

À partir de, a partir de, a partire da.

Source prepositions and open intervals in Romance*

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1. Introduction. Two grammatical paradigms generally thought to be independent:

Aspectual contexts (A-contexts): Lexical items and syntactic structures providing duration, pluriactionality and other forms of event quantification. These requirements are imposed by a number of (well-known) temporal adjuncts to their external arguments.

Intensional contexts (I-contexts): Non-veridical contexts licensing free-choice items, polarity subjunctives and other modal-like dependent and polarity-sensitive expressions.¹

- Most temporal adjuncts are licensed by *Aktionsart* information on compositional basis.
- We will show some unexpected interactions of A-contexts and I-contexts by analyzing one temporal preposition: APD (= French *à partir de*, Sp. *a partir de*, It. *a partire da*, other Romance counterparts).

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¹ We are using 'intensional' as a suitable cover term, although strictly speaking intensional contexts are just a subset of non-veridical contexts (see Giannakidou 2001).

- APD is interesting because...
 - 1) ...its licensing conditions are provided by both A- and I-contexts, a rather unusual status among temporal Ps. Even so, APD forms a paradigm with other source prepositions unable to be licensed in this way.
 - 2) ... it shows that I-contexts are able to provide time spans.

2. I- and A- contexts licensing APD

2.1. I-contexts

A. FUTURE

- (1) a. Fr. *Je {t'appellerai / *t'ai appelé} à partir de 10 heures.*
 'I {will call / called} you from 10 on'
- b. It. *Il pacchetto {arriverà / *è arrivato} a partire dal martedì.*
 'The package {will arrive / arrived} as of Tuesday'

B. IMPERATIVES

- (2) a. Sp. *Pásate por mi oficina a partir del jueves.*
 'Stop by my office from Thursday on'
- b. Sp. **Me pasé por tu oficina a partir del jueves.*
 'I stopped by your office from Thursday on'

C. INTENSIONAL PREDICATES

- (3) Fr. *A partir de ce jour, j'ai {eu besoin d'une voiture / *acheté une voiture}.*
 'From this very day, I {needed / bought} a car'

D. CONDITIONALS

- (4) a. Fr. **Tu as acheté cet appartement à partir du premier octobre.*
 'You bought this apartment from October 1st on'
- b. Fr. *Si tu as acheté cet appartement à partir du premier octobre, c'est sûr qu'il t'a coûté moins cher.*
 'If you bought this apartment from October 1st on, it sure was much cheaper'

E. MODAL VERBS

- (5) a. Sp. **Te matriculaste en el curso a partir del pasado 1 de septiembre.*
'You registered for the course starting September 1st'
b. Sp. *Te pudiste matricular en el curso a partir del pasado 1 de septiembre.*
'You might have registered for the course starting September 1st'

F. HABITUAL SENTENCES

- (6) a. Fr. *En été, le soleil se lève à partir de 6 heures du matin.*
'In the summer, the sun rises after 6 A.M.'
b. Fr. *L'année dernière j'étais au bureau tous les jours à partir de 8 heures.*
'Last year, I started working every day as of 8 A.M.' [from Rohrer 1981: 160]

G. WIDE SCOPE (PROPOSITIONAL) NEGATION

- (7) a. **Je t'ai appelé à partir de 10 heures (= (1a)).*
b. *Tu te trompes. Je ne t'ai pas appelé à partir de dix heures. Je t'ai appelé bien avant.*
'You are wrong. I have not called you after ten o'clock. I've called you long before'

2.2. A-contexts

- Rohrer (1981), Lagae (2012): Fr. *à partir de* is expected to be rejected in past sentences, since it is built out of *partir* 'depart'. It is "prospectively oriented" (cfr. {*dépuis* / **à partir de*} *hier* 'from yesterday onwards').
- OK, but APD is accepted in a number of past situations (A-contexts) crucially depending on aspectual information.

H. ASPECTUAL VERBS OF INITIAL PHASE

- (8) It. *La conquista del paese fu iniziata a partire dall'anno 1500.*
'The conquest of the country was started as of 1500'

I. DEGREE VERBS AND OTHER CHANGE OF STATE PREDICATES COERCED INTO THEIR INITIAL PHASE

- (9) a. Fr. *Paul {a grossi / *s'est marié} à partir de 40 ans.* [= 'started to gain weight']
'P. {gained weight / married} starting at 40'

- b. It. *La situazione si è deteriorata a partire di quello momento* [= 'started to deteriorate']
 'The situation deteriorated as of that moment'
- c. Sp. *Todo cambió radicalmente a partir de esa fecha.* [= 'started to change']
 'Everything changed as of that date'

J. DURATIVE EVENTUALITIES COERCED INTO THEIR INITIAL PHASE

- (10) a. Fr. *Marie a travaillé* [= 'started to work'] *à partir de 16 ans.*
 'M. started to work at 16'
- b. Sp. *Picasso pintó* [= 'started to paint'] *el Guernica a partir de mayo de 1937.*
 'Picasso painted Guernica as of May 1937'
- c. Fr. *Il a plu* [= 's'est mise à pleuvoir'] *à partir d'octobre.*
 'It rained as of October'
- d. It. *Gli accordi sono stati a rischio* [= 'started to be in danger'] *a partire dalla caduta del governo.*
 'The agreement reached started to be in danger as of the government's fall'

K. PLURALS PROVIDING CUMULATIVE OR DISTRIBUTIVE READINGS OUT OF TELIC PREDICATES (AGAIN COERCED INTO THEIR INITIAL PHASE)

- (11) a. Fr. *De nombreux alpinistes sont arrivés au sommet de l'Everest à partir de 1953.*
 'Mountaineers climbing the Everest started to be numerous from 1953 onwards'
- b. Sp. *A partir de ese día cometió {muchos errores / *un error}.*
 'From that day on, s/he made {a lot of mistakes / a mistake}'

L. FREQUENCY ADVERBIALS PROVIDING EVENT QUANTIFICATION FOR TELIC PREDICATES

- (12) a. Fr. **Il a remporté le Tour de France à partir de cette date.*
 'He won the Tour de France from that date onwards'
- b. Fr. *Il a remporté le Tour de France à plusieurs reprises à partir de cette date.*
 'He won the Tour de France many times from that date onwards'

3. Analysis

3.1. Basic conceptual ingredients

- The main grammatical properties of temporal APD are stated in (13):
- (13) a. APD is a two place preposition heading an adjunct that modifies a punctual predicate (durative predicates coerced into their initial phase are included).
b. APD's internal argument provides the left boundary starting point (LBSP) of an open interval (OI).
c. The predicate to which APD modifies provides APD's external argument.
d. Depending on the aspectual properties of the predicate, the eventuality is located either at LBSP or at some unspecified point inside OI.
- (14) a. Fr. *Je t'appellerai a partir de 10 heures* means 'I will call you at t (t = an unspecified point included in a interval after Speech time and starting at 10 hours in some contextually defined time span)' (see Rohrer 1981 and Lagaë 2012 for similar paraphrases).
b. Fr. *A partir de ce jour, j'ai eu besoin d'une voiture* (informally) means 'The situation of my needing a car begins at t (t = someday preceding Speech time)'
- English equivalents of APD, such as *starting* and *from X onwards*, overtly lexicalize APD's two main conceptual ingredients: LBSP (expressed by *starting* and *from*), and OI (expressed by *onwards*).

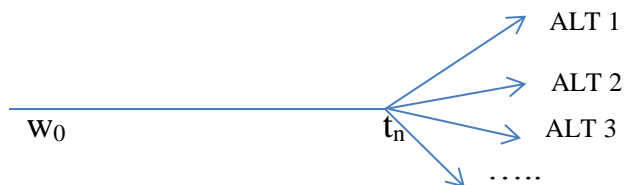
3.2. Main tenets of our analysis

Both A- and I-contexts provide OI.

- (15) a. A-CONTEXTS do so on aspectual grounds.
b. I-CONTEXTS do so through their modal meaning. In branching theories of time, modality is inherently temporal (Martin 1981, Condoravdi 2002, Laca 2012, among others).

Modals and open alternatives:

- If time is represented as a line stretching from the past and up to the present, at any given time in this line, different paths open towards the future without limit.
- Alternatives introduced by either modals or intensional operators are situated within this time span.
- In Condoravdi's model (2002), this temporal span is called 'temporal perspective' and is represented by $[t, -)$. See García-Murga (2015) for Spanish on the same issue:



(16) Event location in I- and A- contexts.

- I-CONTEXTS license a (explicit or implicit) temporal variable locating the punctual event at some unspecific point inside the OI. The unspecificity of this variable parallels that of indefinites within modal environments.
- A-CONTEXTS: APD denotes a transition from a non-existing situation to an existing one (or vice versa). Transitions may introduce temporal spans (Givon 1973, Engerer 2014, among others).
- If both A- and I- CONTEXTS are capable of licensing APD, the former have preference. The APD licenser in (17) is the durative predicate *étudier* (group J, above), rather than the future (group A).

(17) Fr. *Demain je étudierai à partir de six heures.*
'I'll do my homework from 6.00 o'clock on'

3.3. The analysis step by step

3.3.1. Lexical agreement

- Initial phase verbs and APD partially share their meaning.
- This LEXICAL AGREEMENT is similar to the one that characterizes...
 - ...so-called *modal concord* (Zeijlstra 2008, Grosz 2009, Anand & Brasoveanu 2010, Huitink 2012, and many others), as in (18),
 - ...some selected PPs, as in (19),
 - ...some phrasal verbs, as in (20),
 - ...some durational PP adjuncts (Eng. *during* only modify durative predicates).

(18) a. *It does not have to be necessarily so.*

b. *He definitely must be home.*

c. *It probably wouldn't make much sense.*

(19) a. It. *convivere con* ('live with' *lit.* with-live with)

b. Sp. *interponerse entre* ('come between' *lit.* with-put with)

(20) *Calm down, rise up, finish off, grow up, seek out, show up, slow down, stand up, start off, trash out.*

3.3.2. The inceptive coercion process (ICP)

- If APD's external argument is an aspectual verb of initial phase (IPV), such as *begin*, *start*, it partially reproduces APD's meaning (group H). A process of inceptive coercion (ICP) is able to focus the initial phase of predicates denoting duration (groups I, J, K).
- Aspectual verbs denote transitions from a situation to the opposite (Givon 1973, ter Meulen 1995, Engerer 2014 and references therein).
- Crucially, transitions require a temporal axis along which they locate both situations (the previous and the current one). This analysis is widely accepted for the aspectual adverbs *already* and *still* (Michaelis 1992, Krifka 2000, Ippolito 2007, among others), and corresponds to Engerer (2014)'s Time condition:

- (21) Time condition (Engerer's 2014)
Phasal verbs impose time structure on all arguments in their syntactical environment. This time structure provides the semantic interpretation of sentences including phasal verbs.
- (22) Transitions may be spatial as well
Spatial source prepositions *from*, *out of* denote a transition plus a (directional) path (Zwarts 2000, 2005, Pantcheva 2011). Paths, according to Jackendoff (1983) are functions from a non-temporal interval into space. In Zwarts (2000), oriented paths are defined as ordered sequences of vectors.
- (23) THE INCEPTIVE COERCION PROCESS (ICP):
i. APD focus the initial phase of a situation.
ii. This initial phase may be either positive (p) or negative ($\neg p$). Negative initial phases denote ceasing situations.

Transitions leading to positive situations, i.e., p holds at t [= (9)]:

- (24) a. Fr. *Paul {a grossi / *s'est marié} à partir de 40 ans.* [= (9a)]; 'started to gain weight'
'P. {gained weight / married} starting at 40'
- b. It. *La situazione si è deteriorata a partire di quello momento* [= (9b)]; 'started to deteriorate'
'The situation deteriorated as of that moment'
- c. Sp. *Todo cambió radicalmente a partir de esa fecha* [= 'started to change']
[= (9c)]
'Everything changed radically as of that date'
- d. Fr. *À partir du 13 janvier, le froid était devenu sibérien.* [= 'started to be Siberian']
'Cold began to be Siberian from January 13rd on'
(from Lagae 2012)

Transition leading to negative situations, i.e., $\neg p$ holds at t (a current situation ceases to hold at t):

- (25) a. Esp. *Dejó de fumar a partir de ese momento.*
‘S/he gave up smoking from that very moment’
b. Fr. *Nous avons arrêté de les chercher à partir de minuit.*
‘We stopped looking for them as of midnight’
c. It. *Le ostilità cessarono a partire dell'estate.*
‘Current hostilities stopped as of the summer’

Transitions are possible with other aspectual verbs, as predicted by our analysis.

- (26) a. Sp. *Juan volvió a estudiar a partir de 1990.*
‘J. started studying again as of 1990’
b. Fr. *À partir de cette date, les pourparlers ont été poursuivis.*
‘From that date onwards, talks were continued’

- Crucially, other prepositions of temporal source are ungrammatical in these contexts: they are not subject to ICP since they modify durative predicates:

- (27) a. Sp. **Juan volvió a estudiar desde 1990.*
‘J. started studying again from 1990 on’
b. Fr. *Il a continué a étudier {à partir de / *depuis} 1990.*
‘He kept studying from 1990 (on)’

3.3.3. The open interval (OI)

- An interval is open if it contains no right boundary (RB), whether explicit or implicit:

- (28) Sp. *El paquete llegará a partir del martes (*hasta el jueves).*
‘The package will arrive at any moment from next Tuesday on (until Thursday)’

- The APD properties in (13) are not shared by other prepositions of temporal source. They often modify durative predicates and denote closed intervals, even if their right boundary is unknown or recovered from context (Rohrer 1981, Mòia 2001, 2006; Iatridou & von Stechow 2005, and many others):²
- (29b) is ungrammatical because *da* requires a RB (sometimes implicit).
- (29c) is grammatical because APD requires no RB. It asserts the beginning of situation that expands along the interval and whose RB remains unknown.

- (29) a. It. *Maria abitava nello stesso appartamento dal 1970*. [implying ‘...up to that moment’]
 ‘M. had lived in the same apartment ever since 1970’
- b. It. ??*L’anno scorso ha piovuto da ottobre*.
 ‘Last year it rained since October’
- c. It. *L’anno scorso ha piovuto da ottobre fino a Natale*.
 ‘Last year it rained from October to Christmas’
- d. It. *L’anno scorso ha piovuto a partire da ottobre*.
 ‘Last year it rained as of October’

- Homogeneous eventualities provide OIs.³
- Accomplishments are subject to ICP.
- (Open) intervals are created by either durative events or event quantification processes (Krifka 1988, Lasnik, 1995, Mòia 2001, Landman 2000, Mòia 2001, Laca 2007, Asnes 2007, and much related work).
- Unbounded pluriactionality results from summing up the relevant subevents (van Geenhoven 2005, Laca 2006).

- (30) a. Sp. *Juan {*llegó / *comenzó a llegar} a la ciudad a partir del pasado martes*
 ‘Juan {arrived / started arriving} to town from last Tuesday on’
- b. Sp. *Los invitados {llegaron / comenzaron a llegar} a la fiesta a partir de las*

² In Mòia (2001, 2006), SINCE prepositions introduce a temporally bound domain of quantification.

³ Technically, it can be assumed a temporal trace function ensuring that the situation unfolds along the OI introduced by APD (Jackendoff 1996, Krifka 1998).

ocho.

‘Guests {arrived / started arriving} to the party as of eight o’clock’

- Extensional OIs reject lexical single event readings as well as non-homogeneous eventualities because the OI is not licensed.
- Telic events complementing aspectual auxiliaries force episodic readings (see Verkuyl’s 1999 on aspectuals as ‘slicers’). In these cases, no OI is obtained, and—consequently—APD’s external argument cannot be licensed:

(31) a. Sp. *García Márquez escribió Cien años de soledad a partir de 1965.*

‘G.M. wrote *Cien años de soledad* starting in 1965’

b. Sp. ??*García Márquez empezó a escribir Cien años de soledad a partir de 1965.*

‘G.M. started to write *Cien años de soledad* from 1965 onwards’

- As in group K, pluriactionality is able to provide an homogeneous situation able to license an OI:

(32) a. Fr. *Ils ont commencé à réduire ses activités à partir du janvier.*

‘They have started to reduce their activities as of January’

b. It. *A partire da quella data cominciò ad essere evidente che non era possibile raggiungere l’accordo?*

‘From what specific date on it began to be obvious that the agreement was not possible?’

- Change of state verbs denote sets of degrees in homogeneous scalar processes, which correspond to the temporal trace: a successive points in the intervals provided by temporal adjuncts:

(33) *The temperature raised along the summer.*

- Scalar changes are expressed by grading adjectives and verbs derived from them (Kennedy 2001; Kennedy & McNally 2005; Civardi & Bertinetto 2015).

- APD is sensitive to the fact that incremental predicates may be obtained on compositional bases:

- (34) a. Fr. *Jean a perdu {la mémoire / *ses clefs} a partir de cette date.*
 ‘Jean lost his {memory / keys} from that date’
 b. Fr. *A partir de ce jour, Jean a abandonné {la littérature / *son chien}.*
 ‘From that day on, Jean lost his {memory / keys}’

3.3.4. The unspecific location of the event

- Once the interval is available, I-contexts license an unspecific temporal point within it in APD structures.
- The semantic properties of this temporal variable resemble those of free-choice items and other unspecific indefinites licensed in intensional contexts (Giannakidou 1998, 2001, 2013; Giannakidou & Quer 2013).

- (35) a. Sp. *El frío llegará {en cualquier momento / *entonces} a partir del sábado.*
 ‘Cold will arrive {at any moment / then} as of Saturday’
 b. Sp. *Te llamaré el martes {en cualquier momento / *a las 7} a partir de las cinco.*
 ‘I’ll call you {at any moment / at seven o’clock} as of Saturday’

4. Conclusions

- APD is a semantically complex two place preposition. It is built out of two main conceptual components: a LBSP and an OI. The OI is licensed...
 - a) ... on aspectual grounds in A-contexts.
 - b) ...though alternatives introduced by modals or intensional operators in I-contexts.
- Aspectual licensing predicts APD’s rejection in episodic contexts.
- In A-contexts, APD denotes a transition from a (non-)existing situation to another of the opposite polarity.
- APD’s internal argument provides LBSP. This argument introduces the OI where

the situation holds.

- I-contexts license an unspecific temporal variable in OI.

SOME CONSEQUENCES AND PERSPECTIVES

- 1) I-contexts crucially provide temporal content in APD structures because these require open intervals. Modals and other intensional operators contribute the necessary prospective unbound information, as in Condoravdi's (2002) 'temporal perspective' approach.
- 2) Aspectual verbs can only be properly described as "slicers" if complemented by bound predicates. Otherwise, the segment that the slicer function leaves out is semantically active (contrary to Verkuyl's 1999 analysis).
- 3) APD shows some interesting similarities with other units.
 - a) Coexistence of a (local) lexical licensing mechanism for some grammatical element, and some (at-distance) licensing operator for this very item is supposed to be a characteristic of the Romance subjunctive (Quer 1998, 2009). APD structures show that this "double licensing" is not so unique.
 - b) APD requires phases, as phasal verbs and adverbs do. If our analysis is on the right track, it supports Engerer's (2014: 256) hypothesis as regards "the ubiquity of phasal notions on all layers of grammar".
 - c) APD's distribution is close to that of FCIs (Giannakidou 2001). Interestingly enough, *any* is not excluded from episodic contexts (Duffley & Larivée 2010, 2015) either. Even so, its occurrence is lexically restricted to contexts of utter indeterminacy, the only ones compatible with its semantics.

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