proposal by the manager'
- b. el desplaza-miento del hormigón hacia fuera
the displace.INF-ment of the concrete towards out
'the outward displacement of the concrete'
- (15) a. *la guerra por parte de los españoles
the war by part of the Spaniards
'the war by the Spaniards'
- b. *el incendio hacia el norte
the fire towards the north
'the fire towards the north'

The examples in (16) and (17) show, again, a contrast between zero nominals from class A and class B. Only the latter license prepositions such as *por* (*parte de*) ‘by (part of)’ or *hacia* ‘towards’, this is, prepositions which are compatible with deverbal derived nouns that denote an eventuality.⁵

- (16) a. *el acierto de la respuesta por parte de aquel concursante
 the right.answer of the answer by part of that contestant
 ‘the right answer by that contestant’
- b. *el soplo de viento hacia el norte
 the breath of wind towards the north
 ‘the breath of wind towards the north’
- (17) a. la firma del acuerdo por parte del embajador
 the signing of.the agreement by part of.the ambassador
 ‘the signing of the agreement by the ambassador’
- b. el transporte de mercancías hacia el norte
 the transport of goods towards the north
 ‘the transport of goods towards the north’

The fourth test that distinguishes between zero nominals from classes A and B has to do with prefixes that modify the aspectual meaning of the base they attach to, such as *des-* ‘dis-’ (Varela & Martín García 1999; Varela 2005: 96–97; RAE-ASALE 2009: sct. 10.5h, 10.6p-s, 10.9i, 10.10ñ). When *des-* ‘dis-’ is combined with nouns that do not derive from verbs (18a), the reading that arises is a privative one, so that the meaning it adds to the base is ‘lack of, absence’. When this prefix is attached to verbs (18b), a reversative reading is the one available: the meaning added by the prefix is one which consists in undoing or doing in the opposite direction the eventuality denoted by the base.

- (18) a. des-esperanza
 dis-hope
 ‘hopelessness, lack of hope’

⁵ Whereas Borer (2013: 331) claims that those cases of English zero nominals which are compatible with temporoaspectual modifiers, and which also possess argument structure (i), should be treated as lexical exceptions, Fábregas (2014; 2016) affirms that this is not so straight-forward, since it does not seem an exception: a vast group of zero nominals, i.e. those derived from verbs, can co-occur with these modifiers and have argument structure. The affirmation made by Borer (2013) is also discussed by other authors such as Newmeyer (2009: 103), who says that “literally dozens of zero-derivation nouns allow full argument structure”.

- (i) (Borer 2003: note 13)
- a. my constant change of mentors from 1992–1997
 - b. the frequent release of the prisoners by the governor
 - c. the frequent use of sharp tools by underage children

- b. des-coser
 dis-sew
 ‘unstitch’

Zero nominals form class A that accept *des-* ‘dis-’ (19a) give rise to the privative interpretation —*desempate* ‘untie’, *desagrado* ‘displeasure’ and *desacierto* ‘mistake’ mean lack of tie, pleasure and good choice, respectively—, whereas with zero nominals from class B (19b) the available interpretation is the reversative one —*desembarco* ‘disembarkment’, *descarga* ‘unloading’ and *desarme* ‘disarmament’ refer to the actions which consist in undoing the eventualities of embarking, loading and supplying with arms, respectively—.

- (19) a. des-empate, des-agrado, des-acierto
 dis-tie dis-liking dis-right.answer
 ‘untie’, ‘displeasure’, ‘mistake, error’
- b. des-embarco, des-carga, des-arme
 dis-embarment dis-loading dis-armament
 ‘disembarkment’, ‘unloading’, ‘disarmament’

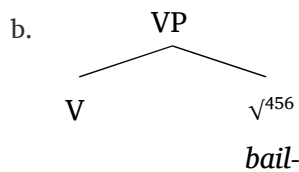
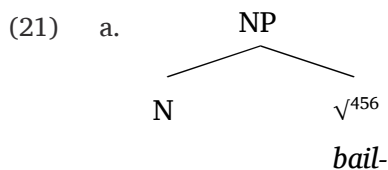
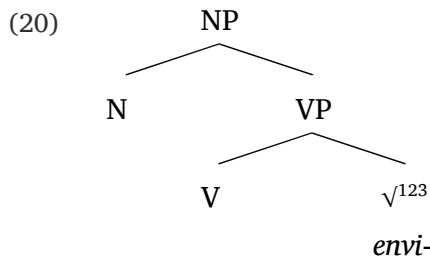
The results obtained show that the prefix *des-* ‘dis-’ modifies the aspectual content of those zero nominals that belong to class B, but not of those from class A. Therefore, only the former possess a verbal base and denote an eventuality.

Furthermore, following the line of proposals which establishes a correlation between the aspectual behaviour of deverbal nominalizations and the inheritance of part of the syntactic structure from the verb they derive from (see Picallo 1991; Alexiadou 2001; Sleeman & Brito 2010a; b; Borer 2012; 2013; Fábregas 2016; among others), from a neoconstructionist approach, the fact that nouns from class B are compatible with temporoaspectual and frequency modifiers, possess argument structure and can be combined with aspectual prefixes leads Fábregas (2014; 2016) to conclude that these nouns are verb derived (e.g. *envi(ar)* ‘(to) ship’ > *envío* ‘shipment’). This means that they have a series of verbal projections —inherited from the corresponding verb— within their syntactic configuration, which give rise to the eventuality interpretation, and which are responsible for the introduction of argument structure.⁶ N merges with these verbal projections, projects as a NP and, consequently, the structure is turned into a noun (20).⁷ In this case we can properly talk of cases of deverbal nominalizations. On the contrary, from the ungrammatical results obtained with nouns from class A when co-occurring in all the contexts previously described, it follows that they lack aspectual properties and, thus, that they are not

⁶ To simplify the syntactic configuration in this section, VP is used. However, as it will be explained in detail in section 4, Ramchand’s (2008; 2018) framework is followed in this paper. According to this linguist, the VP is decomposed into three projections: InitiationP, ProcessP and ResultP.

⁷ This aligns with the proposal made by Iordăchioaia (2020a; b) for the configuration of English zero nominals.

related to any verb, so both noun (e.g. *bail-e* ‘dance’) and verb (e.g. *bail-a(r)* ‘(to) dance’) are syntactically independent from each other (21).



In the following section I delve into the aspectual behaviour of nominals from class B. The diagnoses exposed will show evidence in favour of considering that the eventuality denoted by these nominals corresponds to a dynamic eventuality, this is, an event.

2.2 A dynamic eventuality: aspectual tests

A first test which proves that zero nominals from class B denote a dynamic eventuality has to do with the predicate *tener lugar* ‘(to) take place’. This predicate selects deverbal nominalizations that denote a dynamic eventuality, i.e. an event, as its subject (22a), whereas it rejects those that refer to a non-dynamic eventuality, i.e. a state (22b) (Grimshaw 1990: 58–59; Godard & Jayez 1994; Fradin 2011; Marín 2011; Fábregas & Marín 2012a; Fábregas et al. 2012).

- (22) a. La presenta-ción de solicitudes tuvo lugar el martes.
 the submit.INF-ssion of applications took place the Tuesday
 ‘The submission of applications took place on Tuesday.’
- b. *El conoci-miento de las normas tuvo lugar el martes.
 the know.INF-ledge of the rules took place the Tuesday
 ‘The knowledge of the rules took place on Tuesday.’

The grammaticality of examples in (23) brings to light that zero nominalizations from class B denote a dynamic eventuality.

- (23) a. El ataque a la ciudad por parte del ejército enemigo tuvo lugar en 1950.
 the attack to the city by part of.the army enemy took place in 1950
 ‘The attack to the city by the enemy army took place in 1950.’
- b. El desembarco en Turquía por parte de los comerciantes tuvo lugar en
 the disembarkment in Turkey by part of the traders took place in
 1650.
 1650
 ‘The disembarkment in Turkey by the traders took place in 1650.’

A second test has to do with perception verbs, such as *ver* ‘(to) see’ or *presenciar* ‘(to) witness’. Deverbal nominalizations that refer to a dynamic eventuality can occupy the internal argument position of this type of predicates, whereas those that denote a state are ruled out (Higginbotham 1983; Felser 1999; Maienborn 2003; 2005; Jaque 2014). This contrast is exemplified in (24).

- (24) a. Los periodistas presenciaron la comparecencia por parte del presidente.
 the journalists witnessed the appear.INF-ance by part of.the president
 ‘The journalists witnessed the appearance by the president.’
- b. *El profesor presenció el conocimiento de las normas.
 the teacher witnessed the know.INF-ledge of the rules
 ‘The teacher witnessed the knowledge of the rules.’

Zero nominals from class B give rise to a well-formed sequence in this context (25), thus, they refer to a dynamic eventuality.

- (25) a. Los periodistas presenciaron el ataque a la ciudad por parte de las tropas
 the journalists witnessed the attack to the city by part of the troops
 enemigas.
 enemy
 ‘The journalists witnessed the attack to the city by the enemy troops.’
- b. Los alumnos vieron el atraco al banco por parte de los ladrones.
 the students saw the robbery to.the bank by part of the thieves
 ‘The students saw the robbery to the bank by the thieves.’

A third test that discriminates between eventive and stative nominals is related to the predicate *parar* ‘(to) stop’. Whereas deverbal nominalizations that denote a dynamic eventuality can occupy the subject position of this predicate (26a), those that refer to a state give rise to an ill-formed sequence (26b) (Dowty 1979; de Miguel 1999; Marín 2011; Fábregas & Marín 2012b; c; Fábregas et al. 2012; Marín 2022).

- (26) a. La comparece-ncia por parte del presidente ha parado.
 the appear.INF-ance by part of.the president has stopped
 ‘The appearance by the president has stopped.’
- b. *La existe-ncia de una vacuna ha parado.
 the exist.INF-ence of a vaccine has stopped
 ‘The existence of a vaccine has stopped.’

As examples in (27) show, zero nominals from class B can occupy the subject position of *parar* ‘(to) stop’. Therefore, they denote an event.

- (27) a. El desembarco por parte de los comerciantes en Turquía ha parado.
 the disembarkment by part of the traders in Turkey has stopped
 ‘The disembarkment by the traders in Turkey has stopped.’
- b. El ataque por parte de las tropas a la capital ha parado.
 the attack by part of the troops to the capital has stopped
 ‘The attack by the troops to the capital has stopped.’

The fourth test is related to modifiers associated to the velocity at which an eventuality develops, such as *rápido* ‘fast’. Regardless of whether the modifier is placed before or after the nominalization, this type of modifiers is compatible with deverbal nominalizations that denote a dynamic eventuality (28a), whereas the co-occurrence with those that refer to a state is ruled out (28b) (de Miguel 1999; Coll-Florit et al. 2008; Marín & McNally 2011; Fábregas & Marín 2012b; Marín 2022).

- (28) a. la (rápida) verifica-ción (rápida) de los datos por parte de los científicos
 the fast verificate.INF-tion fast of the data by part of the scientists
 ‘the fast verification of the data by the scientists’
- b. la (*rápida) pose-sión (*rápida) de armas
 the fast possess.INF-ion fast of weapons
 ‘the fast possession of weapons’

From the grammaticality of sequences such as the ones in (29), it follows that zero nominals from class B denote a dynamic eventuality.

- (29) a. el (rápido) desembarco (rápido) por parte de los comerciantes en Turquía
 the fast disembarkment fast by part of the traders in Turkey
 ‘the fast disembarkment by the traders in Turkey’
- b. la (rápida) siembra (rápida) del terreno por parte del agricultor
 the fast sowing fast of.the land by part of.the farmer
 ‘the fast sowing of the land by the farmer’

Table 1 sums up the different aspectual behaviour of the zero nominals described in sections 2.1 and 2.2.

Zero nominals		
	Class A (<i>baja</i> ‘fall’)	Class B (<i>ataque</i> ‘attack’)
Tests used to check if an eventuality is denoted		
Temporoaspectual modifiers	*	✓
Frequency modifiers	*	✓
Argument structure	*	✓
Prefix <i>des-</i> ‘dis-’	*	✓
Tests used to check if the eventuality denoted by nominals from class B is dynamic or non-dynamic, i.e. if it is an event or a state		
<i>tener lugar</i> ‘(to) take place’	–	✓
Perception verbs	–	✓
<i>parar</i> ‘(to) stop’	–	✓
Velocity modifiers	–	✓

Table 1: Aspectual behaviour of Spanish zero nominals.

In the following sections I will exclusively focus on the interaction of the negative particle *no* with zero nominals from class B, this is, those nominals that derive from a verb and denote a dynamic eventuality. From now on, I will refer to these nouns as *zero event deverbal nominalizations*. To study the behaviour of these nominals when co-occurring with *no* will help us to further understand the properties and configuration of one type of nominal that has been studied to a lesser extent, in comparison to those nominals that possess a nominalizer, and, as a last resort, the parallelisms between the verbal and the nominal domains.

3 The co-occurrence of negation with zero event deverbal nominalizations

In section 1 some examples of *<no + zero nominalization>* were already provided. They are repeated here now (30). The nouns from these sequences are cases of class B nominals, i.e. of those tagged as *zero event deverbal nominalizations*. As it was previously mentioned, from now on, I will solely examine the behaviour of this type of nominals. Regarding this issue, their grammaticality when co-occurring with *no* (30) illustrates that they are compatible with negation.

- (30) a. La DGT multó el no uso del cinturón de seguridad.
 the DGT fined the NEG use of.the seatbelt of security
 ‘The DVLA fined the non-use of the security seatbelt.’
- b. El no descenso de los precios del alquiler preocupa a los
 the NEG drop of the prices of.the rental worries ACC the
 españoles.
 Spanish.people
 ‘The non-drop of the rental prices worries the Spanish people.’

At this point, two questions arise: What interpretation(s) emerge when zero event deverbal nominalizations are preceded by *no*? Is their behaviour parallel to the one of verbal predicates when they co-occur with *no*? Given that different authors have studied the available readings with $\langle no + \text{verbal predicate} \rangle$, I aim at comparing the behaviour of these nominalizations with that of verbal predicates, so that it can be determined if the former pattern with the latter or if they behave differently. To do this, I first describe in more detail the interpretations the literature has proposed that arise within the verbal domain in the following section.

3.1 Negation and verbal predicates: two different readings

As it was mentioned in section 1, when negation precedes a verbal predicate (31), two are the available readings: the sentential negation or negated event(uality) reading and the negative or inhibited event(uality) reading.⁸

- (31) María no vino a clase.
 María NEG came to class
 ‘María did not come to class.’

The sentential negation or negated event(uality) reading is the one that arises by default. In this case, it is denied that the propositional content described by the sentence matches what has taken place in real world. Thus, in (31) the content described by the sentence —that María came to class— does not correspond to what has happened in the extralinguistic world. From the point

⁸ Different linguists have provided several diagnoses from which they conclude that $\langle no + VP \rangle$ can denote an eventuality, as will be seen in this section, and they have discussed what its lexical aspect is (Dowty 1979: sct. 7.6; Higginbotham 1983; 1994; 2000; Horn 1989: 51–55; Verkuyl 1993: 163; de Swart 1996; Cooper 1998; Przepiórkowski 1999; de Swart & Molendijk 1999; Weiser 2008; Arkadiev 2015; 2016; Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020, *contra* Asher 1993: 215–221 or Kamp & Reyle 1993: ch. 1, who hold that $\langle no + VP \rangle$ denotes a fact or a proposition). Some authors have proposed that this eventuality has eventive properties (Higginbotham 1983; 1994; 2000; Cooper 1998; Przepiórkowski 1999; Weiser 2008; Arkadiev 2015; 2016), whereas others claim that it has stative properties (Dowty 1979: sct. 7.6; Horn 1989: 51–55; Verkuyl 1993: 163; de Swart 1996; de Swart & Molendijk 1999: 5). Regarding this issue, Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020) have recently shown that $\langle no + VP \rangle$ denotes an eventuality which has a mixed lexical aspect, since it possesses eventive properties, but some stative ones too.

of view of eventualities, this reading consists in denying that an eventuality has taken place. (31) is then paraphrased as ‘The eventuality which consists in María coming to class did not take place’. Syntactically speaking, this negation corresponds with a high negation (Laka 1990; Cooper 1998; Arkadiev 2015; among others). Negation is merged over the higher projections of the verb and, therefore, has scope over those projections associated to the instantiation of the described eventuality. Consequently, it is denied that the abstract eventuality described at the VP lower projections occurs, i.e. no eventuality takes place in the real world.

Under the negative or inhibited event(uality) reading, the verbal predicate describes an eventuality. This eventuality consists in the refrainment of the external argument from carrying out the corresponding affirmative eventuality, which was expected to happen in the first place. Under this interpretation, a sentence such as (31) denotes an eventuality which consists in María refraining from coming to class, in a context in which it was first expected for her to come. In this case, negation is associated to a low negation (Cooper 1998), because the fact that an eventuality that takes place is described has to do with the interaction of *no* with lower projections of the verb’s syntactic configuration (I will introduce the syntactic structures that give rise to these two readings in section 4.1).

Moreover, the following observation made by Higginbotham (1983) is essential. When this reading arises, $\langle no + VP \rangle$ depicts an eventuality which particularly consists in the refrainment of the external argument from performing the eventuality denoted by the VP, and not in doing any other different eventuality. If the latter were the case, the content of the sentence would then not be sufficiently restrictive. Thus, for instance, a sequence such as (31) does not depict any other eventuality different from María having come to class, but specifically her refrainment from attending class. In other words, (31) does not entail that María has, for instance, carried out the eventuality of going to the library or meeting a friend. Therefore, note that, along with the fact that this reading arises in a context in which it is expected that the corresponding affirmative eventuality was firstly going to happen, the key aspect is that the eventuality described consists in that the external argument refrains from doing this positive eventuality. This is the reason why Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020) refer to these cases as inhibited eventualities, and to the interpretation that arises as inhibited eventuality reading.

Crucially, the literature has claimed that, although we can imagine of something that occurs in the real world which makes the external argument refrain from doing the corresponding affirmative eventuality, as well as of something that makes us expect in the first place that it should carry out this eventuality, these are pragmatic factors which are not encoded within the grammar of the sentences but provided by the extralinguistic world (de Swart 1996: 230; Cooper 1998: 12; de Swart & Molendijk 1999: 5; Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 730).

With all that, the literature has provided several grammatical contexts which coerce the inhibited eventuality reading. Among them we find the co-occurrence with durative modifiers introduced by *durante* ‘for’, which are compatible with predicates that describe an eventuality (32a) (Asher 1993; Higginbotham 2000). Because these modifiers measure the time during which an eventuality has extended, a grammatical sequence will be obtained only in those cases in which an eventuality takes place, as in (32a), where *durante una semana* ‘for a week’ measures the time during which the eventuality that consists in the troops attacking the capital has taken place. As Przepiórkowski (1999) notes, the presence of negation in (32b) coerces the inhibited eventuality reading, since the durative modifier requires that an eventuality takes place. In this case, there is an eventuality that happens. This eventuality consists in the troops refraining from attacking the capital —when it was first expected that they would attack it—, and the modifier *durante una semana* ‘for one week’ measures the interval of time along which this eventuality occurs.⁹ The negated eventuality reading is not available in this context because it is not possible to measure the duration of an eventuality that does not happen.

- (32) a. Las tropas atacaron la capital durante una semana.
 the troops attacked the capital for one week
 ‘The troops attacked the capital for one week.’
- b. Las tropas no atacaron la capital durante una semana.
 the troops NEG attacked the capital for one week
 ‘The troops did not attack the capital for one week.’

Another context used by Przepiórkowski (1999) that coerces this reading has to do with frequency modifiers (see also Stockwell et al. 1973: ch. 5; de Swart 1996: 229–230). In Spanish, modifiers such as *frecuentemente* ‘frequently’ or *a menudo* ‘often’ quantify the occurrence of an eventuality (Mourelatos 1978; Hoepelman & Rohrer 1980; Bertinetto 1986: 34–35; de Swart 1993: ch. 1). Similarly to what happens with durative modifiers, frequency modifiers are compatible with predicates that denote an eventuality. In (33a) it is described that the troops attack the capital, and *frecuentemente* ‘frequently’ quantifies the frequency of this eventuality. The example in (33b) illustrates that, when negation precedes the predicate, a grammatical sequence is obtained.

- (33) a. Las tropas atacan la capital frecuentemente.
 the troops attack the capital frequently
 ‘The troops frequently attack the capital.’
- b. Las tropas no atacan la capital frecuentemente.
 the troops NEG attack the capital frequently
 ‘The troops do not frequently attack the capital.’

⁹ In (32b) negation can also refute the durative modifier. However, this interpretation is not relevant for my purposes here. The same thing applies to the following examples of this section with frequency modifiers.

As Lakoff (1965: 172) claims, if an eventuality does not take place, it will not be possible to quantify the frequency with which it happens. Hence, since (33b) is grammatical, an eventuality takes place and, therefore, the only possible reading to arise is the inhibited eventuality reading. This eventuality consists in the troops refraining from attacking the capital, and *frecuentemente* ‘frequently’ quantifies its occurrence. Again, the sentential negation reading is not available in this case. This is so because this interpretation involves denying that an eventuality has occurred, and it is not possible to measure the frequency of an eventuality that has not happened.

Finally, a third context that coerces the inhibited eventuality reading has to do with perception verbs, such as *ver* ‘(to) see’ or *presenciar* ‘(to) witness’. Higginbotham (1983; 1994; 2000) and Cooper (1998) apply this diagnosis to English and show that when $\langle no + VP \rangle$ occupies the infinitival complement of a perception verb, the only reading that arises is the inhibited eventuality one. This is so because these verbs necessarily select as their infinitival complement predicates that refer to eventualities. Again, this diagnosis can also be applied to Spanish (34) (see Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020).

- (34) a. Julia ha visto a Ana venir a clase.
 Julia has seen ACC Ana come to class
 ‘Julia has seen Ana come to class.’
- b. Julia ha visto a Ana no venir a clase.
 Julia has seen ACC Ana NEG come to class
 ‘Julia has seen Ana not come to class.’

Following Higginbotham (1983; 1994; 2000) and Cooper (1998), the available interpretation in (34b), where negation precedes the verb from the embedded clause, is the inhibited eventuality one: the external argument, Ana, refrains from doing the corresponding affirmative eventuality denoted by the infinitive —this is, from coming to class—, and this eventuality is seen by Julia, who corresponds to the subject of the main clause. This reading arises in a context in which Julia somehow formerly expects that Ana will come to class.

In this section the two readings that arise when negation precedes a verbal predicate have been described. Whereas the sentential negation or negated event(uality) reading is the interpretation that arises by default, it has been explained how several authors have shown that there is also another reading available: the inhibited eventuality reading. Then, different contexts used by the literature to prove that $\langle no + VP \rangle$ also gives rise to this second reading have been provided. Given that these contexts coerce the inhibited eventuality reading, in the following section the (in)compatibility of $\langle no + zero\ event\ deverbal\ nominalization \rangle$ with them is addressed. The results obtained will shed light on the (non-)existence of a parallelism between the verbal and the nominal domains.

3.2 Negation and zero event deverbal nominalizations: just one reading

In this section it is studied if zero event deverbal nominalizations, when preceded by *no*, behave the same way as verbal predicates, so that they also give rise to both the negated and the inhibited eventuality readings, or if they behave differently. To do this, it is checked if $\langle no + \text{zero event deverbal nominalization} \rangle$ is compatible with those contexts described in the previous section which coerce the inhibited eventuality reading.

The first test has to do with durative modifiers. As it was shown in section 2.1, zero event deverbal nominals, since they denote an eventuality, can co-occur with this type of modifiers in their affirmative version. However, the negative counterpart of the examples is ungrammatical, as shown in (35). From their ill-formedness, it follows that these nominals, when preceded by *no*, are incompatible with durative modifiers. This means that $\langle no + \text{zero event deverbal nominalization} \rangle$ does not denote an eventuality.

- (35) a. el (*no) cierre de la tienda por parte de la dueña durante dos meses
 the NEG closing of the shop by part of the owner for two months
 ‘the non-closing of the shop by the owner for two months’
- b. el (*no) ataque a la capital por parte del ejército enemigo durante
 the NEG attack to the capital by part of the army enemy for
 varias semanas
 several weeks
 ‘the non-attack to the capital by the enemy army for several weeks’

The second test is related to frequency modifiers. As shown in section 2.1, these nominals in their affirmative version accept co-occurring with a frequency modifier such as *frecuente* ‘frequent’. When negation precedes these nominalizations, the result obtained in presence of a modifier such as *frecuente* ‘frequent’ is not grammatical (36). Thus, $\langle no + \text{zero event deverbal nominalization} \rangle$ is incompatible with this type of modifiers. This result aligns with the one from the previous test: an eventuality is not denoted in this case.

- (36) a. el frecuente (*no) cierre de puestos en el mercado por parte de los
 the frequent NEG closing of stalls in the market by part of the
 comerciantes
 shopkeepers
 ‘the frequent non-closing of stalls at the market by the shopkeepers’
- b. la frecuente (*no) firma de documentos por parte del embajador
 the frequent NEG signing of documents by part of the ambassador
 ‘the frequent non-signing of documents by the ambassador’

In third place, as it was shown in section 2.2, these nominalizations can occupy the internal argument position of perception verbs. Nevertheless, when negation precedes these nominals, the result obtained is again an ungrammatical sentence (37). From the incompatibility with perception verbs, it follows that $\langle no + \text{zero event deverbal nominalization} \rangle$ does not refer to an eventuality.

- (37) a. Los periodistas presenciaron el (*no) ataque a la ciudad por parte de las
 the journalists witnessed the NEG attack to the city by part of the
 tropas enemigas.
 troops enemy
 ‘The journalists witnessed the non-attack to the city by the enemy troops.’
- b. Los alumnos vieron el (*no) atraco al banco por parte de los ladrones.
 the students saw the NEG robbery to.the bank by part of the thieves
 ‘The students saw the non-robbery to the bank by the thieves.’

Remember that since durative and frequency modifiers, as well as perception verbs, are only compatible with predicates that denote an eventuality, they constitute three contexts that coerce the inhibited eventuality reading. The fact that $\langle no + \text{zero event deverbal nominalization} \rangle$ gives rise to ungrammatical sequences when it co-occurs with all these three contexts lays bare that, in presence of negation, these nominals do not receive the inhibited eventuality reading. Therefore, in cases such as *La DGT multó el no uso del cinturón de seguridad* ‘The DVLA fined the non-use of the security seatbelt’, only the negated eventuality reading is available, i.e. it is described that no eventuality happened. At this point, the immediate question that arises is the following: What differentiates zero event deverbal nominalizations from verbal predicates so that the former do not give rise to the inhibited eventuality reading, but only to the negated eventuality interpretation? The following section is devoted to this issue.

4 A proposal of syntactic analysis

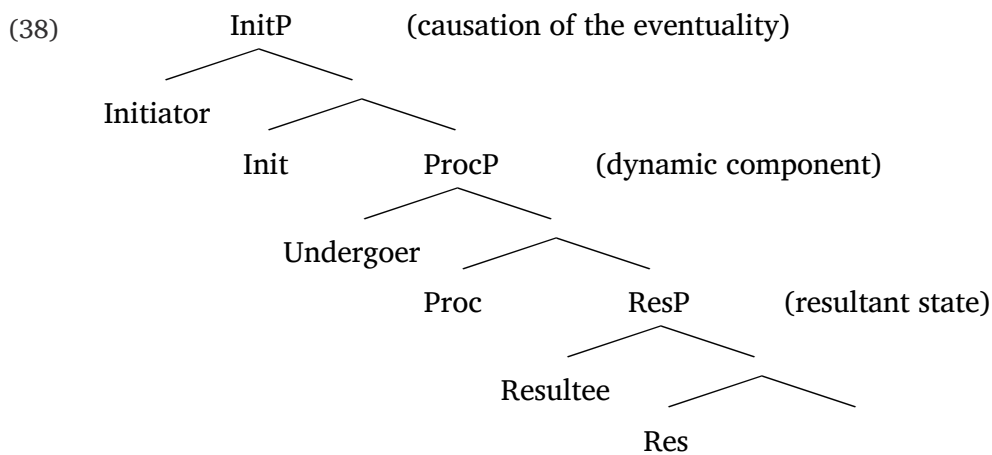
In this section it is proposed that the reasons why $\langle no + \text{zero event deverbal nominalization} \rangle$ does not refer to an eventuality and, thus, it does not give rise to the inhibited eventuality reading are of syntactic nature. In addition, it is also explored how the negated eventuality interpretation is obtained in these cases. To do this, we first need to delve into the syntactic proposal made by the literature to account for the negated and the inhibited eventuality readings within the verbal domain. This is tackled in section 4.1. Then, in section 4.2 I explain the syntactic structure proposed by the literature for zero event deverbal nominalizations, and I show how

the interaction of negation with their configuration is what results in the unavailability of the inhibited eventuality reading with them. To conclude, I outline some paths of reasoning that could be adopted in future works to account for how the negated eventuality interpretation arises in more detail.

4.1 The negated and the inhibited eventuality readings within the verbal domain: a proposal of syntactic analysis

Fábregas and González Rodríguez (2020), based on Klein's approach to negation (1994: 49) and on Cooper's (1998) semantic analysis, claim that the fact that verbal predicates give rise to the negated and the inhibited eventuality readings obeys to the scope negation can have over the different syntactic projections of the verbal predicate. Their proposal lies in Ramchand's (2008; 2018) decomposition of the VP, and I will also follow this author to account for the verbal projections that are present within the configuration of nominalizations. Therefore, before I explain how the inhibited eventuality reading arises, Ramchand's (2008; 2018) approach to the VP is worth a few lines.

According to this author, the VP is decomposed into three functional projections: InitiationP (InitP), ProcessP (ProcP) and ResultP (ResP). The way in which they are syntactically related to one another is shown in (38).



Crucially, it is at a first level of representation, when eventualities are defined as abstract objects according to their lexical aspect and their participants, with no time and world parameters yet, when InitP, ProcP and ResP are merged (Ramchand 2008: ch. 3; 2018: 14–15). These projections constitute the lower domain of the clause. Specifically, each of them introduces a different subevent(uality), which provides with certain semantic information about the described eventuality. InitP conveys the causative subevent(uality), which corresponds to a state responsible

for making the eventuality come into existence; ProcP introduces the dynamic subevent(uality), i.e. an event which expresses the change associated to the progression of the described eventuality, and which is present within the structure of every dynamic predicate; and ResP conveys the resultant state of the eventuality.¹⁰ Moreover, each of these projections introduces within its specifier an argument that takes part in the eventuality. In [Spec, InitP] is placed the initiator, this is, the entity which triggers the eventuality consciously or unconsciously, volitionally or non-volitionally (Ramchand 2008: 33–37). [Spec, ProcP] is saved for the undergoer, i.e. the entity that experiences the progress of the eventuality. Finally, in [Spec, ResP] is the resultee, namely the entity that possesses or holds the resultant state.

The key aspect in Ramchand’s (2008) model is that the subevent(uality)s introduced by each of these projections are semantically related to each other by means of causation. She formalises this with the Event Composition Rule:¹¹

(Ramchand 2008: 44)

(39) Event Composition Rule

$e = e_1 \rightarrow e_2$: e consists of two subevents, e_1, e_2 , such that e_1 causally implicates e_2

From the general Event Composition Rule, Ramchand (2008: 44) proposes the two rules in (40), which specify the way in which the three subevent(uality)s introduced by InitP, ProcP and ResP are causally related.

- (40) a. If $\exists e_1, e_2$ [State(e_1) & Process(e_2) & $e_1 \rightarrow e_2$], then by definition Initiation(e_1)
 b. If $\exists e_1, e_2$ [State(e_1) & Process(e_2) & $e_2 \rightarrow e_1$], then by definition Result(e_1)

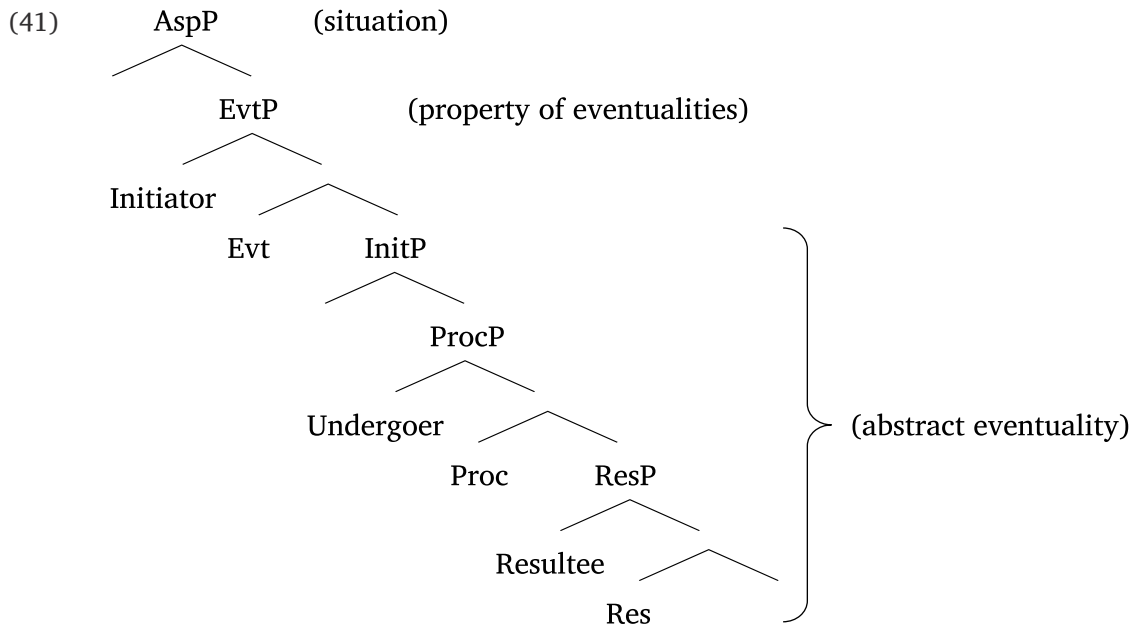
InitP and ResP introduce states, and the fact that these eventualities correspond to causative or resultative eventualities depends on their position in relation to ProcP. As Ramchand (2008: 44) explains, if the state is conveyed by InitP, it is interpreted as a causative state that triggers the development of the dynamic subeventuality (40a), whereas if the state is conveyed by ResP, then it is a resultative state that has been caused by the development of the dynamic subeventuality (40b). Therefore, InitP, ProcP and ResP are related by means of two causative relations, so that it is InitP that causes ProcP, and it is ProcP that entails ResP.

At this lower domain the eventuality has not been provided with time and world parameters yet. In terms of Ramchand (2018: 17), what we have up to InitP are “generalized abstractions”.

¹⁰ Although these are the three projections that conform the VP, not all of them are present within the syntactic configuration of every verbal predicate. The fact that a VP can be decomposed into all or only a subset of them depends on its lexical aspect.

¹¹ Ramchand (2008: 42–43) follows Hale & Keyser’s (1993) notation and expresses this causation relation by means of the arrow.

In (2018: ch. 1) she proposes two projections responsible for turning this abstract eventuality into a particular one: EvtP (EventP) and AspectP (AspP) (41).



Specifically, EvtP is at the edge of the first phase and acts as an intermediary between this lower area and an upper area: it turns the symbolic content u described up to InitP into a property of eventualities e by means of a performing act of communication d (42) (Ramchand 2018: 16, *apud* Henderson 2016).

(42) (Ramchand 2018: 17)

$$[[\text{EvtP}]] = \lambda d \lambda e [\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ \text{Th}_\delta(d) = u \ \& \ \text{Convey}(d, e)]$$

Moreover, in (2018: 78–80) Ramchand separates the expression of the causative semantics from the position where the initiator is generated. She follows Pylkkänen (1999) and proposes that Init expresses the causative subeventuality, but this projection is no longer in charge of introducing the initiator. It is now introduced at the specifier of EvtP, so that it is the entity in charge of controlling the eventuality described by the nodes below this projection (41).

Additionally, note that, however, once EvtP is merged, it has not yet been affirmed that the eventuality e , whose descriptive content corresponds with u , has taken place in time and world. For Ramchand (2018: 18–20, *apud* Champollion 2015), the projection that existentially binds the eventuality is AspP. This author expresses the relation between the eventuality and the anchoring utterance d by means of f , which creates a “property of spatiotemporal properties of e (rooted in d)” (43) (Ramchand 2018: 19). Therefore, with the merge of AspP the speaker asserts that the eventuality e described by u in d properly exists. As Ramchand (2018: 19) claims, at this

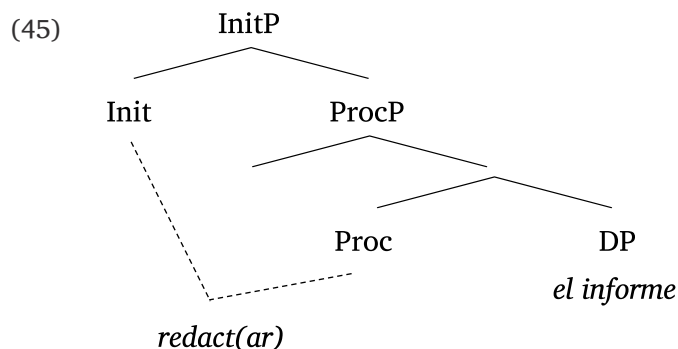
level the eventuality is located with respect to world and time, so that it becomes a *situation*. This anchoring receives the name of *instantiation* (Ramchand & Svenonius 2014).

- (43) (Ramchand 2018: 19)
 $[[\text{AspP}]] = \lambda f \lambda d \exists e [\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ [u](e) \ \& \ f(d)(e)]$

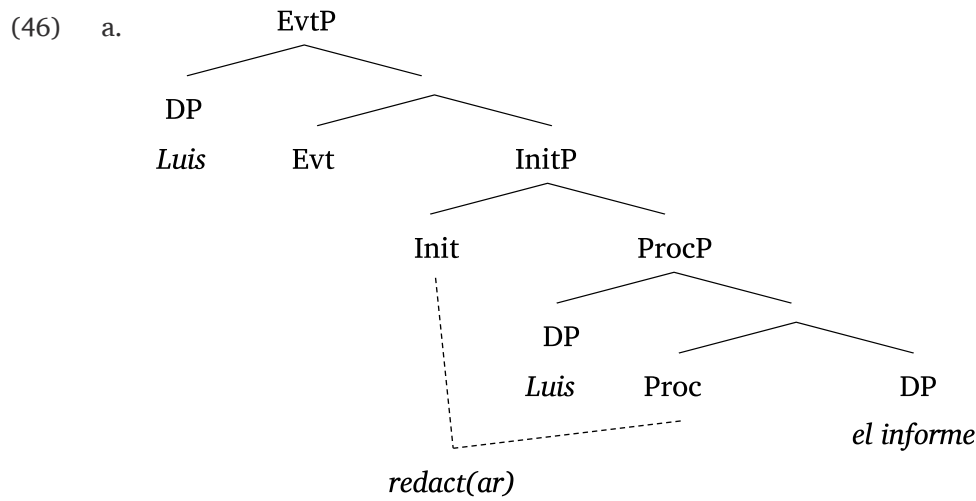
Once the core issues of Ramchand’s (2008; 2018) framework have been exposed, I now move on to explain how the negated and inhibited eventuality readings syntactically arise within the verbal domain. I illustrate this with the sentence in (44). The paraphrases this sentence receives have been provided in terms of eventualities and situations.

- (44) Luis no redactó el informe.
 Luis NEG wrote the report
 ‘Luis did not write the report.’
- Negated eventuality reading: ‘The eventuality denoted by the VP, which consists in that Luis wrote the report, is not instantiated.’
 - Inhibited eventuality reading: ‘The eventuality denoted by the VP, which consists in that Luis refrained from writing the report, is instantiated.’

Crucially, at the level where the abstract eventuality is depicted, the structure of the VP *redactar el informe* ‘write the report’ is the same, independently of whether the negated or the inhibited eventuality reading arise (45).

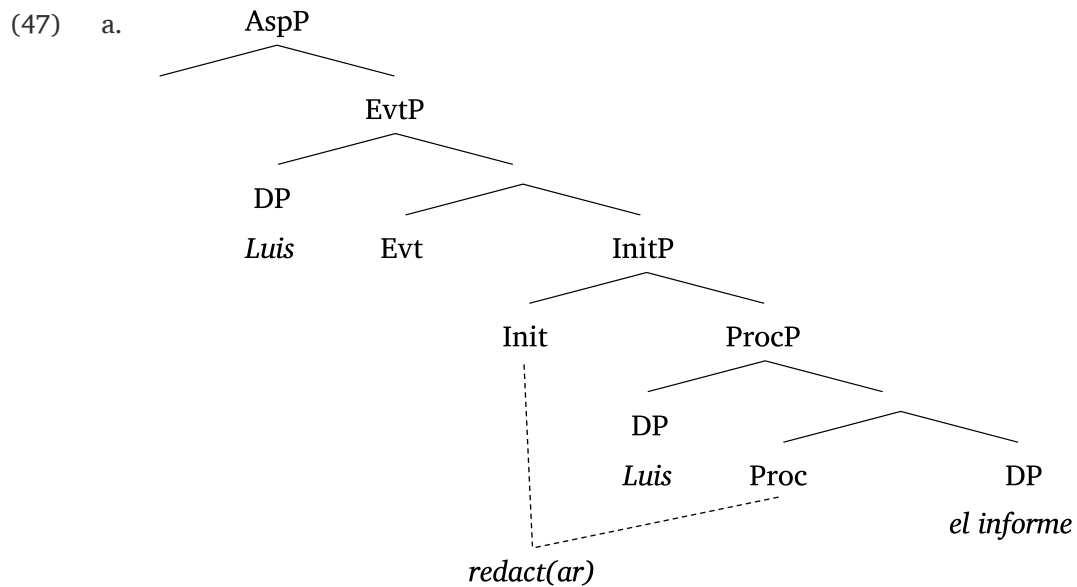


The negated and the inhibited eventuality readings differ at the following step of the derivation. Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020) claim that the difference essentially lies in the two positions negation can occupy within the clause and, in consequence, in the different scope negation has over the rest of projections. I now first illustrate how the negated eventuality reading arises. Evt is merged with InitP and the initiator is introduced in the specifier of this projection: it corresponds with the entity which controls the eventuality (46a). The compositional semantics for this step is provided in (46b). By means of an act of communication *d* an eventuality *e*, whose generic, descriptive content *u* is depicted up to InitP, is conveyed.



- b. (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 757)
 $\lambda d \lambda e [\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ \text{Th}_\delta(d) = \text{write}_{\text{init}} \ \& \ \text{Convey}(d, e) \ \rightarrow [\text{write}_{\text{init}}](e)]$

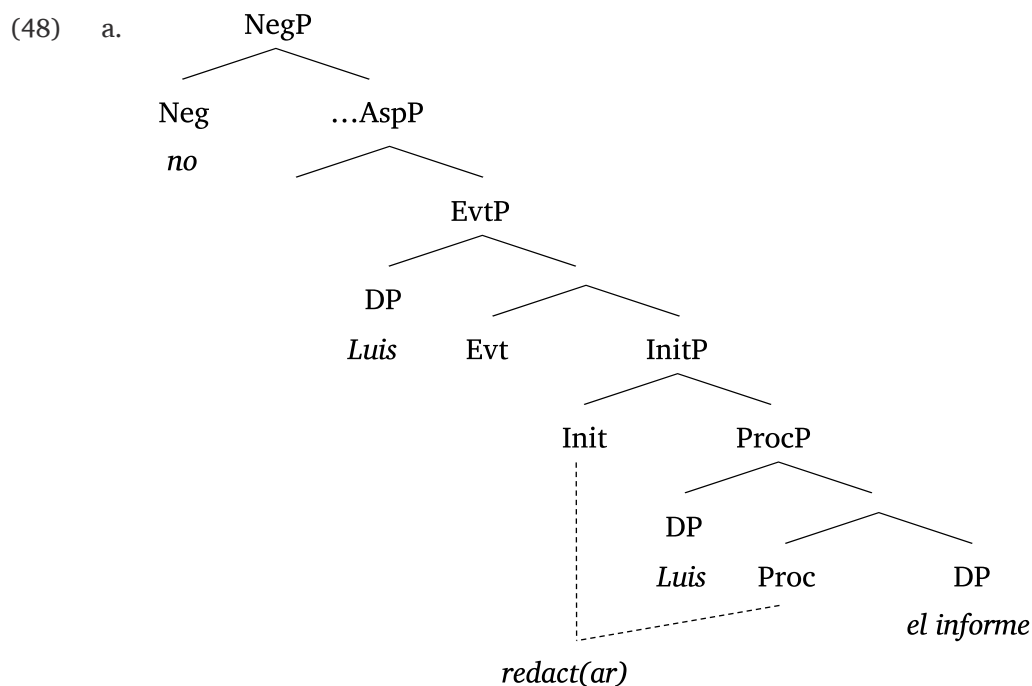
At the following step of the derivation, AspP is merged (47a). This projection creates a property of spatiotemporal properties of e rooted in d by means of f (47b). Essentially, the eventuality is now provided with time and world parameters, so that it is instantiated and becomes a situation.



- b. (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 758)
 $\lambda f \lambda d \exists e [\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ [\text{write}_{\text{init}}](e) \ \& \ f(d)(e)]$

According to Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020: sct. 4.2), the negated eventuality reading arises due to the merge of Neg at the level of the higher aspectual projections (48a), which

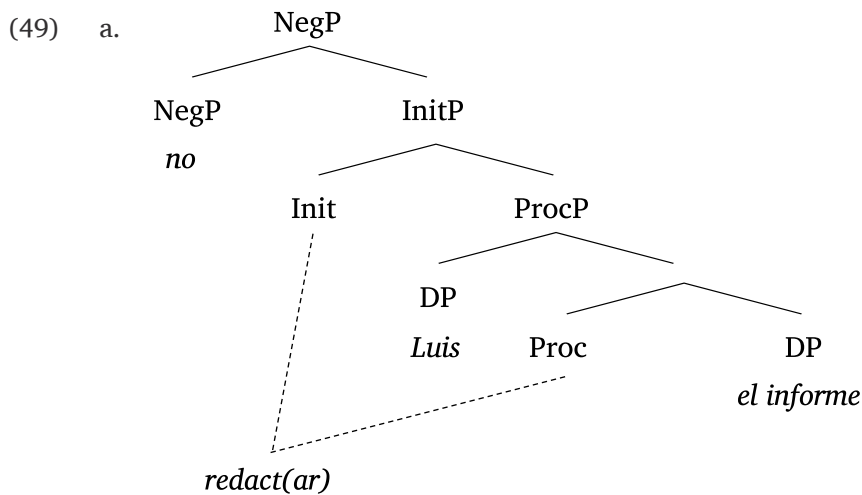
are responsible for the existential closure of the eventuality. In this case, the position NegP occupies is the position of sentential negation, i.e. the one saved by default for Spanish negation (Laka 1990). As these authors claim, negation “scopes over the existential operator and denies the existence of the event[uality] corresponding to the description below EvtP” (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 757–758). This precisely explains how the syntactic structure in (48a) is connected to (48b): negation, represented by means of \neg , has scope over \exists , which represents the existential quantifier. In short, negation denies that the eventuality which matches the abstract description expressed by the VP takes place. This is the reason why a sentence like *Luis no redactó el informe* ‘Luis did not write the report’ is paraphrased in this case as ‘The eventuality described by the VP, which consists in that Luis wrote the report, is not instantiated’.



- b. (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 758)
 $\lambda f \lambda d \neg \exists e [\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ [\text{write}_{\text{init}}](e) \ \& \ f(d)(e)]$

I now move on to explain how the inhibited eventuality reading is obtained. Remember that when this interpretation arises, a sentence such as *Luis no redactó el informe* ‘Luis did not write the report’ denotes an eventuality that takes place. Specifically, it consists in the refrainment of the external argument from triggering the corresponding affirmative eventuality, when it was first expected that it would carry this affirmative eventuality out, this is, Luis refrains from writing the report in a context in which it was first expected that he would write it. Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020: 759) propose that this interpretation arises when negation acts at the descriptive level of the eventuality. Specifically, they claim that Neg merges with InitP in this

case and projects as NegP. Thus, it has scope over those projections responsible for describing the aspectual properties of the eventuality, before it has been anchored to time and world by higher projections (49a). Due to the scope negation has over InitP, it consequently refutes the causal relation that links the causative state expressed by InitP and the dynamic event expressed by ProcP, by means of which the causative state triggered the corresponding process associated to ProcP. Specifically, negation turns this causative relation into an inhibition relation: since the causative state is now inhibited, it will no longer trigger the dynamic subeventuality.¹² The formula provided by Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020) to account for this reading is provided in (49b). Crucially, “inhibit” and “non-init” equate to “not initiate”, i.e. “¬ initiate”, and “not-init”, i.e. “¬ init”, respectively. This “not initiate” and “not-init” are interpreted in this case as the opposite of initiating, this is, as inhibiting the initiation.¹³



¹² As it was exposed in section 3.1, remember that Higginbotham (1983) explained that when the inhibited eventuality reading arises, the eventuality specifically consists in the refrainment of the subject, and not in any other eventuality different from the one depicted by the VP. If this were the case, the content of the sentence would not be restrictive enough. This observation is syntactically captured by Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020: 761), who claim that Neg is merged with InitP, and not with ProcP, because this second option is not restrictive enough: if negation had scope over ProcP, then the description conveyed by the syntactic configuration could be applied to any other predicate different from the selected one—for example, in the case of *Luis no escribió el informe* ‘Luis did not write the report’, to those cases in which Luis has done any other eventuality different from writing the report, such as sleeping, reading a book...—.

¹³ Moreover, Bernard & Champollion (2024: 614) have explicitly shown that the description of an inhibited eventuality can also be formalised by means of the formula provided in (i). They illustrate it with a sentence such as *Juan did not review the article*. As these authors claim, “the denotation of instances of *not* introducing inhibiting events can be expressed by combining *Neg* with a partial function *init* that maps events to their initiators”.

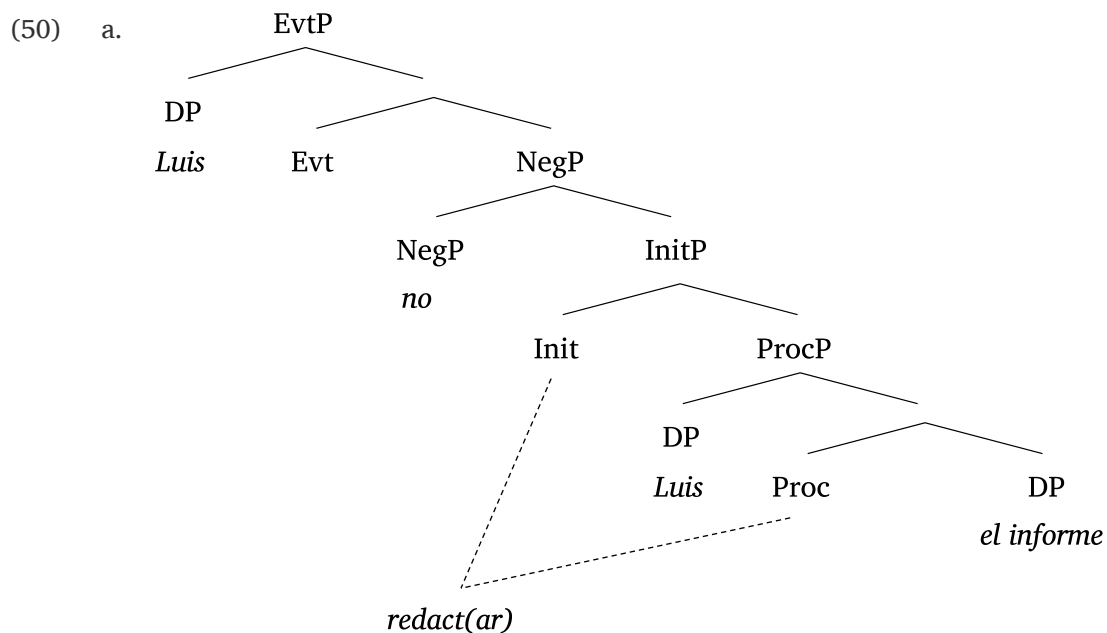
(Bernard & Champollion 2024: (66))

(i) $\lambda e. \text{init}(e) = \text{Juan} \wedge e \in \text{Neg}(\lambda e'. \text{ag}(e') = \text{Juan} \wedge \text{review}(e') \wedge \text{th}(e') = \text{art})$

b. (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 759)

$\lambda e, e_1, e_2 [e = e_1 \text{ INHIBIT } e_2 \ \& \ \text{write}_{\text{non-init}}(e_1) \ \& \ \text{write}_{\text{proc}}(e_2)]$

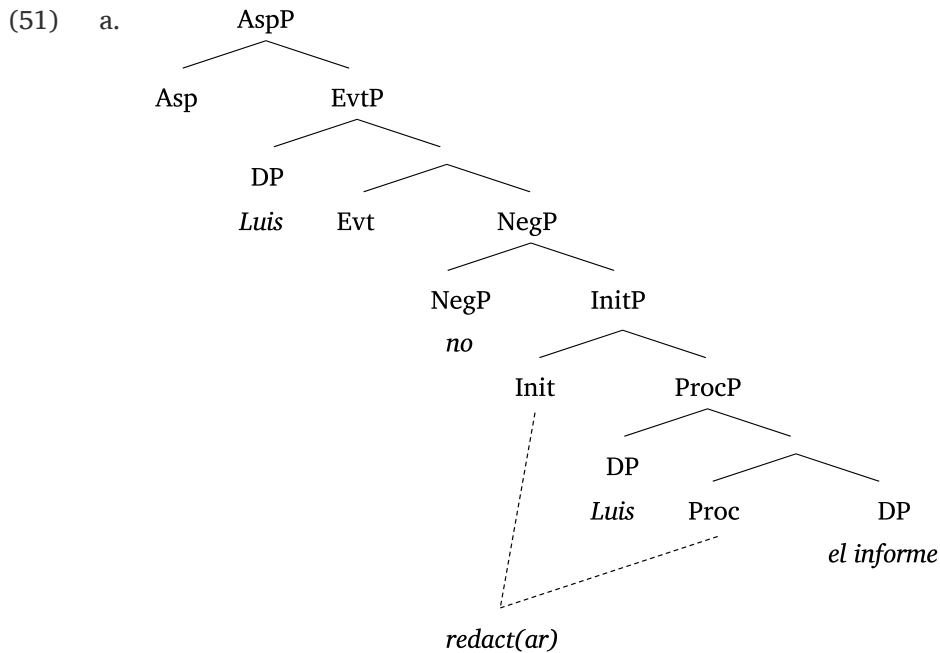
Note that EvtP and AspP have not been projected yet. Therefore, a symbolic eventuality is described at this level of the derivation. This symbolic eventuality consists in the refrainment of making the corresponding affirmative eventuality happen. Then, EvtP is introduced. The initiator, from the specifier of EvtP, controls this inhibited eventuality (50a). Because of the merge of this projection, by an act of communication d an eventuality e which descriptively consists in inhibiting the eventuality of writing a report is now conveyed (50b).



b. (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 759)

$\lambda d \lambda e [\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ \text{Th}_\delta(d) = \text{write}_{\text{non-init}} \ \& \ \text{Convey}(d, e) \ \rightarrow$
 $[\text{write}_{\text{non-init}}](e)]$

Then, Asp is merged (51a), so that the eventuality which consists in the refrainment from writing the report is existentially bounded. As Fábregas & González Rodríguez (2020: 760) claim, now “the speaker asserts that a particular event[uality] exists and occupies a particular extension in time”. By means of f , a property of spatiotemporal properties of e rooted in d is now created (51b). In other words, it is asserted that now there is an eventuality that takes place, which corresponds in this case to an inhibited eventuality. Because of the introduction of AspP, this inhibited eventuality is instantiated and becomes a situation.

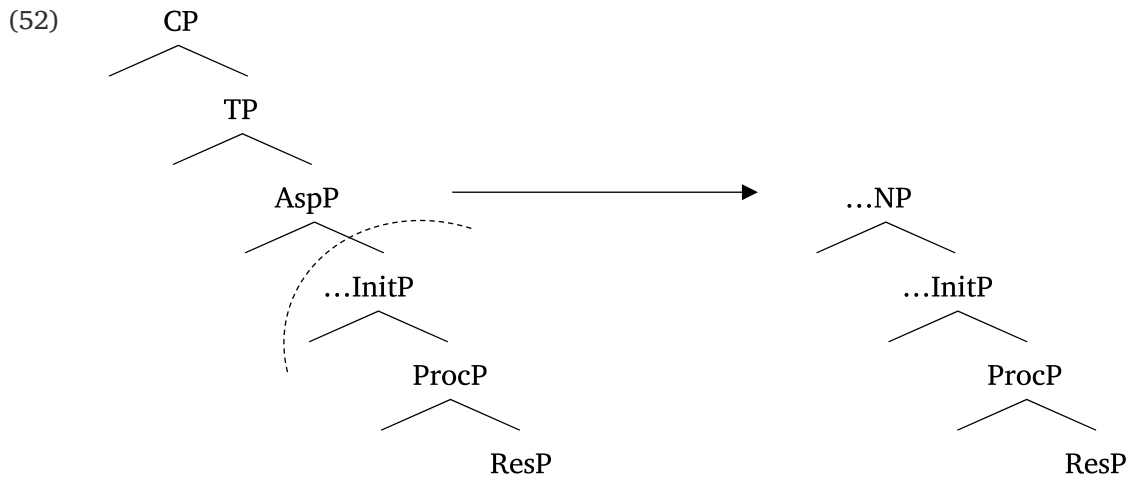


- b. (Fábregas & González Rodríguez 2020: 760)
 $\lambda f.\lambda d.\exists e[\text{Utterance}(d) \ \& \ [\text{write}_{\text{non-init}}](e) \ \& \ f(d)(e)]$

Once I have presented how the negated and the inhibited eventuality readings are obtained when *no* precedes a VP, in the following section why the inhibited eventuality reading is not available with zero event deverbal nominalizations is explained.

4.2 Why the inhibited eventuality reading is ruled out with zero event deverbal nominalizations: a syntactic explanation

In the line of authors such as Picallo (1991), Harley & Noyer (1998), Alexiadou (2001; 2011), Sleeman & Brito (2010a; b), Borer (2013) or Fábregas (2016), I assume a syntactic analysis for nominalizations. The tests provided in section 2 showed that the zero event nominalizations scrutinised in this paper are deverbal. From a syntactic point of view this means that their syntactic configuration possesses verbal projections. Furthermore, I assume the Aspect Preservation Hypothesis (APH), which states that deverbal nominalizations inherit the projections located at the bottom of the syntactic tree from their verbal bases, this is, those projections associated to the expression of the Aktionsart (Meinschäfer 2003; 2005; Fábregas & Marín 2012a; Fábregas et al. 2012; among others). Taking these two claims as a point of departure, the general syntactic structure that has been proposed for deverbal nominalizations is the one presented in (52). NP, which is the projection responsible for introducing the nominalizer affix, takes the VP (here, decomposed into InitP, ProcP and ResP) as complement. The structure is then nominalised, and, as a result, a nominalization is obtained.

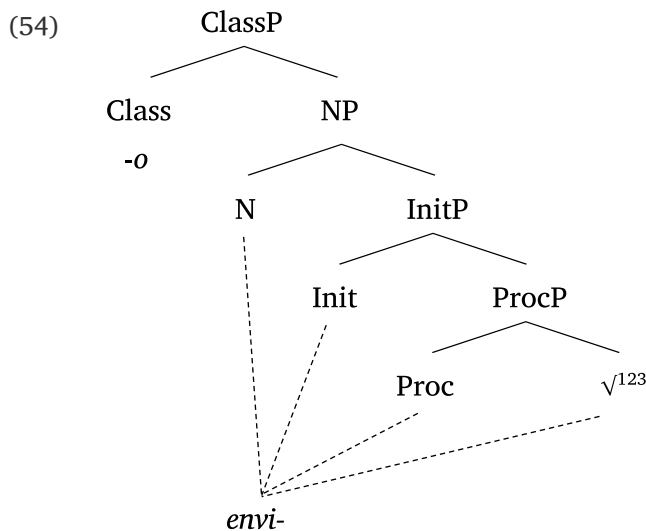


In the following section I delve into the syntactic structure of zero event deverbal nominalizations, i.e. those that do not possess a derivative suffix.

4.2.1 The syntactic structure of zero event deverbal nominalizations

A syntactic analysis for Spanish zero event deverbal nominalizations has been proposed by Fábregas (2014; 2016). This author bases his account on Phrasal Spellout, an operation which regulates the way in which the lexicalisation of the syntactic structure takes place, and portmanteau morphemes. I will explain this with the nominal *envío* ‘shipment’ as example. The syntactic information stored in the lexical entry of an exponent like *envi-* ‘ship’ is provided in (53). The syntactic structure built at the syntax is represented in (54).

(53) /envi-/ <---> [_{NP} N [_{InitP} Init [_{ProcP} Proc [^v¹²³]]]]



Once the syntactic component has generated the configuration in (54), the exponents are later inserted in the structure and materialise it. From the information within the lexical entry of *envi-* (53), it follows that this exponent lexicalises a root, which merely conveys a phonological index, dominated by the verbal functional projections InitP and ProcP, which are in turn dominated by the nominal projection NP. In other words, *envi-* lexicalises more than one node. Therefore, it is a portmanteau morpheme (Caha 2018: 58).

In (54) there is a mismatch between the number of nodes that appear in the syntactic tree and the number of morphophonological exponents that materialise the structure. Thus, there is no one-to-one mapping between the nodes and the exponents, since we do not find a different exponent for each of the nodes of the syntactic structure, i.e. for the root, the verbalizing affix, the nominalizer and the noun mark. In this case it is by Phrasal Spellout that the structure is lexicalised. According to this principle, more than one node can be lexicalised by means of a single morphophonological exponent. This exponent is inserted in a phrasal node and materialises a phrase (Caha 2009; Starke 2009; Pantcheva 2011; among others). For (54) this means that once the structure has been syntactically built, the exponent *envi-* is inserted in the phrasal node NP, and it materialises NP, InitP, ProcP and the root. Crucially, for the exponent to do Phrasal Spellout the heads must be hierarchically ordered in the tree the way they are within the lexical entry, they must be adjacent and they must form a syntactic constituent. Otherwise, the derivation will not succeed. In further steps of the derivation, and following Picallo (2008), the noun mark is introduced in ClassifierP (ClassP).

After having explained the main issues that concern the syntactic formation of zero event deverbal nominalizations, in the following section I develop why the inhibited eventuality reading does not arise with them.

4.2.2 The interaction of negation with the structure of zero event deverbal nominalizations

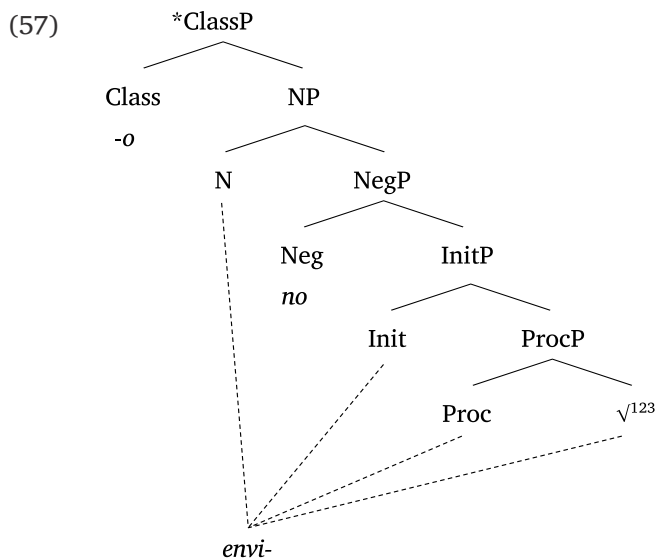
In section 4.1 it has been explained that the inhibited eventuality reading arises configurationally when negation is merged with InitP, whereas the negated eventuality reading is obtained when Neg is merged with high aspectual projections. The question that is answered in this section is why sequences such as the one in (55), where the inhibited eventuality reading is coerced with zero event deverbal nominalizations, are ungrammatical. Additionally, there is another question that immediately arises from the data presented: How is the negated eventuality reading obtained with these nominals? Although this is not the main goal of the article, at the end of this section I will sketch some lines of reasoning that point towards the direction that should be followed to account for the availability of this interpretation.

- (55) *Los aprendices presenciaron el no envío del traje por parte del
 the trainees witnessed the NEG shipment of.the suit by part of.the
 diseñador a la modelo.
 designer to the model
 ‘The trainees witnessed the non-shipment of the suit by the designer to the model.’

As it was described in the previous section, the exponents of zero event deverbal nominalizations are portmanteau morphemes: N, Init and Proc together with the root form one single exponent (56). For this exponent to lexicalise the syntactic structure formed by NP, InitP, ProcP and the root via Phrasal Spellout, the heads must be adjacent in the syntactic tree, hierarchically ordered in the way they are within the lexical entry and form a syntactic constituent. If any other head—which is not stored in the lexical entry of the exponent—is placed between two of these nodes, the syntactic constituent will break, because the nodes will no longer be adjacent. Therefore, the exponent will not be able to do Phrasal Spellout. As a result, the derivation will fail.

- (56) /envi-/ <---> [_{NP} N [_{InitP} Init [_{ProcP} Proc [^v123]]]]

This is what happens with negation indeed. For the inhibited eventuality reading to arise, Neg needs to be merged with InitP. However, in the case of the zero nominals scrutinised, if negation is merged with InitP, it interrupts the constituent formed by N, the verbal functional projections and the root, as it is shown in (57). Consequently, negation breaks the constituent, because N and Init are no longer adjacent, and there is no head that dominates N and Init without also dominating Neg too. Thus, the nodes from the lexical entry (56) do not form a constituent anymore. From this it follows that the exponent will not be able to do Phrasal Spellout and materialise the structure. Thus, the inhibited eventuality reading will not be obtained with these nominals.



In conclusion, the inhibited eventuality reading arises syntactically due to the merge of negation with InitP. However, with zero event deverbal nominalizations the merge of Neg with InitP entails the interruption of the constituent that is lexicalised by the exponent, which is a portmanteau morpheme, via Phrasal Spellout. Therefore, the syntactic configuration cannot be materialised and the inhibited eventuality reading does not arise.

To close this section I now sketch a hypothesis that could in principle account for the availability of the negated eventuality reading with these nominals. It is related to the presence/absence of high aspectual projections within their structure. Remember that the negated eventuality interpretation emerges with verbal predicates due to the interaction of NegP with these projections. Thus, one possible solution that explains how this reading arises with zero event deverbal nominalizations could rely on the following. If these nominals inherited these higher projections from their verbal bases, then negation could in principle be merged with them. Since negation in this case would have scope over these projections, in theory nothing would prevent this interpretation from being available with zero event deverbal nominalizations. However, note that at the beginning of section 4.2 it was illustrated how these nominalizations are syntactically obtained when N is merged with the lower verbal projections, and not with AspP, TP or CP. The reason lies in the following. These nominals do not pass the tests used by the literature to verify that the nominalization's structure also inherits these high projections. For instance, they do not assign accusative case to its internal argument, which is introduced with the preposition *de* 'of' instead (58) and they are incompatible both with aspectual adverbs (59) and auxiliary verbs (60) (Alexiadou et al. 2011; Alexiadou 2020). Consequently, the hypothesis that links the availability of the negated eventuality reading with zero event deverbal nominalizations to the presence of AspP, TP..., should be discarded. I leave the discussion open at this point, so that further studies should delve into this issue.¹⁴

¹⁴ As one of the anonymous reviewers suggests, there is another hypothesis available. It is based on the parallelism between the verbal and the nominal domains. It could be assumed that there is a functional projection XP in the structure of nominals, which is responsible for the nominal expression to have a referent—similarly to what happens at the verbal domain with the higher aspectual projections in charge of the existential closure of the eventuality—. If Neg were merged with this projection XP, then it would have direct scope over it: [... [_{NegP} Neg [_{XP} X [_{NP} N]]]. Consequently, nothing would apparently prevent it from refuting the existential closure of the noun. Thus, how the negated eventuality reading arises at the nominal domain could be explained: the refutation of the existential closure by negation at the nominal domain would be similar to the refutation of the existential closure that takes place with verbs at the level of the higher aspectual projections—namely, AspP, TP...—, so that the negated eventuality reading arises in these cases. With all that, this hypothesis needs to be verified, and this issue is beyond the limits of this paper. On the one side, this could be done by checking if the negated eventuality reading is also available with other nominalizations. For instance, with those eventive deverbal nominalizations that do possess a nominalizer (e.g. *aceptación* 'acceptance'). If this interpretation emerges with these items as well and it is shown that XP is also present within their structure and negation has scope over it, this solution might go in the right direction. On the other side, it is also necessary to delimit what differentiates the contribution made by this XP from the one made by the DP.

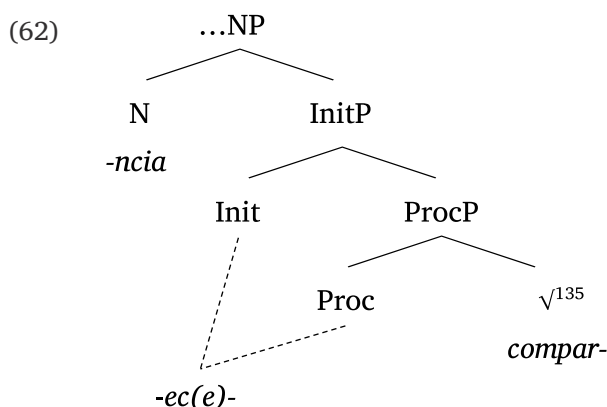
- (58) el envío *(de) el traje
 the shipment of the suit
 ‘the shipment (of) the suit’
- (59) *el frecuentemente cierre de puestos
 the frequently closing of stalls
 ‘the frequently closing of stalls’
- (60) *la haber firma de acuerdos
 the have signing of agreements
 ‘the have signing of agreements’

5 Predictions made by the proposed analysis

Once it has been explained how the inhibited eventuality reading does not arise with zero event deverbal nominalizations, the main prediction made by the proposed analysis is presented in this section. Essentially, from the offered analysis it follows that event deverbal nominalizations with a nominalizer affix, when preceded by the negative particle *no*, will give rise to the inhibited event(u)ality reading (61), because in these cases negation does not break any constituent.

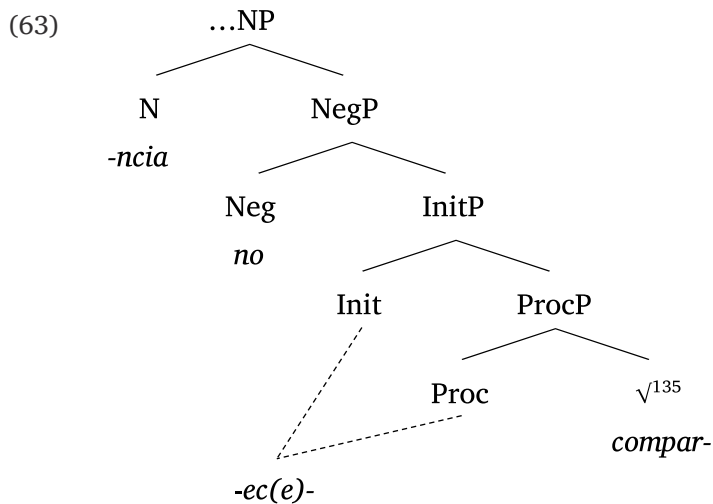
- (61) la no comparece-ncia por parte del presidente
 the NEG appear.INF-ance by part of.the president
 ‘the non-appearance by the president’

The syntactic structure of an event deverbal nominalization such as *comparecencia* ‘appearance’, which possesses the nominalizer *-ncia*, is the one presented in (62). The crucial difference is that with these nominalizations, unlike what happens with zero event deverbal nominals, the NP is lexicalised separately by the nominalizer. Furthermore, the root is lexicalised by the exponent *compar-* and the verbalizer *-ec(e)-* is inserted in InitP and does Phrasal Spellout of the verbal projections.¹⁵



¹⁵ In *-ece-*, the final *-e* corresponds to the theme vowel of the verb. To simplify the reasoning, I include it together with the verbalizer.

Herein lies the most important point of the reasoning. Given that these nominalizations possess a nominalizer which independently materialises the NP, if negation is merged with InitP, it will not interrupt any constituent in this case (63). Thus, no constituent will be broken and, as a result, the inhibited eventuality reading should arise.



To verify if this prediction is borne out, it is checked if *<no + event deverbal nominalization with nominalizer>* gives rise to grammatical sequences when it appears in those contexts applied in section 3.2 which coerce the inhibited eventuality reading.

The first test has to do with durative modifiers. Unlike what happened with zero nominals in presence of *no*, *<no + event deverbal nominalization with nominalizer>* gives rise to a well-formed sequence when it co-occurs with durative modifiers. Since these modifiers measure the time during which an eventuality that takes place has extended, from the grammaticality of (64) it then follows that *<no + event deverbal nominalization with nominalizer>* denotes an eventuality in this context. Specifically, this eventuality corresponds with an inhibited eventuality: the president refrains from appearing in a context in which it is first expected that he would appear, and this eventuality has extended for several days.

- (64) la no comparece-ncia por parte del presidente durante varios días
 the NEG appear.INF-ance by part of.the president for several days
 ‘the non-appearance by the president for several days’

The second test is related to frequency modifiers. Whereas zero event deverbal nominalizations, when preceded by negation, were not compatible with these modifiers, those eventive deverbal nominalizations with an overt nominalizer can co-occur with them (65). Because these modifiers quantify the occurrence of an eventuality that takes place, the grammaticality of the sequence in (65) puts forth that *<no + event deverbal nominalization with nominalizer>* yields the

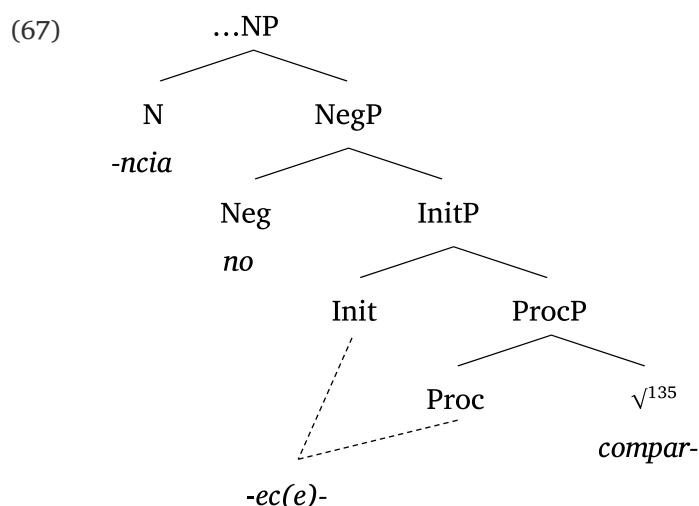
inhibited eventuality reading. Thus, the sentence in (65) denotes an eventuality which consists in the refrainment of the secretary from destroying the documents.

- (65) La frecuente no destru-cción de documentos por parte del secretario solo
 the frequent NEG destruct.INF-ion of documents by part of.the secretary only
 empeora la situación.
 makes.worse the situation
 ‘The frequent non-destruction of documents by the secretary only makes the situation worse.’

In third place, as opposed to zero event deverbal nominals when preceded by *no*, when eventive deverbal nominalizations with an overt nominalizer co-occur with this negative particle, they can occupy the subject position of perception verbs (66). Again, this is so given that when negation precedes the nominalization in this case, an inhibited eventuality is denoted.

- (66) El ministro presenció la no destru-cción de los documentos por parte del
 the minister witnessed the NEG destruct.INF-ion of the documents by part of.the
 secretario.
 secretary
 ‘The minister witnessed the non-destruction of the documents by the secretary.’

Thus, from the empirical results obtained, it can be concluded that these nominalizations give rise to the inhibited eventuality reading. This interpretation is obtained configurationally when Neg is merged with InitP (67).



All in all, note that once the structure has been lexicalised by the exponents, the order obtained is “nominalizer-negation-verbalizer-root”. However, this is not the phonological order we get, which corresponds to “negation-root-verbalizer-nominalizer”. Thus, the lexicalisation of the

structure is different from its linearisation. As one of the anonymous reviewers suggests, after head movement or any other technical operation assumed takes place, the order obtained would be “nominalizer-negation-root-verbalizer”. Then, if it is presumed that the final reordering of the exponents takes place phonologically thanks to some kind of prosodic or morphophonological readjustment, a preliminary solution could be the following.

As Fábregas (2018: 269–170) outlines, the negative particle *no* has clitic properties in Spanish. For instance, it cannot be placed between an auxiliary and a lexical verb (e.g. compare *No han venido* ‘They have not come’ and *Lo han hecho* ‘They have done it’ with **Han no venido* and **Han lo hecho*) and when it precedes a verb, it does not receive an accent. Following this author, this type of requirements points towards the fact that the negative particle *no* forms a prosodic unit with the verb, so that they behave as a single prosodic constituent, and this phonological requisite is part of the information stored within its lexical entry.

Also, nominalizer affixes such as *-ncia* are always suffixes in Spanish, which means that they are placed at the right side of the base. According to Fábregas (2018: sct. 10.4.4), who follows Richards (2016), the phonological information concerning whether the affix is placed at the right or the left edge of a prosodic constituent is stored within its lexical entry as well. In this case, it would be stored that *-ncia* occupies the right side of a prosodic constituent.

Although this is a preliminary solution and further studies should delve into it, once the structure has been materialised, the exponents would be reordered at the Phonological Form, following the requisites imposed by the phonological information present in their lexical entries. Broadly speaking, *no* would occupy the left boundary of the verb, forming a prosodic constituent with it, and the nominalizer would occupy the right boundary of this prosodic constituent, giving rise to the order “negation-verbal base-nominalizer”.¹⁶

6 Conclusions

In this paper I have addressed the co-occurrence of *no* with zero event deverbal nominalizations in Spanish. I have shown that zero event deverbal nominals can co-occur with *no*, however, they differ from verbal predicates in that, contrary to what happens within the verbal domain, they do not give rise to two interpretations. For the verbal domain different authors have shown that when negation precedes the VP, two readings are available: with the first one it is stated

¹⁶ Note that there is another issue which deserves more attention than the one it can receive here. This matter has to do with negative prefixes, i.e. *des-* ‘dis-’ or *in-* ‘in-’. As one anonymous reviewer points out, it seems that the inhibited eventuality reading also arises when they attach to some verbs (e.g. *des-cuidar* lit. ‘dis-care’, *in-admitir* lit. ‘in-admit’), and the same thing happens with the corresponding nominals (e.g. *des-cuido* lit. ‘dis-caring’, *in-admisión* lit. ‘in-admission’). Future studies should tackle the similarities and the differences among these prefixes and the particle *no* both from a descriptive and a syntactic point of view. As a result, this will shed light on how negation interacts with the nominal domain.

that no eventuality has happened —the sentential negation or negated event(uality) reading— whereas with the second one it is affirmed that an eventuality has taken place, namely, an inhibited eventuality —the negative or inhibited event(uality) reading—. According to Fábregas & González Rodríguez's (2020) proposal, this second reading arises configurationally when negation is merged with InitP, so that it refutes the causal relation that links the Init and Proc subevent(uality)s and turns it into an inhibition relation. Consequently, the causative state introduced by Init does not trigger the process.

For the nominal domain I have shown that zero event deverbal nominals do not give rise to the inhibited eventuality reading, but only to the negated eventuality one. Then, I have proposed that this interpretation does not arise because zero event deverbal nominals are obtained by means of portmanteau morphemes which lexicalise via Phrasal Spellout a syntactic structure formed by NP, InitP, ProcP and/or ResP and the root. If negation is merged over InitP —*[NP [NegP [InitP [ProcP [v^n]]]]]—, so that the inhibited eventuality reading can arise, Phrasal Spellout is blocked: negation breaks the constituent formed by the root, the verbal nodes and N, because these nodes are no longer adjacent and hierarchically ordered in the way they are within the lexical entry of the exponent. Therefore, the structure cannot be lexicalised and the inhibited eventuality reading does not arise. Additionally, although this paper has focused on the (un)availability of the inhibited eventuality reading within the nominal domain and future studies should address this issue in depth, I have explored some hypotheses that could in principle account for how the negated eventuality reading arises.

Finally, the analysis proposed predicts that event deverbal nominalizations with a nominalizer affix, when preceded by negation, give rise to the inhibited eventuality reading. This is so because in this case there are two different exponents for the lexicalisation of the VP and the NP, respectively, so negation does not break any constituent.

Abbreviations

ACC = accusative, APH = Aspect Preservation Hypothesis, INF = infinitive, NEG = negation, NM = noun mark, NMZ = nominaliser, TV = thematic vowel, VBZ = verbaliser.

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Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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