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## Romance object-experiencer verbs

### From aktionsart to activity hierarchy

Rolf Kailuweit

The present paper deals with Romance objective-experiencer verbs (OE-verbs). I will show that the different subclasses fit into a continuum between a causative and an unaccusative pole. In order to describe their varying syntactic behaviour, a finer-grained analysis of the subevents they denote will elucidate that a traditional approach following the Vendler-Dowty classes of aktionsart will reach its limit when it comes to OE-verbs. My claim is that case assignment to the EXPERIENCER does not straightforwardly follow from the aktionsart class, but from the activity contrast between the two arguments of the verb. The presence or absence of causativity explains the differentiation between two types of EXPERIENCER: (a) a more passive causatively affected EXPERIENCER and (b) a less passive EXPERIENCER undergoing a change of state in a particular situation without being affected by an external CAUSER. In addition, we find a third type of OE-verb: prototypically unaccusative (ergative) verbs, such as verbs of liking, which select a more active EXPERIENCER expressing a subjective judgement. These three types constitute prototypical categories with fuzzy edges. Romance languages differ in the way they code the three types at the lexical level and at the level of the constructional inventory. The results can be formalised following the activity hierarchy approach (Kailuweit 2013).

**Keywords:** activity hierarchy, unaccusativity, causativity, verbs of emotion, experiencer

Since Belletti and Rizzi (1988), Romance object-EXPERIENCER verbs (OE-verbs) have been a central piece of evidence for theories dealing with mismatches in the linking system. While activity-verbs always realise the AGENT as the subject of the unmarked active construction, experiencer-verbs show surprising variation. The EXPERIENCER appears as the subject of verbs denoting love, hate or fear, but as the object of verbs of several other semantic classes ranging from anger to disgust, grief and fright, but also to pleasure, joy and happiness.

Belletti and Rizzi (1988) tried to prove that OE-verbs are unaccusative (ergative), realising a more passive THEME-argument as their subject at the expense of the more

active EXPERIENCER that is syntactically demoted and appears as a dative or (inherent) accusative complement. Nonetheless, it is not convincing to consider transitive OE-verbs to be unaccusative. In contrast to the dative-experiencer group, these verbs select 'have' for compound tenses in Italian and generally allow for a passive construction. In addition, these verbs form the group with the highest type frequency among verbs of emotion; not only in Romance languages, but also in English and German. We count several hundreds of transitive OE-verbs in these languages and only a couple of dozens of subject-EXPERIENCER (SE-verbs) and dative-EXPERIENCER verbs. Why should the group with the highest type (and token) frequency require an extremely marked syntactic structure? Hence, Grimshaw (1990) and Pesetsky (1995) claimed that (all transitive) OE-verbs are causative; a position that is still defended in recent studies (see Marín 2011 for an overview).

In the present paper, I will show that the picture is by far more complex. Neither unaccusativity nor causativity alone is sufficient to describe the syntactic behaviour of all (transitive) OE-verbs. Instead of clear-cut (sub-)classes, there seems to be a continuum between the causative and the unaccusative pole. The key to understanding the varying syntactic behaviour of OE-verbs lies in their complex event structure. A finer-grained analysis of the subevents they denote will elucidate that a traditional approach following the Vendler-Dowty classes of aktionsart will hit its limits when it comes to describing the event structure of OE-verbs. My claim is that case assignment to the EXPERIENCER does not straightforwardly follow from the aktionsart class, but from the activity contrast between the two arguments of the verb.

The first section of the paper focusses on the aktionsart of transitive OE-verbs. Section 2 accounts for the relation of aktionsart, agentivity and causativity. Section 3 widens the view considering dative EXPERIENCERS in Spanish and Italian and deals with the Spanish dative-accusative continuum. Section 4 introduces the activity hierarchy as a formal device for macrorole assignment and linking and applies it to the different constructions of Romance (especially Spanish and Italian) OE-verbs. Section 5 consists of a brief conclusion.

## 1. Aktionsart

As far as transitive OE-verbs are concerned, many authors have pointed out a contrast between agentive and non-agentive constructions (Ruwet 1972, 1995; Di Desidero 1993; Arad 1998; Mathieu 2000; Pylkkänen 2000; Martin 2002; Vermandere 2002; Kailuweit 2005; Biały 2005; Landau 2010; Marín 2011). The distribution of these constructions is unequal. All OE-Verbs allow for a non-agentive construction, since it is a defining feature of psych-verbs that their non-EXPERIENCER argument can be realised as a subordinate clause or as a non-finite verbal construction (Gross 1975):

- (1) Bill's owning a gun frightened Mary.

If the non-EXPERIENCER argument denotes a person, it seems to be a candidate for an AGENT role. However, several authors (Ruwet 1972, 1995; Di Desidero 1993; Mathieu 2000; Pylkkänen 2000; Martin 2002; Vermandere 2002; Kailuweit 2005, 2013; Landau 2010; Marín 2011) have shown that OE-verbs with two human arguments meet agentivity-tests to a different degree. In Kailuweit (2005), I claimed that there is no clear-cut differentiation of an agentive and non-agentive subclass. Transitive OE-verbs rather form a continuum between an agentive and a non-agentive pole. Some verbs, such as (two-place) verbs of interest are prototypical non-agentive verbs; others, such as verbs of intimidation are prototypically agentive.<sup>1</sup>

For some authors (Arad 1998; Pylkkänen 2000; Landau 2010), agentivity leads to significant differences in aktionsart. In addition, these differences have an impact on the linking properties. In the rest of this section, we will have a closer look at the aktionsart-properties of transitive OE-verbs. I will argue that traditional Vendler-Dowty-classes (states, activities, achievements and accomplishments) with their not always clear relation to agentivity and causativity are neither helpful to distinguish between agentive and non-agentive transitive OE-verbs nor to mark up the whole class of transitive OE-verbs among the other classes discussed in Belletti and Rizzi (1988). I will show that a finer-grained semantic analysis of event structure may explain the striking contradictions of aktionsart-based descriptions that we find in the literature.

Grimshaw (1990) first claimed that the linking-properties of transitive OE-verbs could be explained by aktionsart putting them into the accomplishments class. The reason for this hypothesis is based on the assumption that these verbs are causative. According to Dowty (1979:91; 124s), the fact that a predicate is an accomplishment and that it can be seen as an expression of a causal relation imply each other mutually. Dowty (1979) argues that all accomplishments are causatives and all causatives are accomplishments.

However, Van Valin and LaPolla (1997:97–107) show that in all of Vendler-Dowty's classes both causative and non-causative predicates can be found:

- (2) a. Bill's owning a gun frightened Mary. (*causative state*)
- b. The girl bounced the ball around the room. (*causative activity*)
- c. The cat popped the balloon. (*causative achievement*)
- d. The ice melted. (*non-causative accomplishment*)

(Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:97)

Following Van Valin and LaPolla (ibid.), transitive OE-verbs like *frighten* are not (causative) accomplishments, but causative states.

Arad (1998:6) and Pylkkänen (2000:419s) differentiate between agentive and non-agentive transitive OE-verbs in this context. Like Grimshaw (1990), they believe

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1. The *tough*-construction is a fair agentivity-test which brings about clear results for the prototypical cases. Compare (i) *Mary is easy to scare* and (ii) \**Mary is easy to interest*. However, there is an agentive three-place variant of *interest*: *to interest somebody in something*. The three-place construction meets the test (iii) *Mary is easy to interest in all kinds of projects*.

that agentive OE-verbs are (causative) accomplishments, whilst non-agentive verbs are causative states.<sup>2</sup> Landau (2010: 129) also only considers agentive constructions as (causative) accomplishments. The non-agentive constructions however – Landau does not commit to just one here – can be states or achievements. The hypothesis that transitive OE-verbs, whether or not they are agentive, are to be classified as achievements can be traced back to Van Voorst (1992) and was taken up by Cançado (1995) in her analysis of transitive OE-verbs in Brazilian Portuguese. Unlike Grimshaw (1990), Cançado (1995: 294–296) emphasises the independence of the features ‘agentive’ and ‘causative’ from the aktionsart ones. This being the case, both the agentive and the non-agentive constructions can be classified as causative achievements. To sum up, the positions represented in the literature are extremely heterogeneous: with regard to Vendler and Dowty’s aktionsart classes and the features ‘agentive’ and ‘causative’, they cover the entire range of possible classifications. Even the view that transitive OE-verbs are activities can be seen: this view was expressed by Härtl (2001)<sup>3</sup> and does not even appear to be too wayward depending on the criteria which are applied. Before looking at the status regarding the heterogeneous positions in the literature, some of them will be arranged again in a table:

**Table 1.** Classifications of transitive OE-verbs according to the Vendler-Dowty-classes

	Agentive	Causative	Accomplishments	States	Achievements	Activities
Arad (1998)	No	Yes		X		
Arad (1998)	Yes	Yes	X			
Cançado (1995)	Yes/No	Yes			X	
Grimshaw (1990)		Yes	X			
Härtl (2002)	Yes/No	No				X
Landau (2010)	Yes		X			
Landau (2010)	No			X	X	
Pylkkänen (2000)	No	Yes		X		
Pylkkänen (2000)	Yes	Yes	X			
Van Valin and LaPolla (1997)		Yes		X		
Van Voorst (1992, 1995)	No				X	

2. Pylkkänen (2000: 420) singles out the fact that causativity and stativity are compatible as an original finding of her work on Finnish OE-verbs. She does not mention the approach in Van Valin / LaPolla (1997).

3. Härtl considers most transitive OE-verbs as activities. There are a few individual cases of causative *achievements* like *verblüffen* ([to astound]) and *erschrecken* ([to frighten]) (2001: 191s).

Härtl (2001) highlights that verbs of emotion are inherently not prototypical causal relations.<sup>4</sup> He concludes from this that causality is fundamentally irrelevant for their linking behaviour. According to Härtl (2001:214), it is rather that their linking is determined by their aktionsart class. SE-verbs are inherently states, whilst transitive OE-verbs are activities. Curiously, Härtl does not just see OE-verbs with an agentive non-EXPERIENCER argument (STIMULUS) as an activity, but also, in a broader sense, non-agentive OE-verbs. For the last group, it is the activity of the EXPERIENCER, which fulfils the truth conditions of the activity model (Härtl 2001:214). The ‘activity’ of the EXPERIENCER, which Härtl alludes to, consists in an act of perception (ibid.: 197). Perception can be related to a certain control. However, if we attribute this ‘activity’ to the EXPERIENCER in non-agentive constructions, it would be extremely unclear why this argument is realised as an object and not a subject as it is with other durative atelic activities (watching TV, eating pizza). Furthermore, it is also questionable whether transitive OE-verbs with an agentive non-EXPERIENCER argument can be classified as activities. In line with Marín (2011), I argued in Kailuweit (2005:195) that authentic dynamicity tests, such as combining them with adverbs like *quickly*, *slowly* etc. (cf. Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:94), produce extremely marked sentences. Marín (2011) confirms this analysis for Spanish:

- (3) \*Juan {agobió + molestó} a María  
 Juan {overwhelm-PST.3SG + annoy-PST.3SG} María  
 lentamente (Marín 2011:38)  
 slowly  
 [Juan slowly {overwhelmed + annoyed} María]

The fact that transitive OE-verbs do not pass the dynamicity tests, also argues against analysing them as (causative) accomplishments (cf. Van Valin and LaPolla *ibid.*). Tenny (1994:64–68), who takes up Grimshaw’s (1990) hypothesis that transitive OE-verbs are inherently accomplishments, tries to prove this with the help of the Vendler-Dowty tests. The combination with *slowly* seems to be particularly marked:

- (4) The truth interested John only slowly, since he was not imaginative by nature and was slow to see its implications. (Tenny 1994:66)<sup>5</sup>

Through selecting the verb *interest*, Tenny is choosing a verb which inherently cannot be used agentively. However, as can be seen, even with a possible agentive interpretation, the results are not much better. Other tests for accomplishments, which take telicity into account, equally lead to dubious results. Even in potentially agentive contexts,

4. As we will see in the next section this seems to be correct.

5. With this example, Tenny (1994:66) acknowledges that: “[it] may not be felicitous for some speakers”.

combination with adverbs like *in an hour* (Dowty 1979: 60; Van Valin and LaPolla 1997: 94) is hardly acceptable, against Tenny's judgement.<sup>6</sup>

- (5) The truth frightened John in five minutes. (Tenny 1994: 65)

In Kailuweit (2005: 195–196), I claimed that the 'Imperfective Paradox' (Dowty 1979: 57)<sup>7</sup> argues even more clearly against seeing transitive OE-verbs as accomplishments. The Spanish data from Marín (2011) confirm this view:

- (6) Pierre está acosando / agobiando /  
 Pierre be-AUX-PRS.3SG harass-DUR / burden-DUR /  
 animando / consolando / fastidiando /  
 encourage-DUR/ comfort-DUR / annoy-DUR /  
 importunando / molestando / oprimiendo a María.  
 badger-DUR/ molest-DUR / oppress-DUR to María  
 [Pierre is harassing / burdening / encouraging / comforting / annoying /  
 badgering / molesting / oppressing María]  
 → Pierre ha acosado/  
 Pierre have-AUX-PRS.3SG harass-PP  
 agobiado ... a María. (Marín 2011: 39)  
 burden-PP... to María.  
 [Pierre harassed/burdened... María]

Most transitive OE-verbs behave in the same way on the relevant tests: they clearly differ from accomplishments like *build*, *learn* or *melt*.<sup>8</sup> Just a few transitive OE-verbs can be classified as accomplishments in their agentive use: these include verbs of humiliation and seduction (Marín *ibid.*).

Two options remain for discussion. Transitive OE-verbs could be either achievements or states. According to Ruwet (1995: 31), classifying them as achievements (Van Voorst 1952) seems to be counter-intuitive for most verbs. For a start, Van Voorst's claim is based on an unusual understanding of the achievements aktionsart class. Van Voorst discusses *frighten* as a guiding example and notes that: "The transition from not being frightened to being frightened is the beginning of an event, not the end [...]. This is very much like other achievements, such as *see*" (Van Voorst 1992: 84). However, the verb *see* is only an achievement in the sense of "catching sight of something". When it simply means 'see', it is a state (Dowty 1979: 66–68). The main criterion, which distinguishes achievements from other aktionsart classes is

6. Härtl (2001: 158) also comes to this conclusion: (i) \**Peter ängstigte Ines innerhalb von nur 5 Minuten* [Peter frightened Ines within 5 minutes only]; (ii) \**Der Bildband begeisterte Petra in einer Stunde* [The illustrated book enthralled Petra within one hour] (*ibid.*, examples 137a–b).

7. "If  $\phi$  is an accomplishment verb, then  $x$  is (now)  $\phi$ ing entails that  $x$  has not yet  $\phi$ ed" (Dowty 1979: 57).

8. See the portuguese verbs in Cançado (1995: 294).

punctuality (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:93). Prototypical achievements are *arrive*, *die*, *notice*, *reach* (Dowty 1979:68) or *gagner* ([win]) (Ruwet 1995:31). Many achievements imply a resultant state without explicitly denoting it. Due to their punctuality they cannot be combined with terminative verbs like *stop* without demanding a habitual reading (Dowty 1979:59). They are just as incompatible with time-span adverbials like *for an hour* (Dowty 1979:58), or alternatively can only be interpreted habitually. A number of transitive OE-verbs clearly cannot be counted as achievements on the basis of these tests, regardless of whether the verbs are used agentively or not. In combination with terminative verbs or adverbial expressions of duration, they do not necessarily need to be interpreted habitually:

- (7) a. ... dejó de exasperar a don Fermín  
 ... cease-PST.3SG to exasperate-INF don Fermín  
 aquella onerosa visita (CREA, Caballero Bonald)  
 that onerous visit  
 [... that onerous visit ceased to exasperate don Fermín]
- b. ... dejó de preocupar-me el silencio o el ruido  
 ... cease-PST.3SG to worry-INF me the silence or the noise  
 de la máquina de escribir (CREA, Kociancich)  
 of the machine to write  
 [... the silence or the noise of the typewriter ceased to worry me]
- c. Aquel viejo pudor dejó de atormentar-te (CREA, Martín-Vigil)  
 That old shame cease-PST.3SG to haunt-INF you  
 [That old feeling of shame stopped haunting you]
- (8) a. “Mickey” también le exasperaba durante la operación  
 “Mickey” also him exasperate-PST.3SG during the operation  
 con su voz de gallipavo (CREA, Arrabal)  
 with his voice of turkey  
 [“Mickey” also exasperated him during the operation with his shrill voice]
- b. ... una niña de 10 años cuyo estado de salud  
 ... a-F.SG child-F.SG of 10 years whose state of health  
 preocupó durante días a su padre (CREA, *El Nuevo Herald*)  
 worry-3SG during days her father  
 [... a little girl of 10 years old whose health worried her father for days]
- c. ... la sombra de Ulla no dejó de atormentarme  
 ... the shadow of Ulla not cease-PST.3SG to haunt-INF me  
 durante algunas semanas (CREA, Fernández Cubas)  
 during some weeks  
 [... the shadow of Ulla didn't stop haunting me for weeks]

Another test, which Ruwet (1995:31) puts forward, also shows that transitive OE-verbs generally differ from prototypical achievements; they allow combinations with gradient and intensifying adverbs:



- (9) a. ¿Para qué atormentar – lo más?, pienso, y  
 for what torment-INF him more?, think-PRS-1SG., and  
 decido no decir- le nada (CREA, Zaragoza)  
 decide-PRS-1SG. not tell-INF him nothing  
 [Why torment him more? I have considered it, and have decided not to  
 tell him anything]
- b. ... esta sospecha nos preocupa un poco  
 ... this suspicion us worry-PRS.3SG a little (CREA, *El País*)  
 [... this suspicion worries us a little bit]

From the examples above, it seems to follow Marín's claim (2011) that transitive OE-verbs can mostly be interpreted as states. In relation to non-agentive constructions, Pykkänen (2000:425–430) notes that they have the characteristics of stage-level-states; states which are variable and potentially of limited duration. Transitive OE-verbs, like stage-level-predicates, but in contrast to individual-level-predicates, can appear in the progressive:

- (10) a. Supongo que sabes lo que me  
 presume-PRS.1SG that know-PRS.2SG that which me  
 está atormentando (CREA, Allende)  
 be-AUX-PRS.3SG torment-DUR  
 [I assume you know what is worrying me]
- b. ... la tenacidad del alemán le ha  
 ... the persistence of the German him have-AUX-PRS.3SG  
 ido exasperando poco a poco (CREA, Sampedro)  
 go-PP exasperate-DUR little by little  
 [... the persistence of the German has been exasperating him little  
 by little]

Nevertheless, state-level-states are to be distinguished from activities, as they cannot be the response to the questions: "What is happening here?" or "What is going on?" In Kailuweit (2005:198), I showed that non-agentive OE-verbs behave more like states, whilst agentive constructions are more like activities. For Spanish, this is confirmed by the Vanhoe's data (2002: 166):

- (11) a. Ocurrió que me interesaron la poesía  
 occur-PST.3SG that me interest-PST-3PL the poetry  
 y la música  
 and the music  
 [It so happened that I was interested in poetry and music]
- b. ?Ocurrió que me molestó no poder  
 occur-PST.3SG that me bother-PST.3SG not can-INF  
 ayudar a la gente.  
 help-INF the people.  
 [It happened to bother me that I couldn't help the people]

- c. Ocurrió que fascinó a todo el mundo  
 Occur-PST.3SG that fascinate-PST.3SG all the world  
 con su labia.  
 with his talkativeness  
 [It happened that he fascinated everybody with his gift of the gab]

To sum up, I have shown that attempts to assign OE-verbs to one of the Vendler-Dowty classes with the help of relevant tests do not lead to fully satisfying results. This explains their differing classifications in the literature. As we have seen, not every position can be equally well justified, however, none of the positions have shown to be completely wayward.

The Vendler-Dowty classes are rough grids for classifying the state of affairs that have generally proved to be useful for delimiting the most important types of events (Verkuyl 2002; Filip 2012). However, complex cases, such as the agentive and non-agentive transitive OE-verbs simply cannot be classified just with the help of the usual aktionsart tests.

This complexity therefore touches on the fact that OE-verbs do not denote two subevents which strictly follow each other ( $s_1 < s_2$ ), but two overlapping parts ( $s_1 \circ s_2$ ).<sup>9</sup> Arad (1998: 5) and Pykkänen's (2000: 432) analysis of this fact forms a starting point for a finer-grained semantic description of OE-verbs' event structure. The following diagram for non-agentive constructions of transitive OE-verbs represents their analysis:

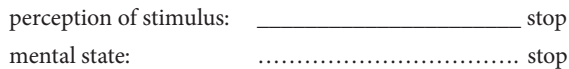


Figure 1. Event structure of non-agentive transitive OE-verbs according to Arad (1998: 5)

However, what exactly perception means in their approach remains open. It seems to be clear, that it is not sensory perception. Emotions such as anger, disgust, grief, fright, joy or happiness arise in a specific situation. They are episodic emotions in the sense of Blum (1980) and Nissenbaum (1985).<sup>10</sup> The emotion itself – the mental state – may persist for an undetermined amount of time beyond this situation. The act of perceiving an annoying situation, for example, and the feeling of anger do not necessarily have

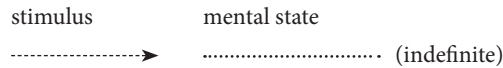
9. Cf. Pustajovsky (1995: 69): "< is strict partial order, ° is overlap".

10. The terms *episodic* and *non-episodic*, as Nissenbaum (1985: 95) also notes, come from Blum (1980: 13). According to Blum, people have episodic emotions "on specific occasions, fairly delimited in time". Without referring to Blum or Nissenbaum, Pykkänen (2000: 429) emphasises that Finnish verbs like *rakasta* ([love]), *pitä* ([like]) or *vihaa* ([hate]) "cannot easily be constructed as episodic". Pykkänen sees this as a criterion to view these verbs as *individual-level predicates* following Carlson (1978) and Kratzer (1989) (cf. *ibid.*: 425–430). From a semantic perspective, however, this is not fully convincing. Non-episodic emotions are also not inalienable characteristics (see also Wanner 2001: 386).

the same temporal scope. What persists along with the emotion of anger itself may be the awareness of the annoying situation, hence a second and parallel mental state.

With episodic emotions such as anger, the emotional state begins at the moment the annoying situation is perceived. Some verbs may lexicalise the punctual onset of the emotion. Therefore, on tests relating to temporal scope, they appear to be more similar to prototypical achievements than other verbs of emotion. However, due to the fact that OE-verbs also generally denote the continuation of the emotion for a shorter or longer span of time, the results of punctuality-tests are not clear. In addition, the possibility of continued intensification can be explained in this way. In principle, a situation can annoy and hurt you more and more the longer you think about it.

With regard to the agentive constructions of transitive OE-verbs, Arad (1998:5) proposes the following diagram.



**Figure 2.** Event structure of agentive transitive OE-verbs according to Arad (1998:5)

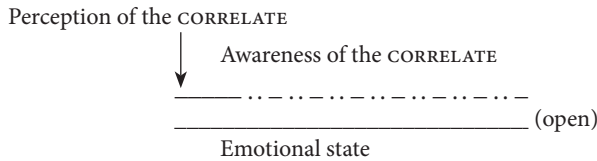
Arad justifies the event-structure illustrated in Figure 2 with the claim that agentive OE-verbal constructions are accomplishments. An AGENT/CAUSER “does its job” and as soon as the change in the emotional state of the EXPERIENCER is achieved, the new emotional state holds independently of the stimulus. However, we have already seen that with just few exceptions – verbs of seduction and humiliation – transitive OE-verbs cannot be categorised as accomplishments. They do not show the “Imperfective-Paradox” and cannot be combined with adverbials like *in an hour*. How could we explain the failure of accomplishment tests with regard to the event structure of agentive OE-verb constructions?

Just as with non-agentive constructions, agentive ones generally denote the punctual onset of the emotional state in the moment of a triggering perception. The difference lies in the fact that what the EXPERIENCER perceives is not just a state of affairs, but intentional acting. The emotional state lasts for an indefinite time span throughout the duration of the deliberate action. For as long as, for example, intentionally provoked anger lasts, it is related to the awareness of the provocative action as a mental state. Therefore, there is no fundamental difference between agentive and non-agentive constructions. Although the provocateur has fulfilled her or his function as an AGENT, the awareness of her or his provocative behaviour remains for an undetermined time as the CORRELATE of the emotional state. It line with Pesetsky (1995), we can distinguish between the semantic roles of CAUSER and CORRELATE (TARGET in Pesetsky’s terms<sup>11</sup>). A potentially annoying situation may or may not exist before the

11. Following Ruwet (1994), I prefer CORRELATE to TARGET, because the second argument of verbs of emotion always denotes a state of affairs that the emotion is related to. If somebody provokes anger, the provocation is not the person itself, but the provocative behaviour. Even if

EXPERIENCER perceives it as a CORRELATE of anger. The same holds for an annoying behaviour. Only at a certain point does this behaviour trigger anger and become the CORRELATE of the emotion. The awareness of the CORRELATE (whether it is an intentional behaviour or not) is a mental state that usually accompanies the emotional state. Nonetheless, if the emotion holds on for a longer span of time, the awareness of the CORRELATE may fade in our memory. We have all had the experience of being in an excellent or bad mood without really knowing why (any more).

I, therefore, propose the following diagram (Figure 3) to represent the event structure of transitive OE-verbs:



**Figure 3.** Event structure of transitive OE-verb constructions (agentive or non-agentive)

To summarise: The hypothesis put forward by Arad (1998), Pytkänen (2000) and Landau (2010) that agentive and non-agentive constructions of transitive OE-verbs split into different aktionsart classes which explain their syntactic properties has not been confirmed. Both constructions denote a punctual change of the emotional state of the EXPERIENCER in a given situation that constitutes the CORRELATE of the emotion. In addition, they also denote the emotional state in its temporal extension as the parallel mental state of awareness of the CORRELATE. Therefore, they do not properly fit into any of the Vendler-Dowty classes of aktionsart.

## 2. Causativity

In this section, I will deal with the relation of agentivity, aktionsart and causativity. As Van Valin and LaPolla (1997) have proved, causativity is neither related to a special type of aktionsart (accomplishments) nor is it an aktionsart of its own. The confusion that leads to identifying accomplishments with causativity is due to the fact that the prototypical case of causation conceptualises it as the capacity of intentional human manipulation of surrounding objects (Searle 1983: 126–132). From early childhood onwards, we learn that we can tear down blankets, throw away a bottle, drop a toy, flip a light switch, button our shirt, open a door, kill an ant, etc. Hence, verbs representing causative accomplishments (or achievements) with an agentive argument denote these

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we love somebody, what we love is in the end a set of properties of this person and, therefore, a state of affairs. This explains why verbs of emotion can always choose a subordinate clause or an infinite verbal construction as their non-EXPERIENCER complement.

kinds of prototypical causations. Agentive constructions of OE-verbs seem to correspond to the prototypical model of causation. An AGENT-CAUSER provokes a change of the emotional state of the EXPERIENCER.

However, provoking a change of emotional state in another person is not a prototypical case of causation. We may try to manipulate (the emotions of) other people, but we will discover that this does not always work. An annoying behaviour may leave a calm person unconcerned and whatever we do, there is no guarantee at all that we could make a person fall in love. Hence, the question would be, to which extent do languages lexicalise the emergence of emotions by means of causativity? The question is not easy to answer except for those languages that code causativity morphologically.

Arad (1998:17–21) classifies the agentive as well as the non-agentive construction as causative because languages such as Japanese, Hebrew or Finnish code both constructions with causative morphology. Dealing with Finnish data, Pylkkänen (2000) agrees with this view, although in her approach, causativity is not relevant for linking. The linking of the agentive constructions follows from the role hierarchy AGENT > EXPERIENCER (Pylkkänen 2000:437s). By contrast, Pylkkänen (2000:440s) analyses the non-agentive construction in line with Belletti and Rizzi (1988). Reinhart (2001:10; 20) considers all transitive OE-verbs causative. In her approach, the inherent causativity explains the linking of the EXPERIENCER to the object position in agentive and non-agentive constructions, but only an agentive construction realises the feature CAUSE externally (ibid.: 18). Landau (2010) does not explicitly mention the (lack of) causativity of non-agentive constructions. His approach that considers the EXPERIENCER of the non-agentive constructions a LOCATIVE does not really go well with a causative interpretation of the CORRELATE. However, Cifuentes' (this volume) approach seems to work out Landau's ideas to explain the causativity of the non-agentive construction. Dealing only with Spanish data, he observes that most Spanish OE-verbs allow for a transitive construction with an accusative EXPERIENCER and an intransitive construction with a dative EXPERIENCER. He considers the accusative construction as prototypically agentive and claims that it denotes a causatively effected change of state of the EXPERIENCER. In contrast, he argues that the non-agentive construction with a locative-like dative EXPERIENCER incorporates the emotional state of the EXPERIENCER as the causatively affected argument.

At first glance, this approach looks like a very elegant solution, at least for Spanish data. To a certain extent, the two constructions seem to constitute a metaphorical version of locative alternation. In the prototypical cases of locative alternation – *Bill sprayed red paint on the wall* ~ *Bill sprayed the wall (with red paint)* – the oblique LOCATION argument is converted into a causatively affected direct object. The same could be said for the EXPERIENCER of the Spanish dative construction which appears as the causatively affected direct object of the transitive construction:

- (12) a. *A Juan le enfadaron mis historias*  
           to Juan him upset-PST.3PL my stories  
           [My stories upset Juan]

- b. *Lo enfadé* (con mis historias)  
 him upset-PST.1SG (with my stories)  
 [I upset him with my stories]

It follows from this view that the dative-EXPERIENCER construction seems to be the basic construction. As Cifuentes (this volume) proves, many Spanish OE-Verbs are derivations, which incorporate a noun or adjective denoting an emotional state. This emotional state is caused by the non-EXPERIENCER argument.

Nonetheless, Cifuentes' approach does not account for several problematic points. Firstly, there is no explanation of the fact that the causatively affected element of the transitive construction is the EXPERIENCER and not the incorporated emotional state (any more). Unlike the THEME-argument in locative alternation, that is syntactically demoted from a direct object to a facultative oblique, the derived predicate with the incorporated element is formally identical in both constructions. In addition, it would be counter-intuitive to pretend that the predicate in the transitive construction undergoes a certain kind of semantic bleaching that obliterates its derived origin. The lexical semantics of the predicate – the particular emotional state that it denotes – seems to be the same in both constructions.

Secondly, Cifuentes (this volume) concedes that the transitive construction is not always agentive in Spanish. Nonetheless, he does not offer a different analysis for the agentive and the non-agentive variant of the transitive construction, but restricts his causative-locative approach to the intransitive construction.

Thirdly, if the EXPERIENCER appears basically as a locative dative for verbs denoting anger, disgust, grief, fright, pleasure, joy or happiness in Spanish, why is this argument almost exclusively coded as an accusative in other Romance languages? I will come back to the last two problems in the following section.

### 3. From dative to accusative

From a morphosyntactic point of view, most Romance languages show a clear-cut distinction of accusative and dative OE-verbs. In French and Italian, verbs of liking (*plaire / piacere*) are prototypical representatives of the dative class (Kailuweit 2005). Spanish is different, allowing OE-verbs to appear either in an intransitive or in a transitive construction (Whitley 1995; Martín 1998; Kailuweit 2007; Cifuentes this volume). However, there is no (completely) free variation in Spanish. First, the prototypical dative verb *gustar* ([like]) never appears in a transitive construction (Whitley 1995). Second, OE-verbs allowing for an agentive subject are rarely constructed with the dative in Latin American Spanish, while non-agentive OE-verbs rarely appear in the accusative construction in European Spanish (Kailuweit 2007). How could we explain these restrictions and affinities?

My claim is that from a semantic point of view, not only should two different types of EXPERIENCERS – a causally effected and a “locative” – be distinguished, but

three. The so-called locative EXPERIENCER splits into two types represented by the Spanish *gustar* ([like]) and *preocupar* ([worry]), respectively. The EXPERIENCER of verbs of liking is not affected in the same way that the EXPERIENCER of verbs of anger, disgust, grief, fright, joy or happiness is. Anger, disgust, grief, fright, joy or happiness are prototypical emotions in the sense of Ekman (1994). They share properties such as quick onset, brief duration, unbidden occurrence, specific physical sensations and reactions, such as a distinctive physiology. They are also present in other primates (Ekman 1994: 16). In contrast, verbs of liking denote an emotion that could range from general preferences to situation-related, episodic pleasure. However, even in the last case, the fact of liking something is not necessarily accompanied with physical sensations and reactions. The difference between pleasure and joy consists precisely in this fact. The EXPERIENCER of verbs of liking, even in their episodic reading, equals the EXPERIENCER of prototypical SE-verbs, such as verbs of loving and hating. A person who likes something expresses a subjective judgement, based on comparison and reflexion. We may ask ourselves or doubt whether we like a shirt that our friend has bought or if we like a song we are listening to. We do not doubt whether something scares or upsets us. Anger or fear are overwhelming experiences, they are not based on judgements.

Hence, if we determine, in line with Dowty's (1991) protorole approach, the activity degree of an argument in a continuum between an active and a passive pole, the dative EXPERIENCER of *gustar* ([like]) is more active than the dative EXPERIENCER of *preocupar* ([worry]). Morphosyntactic evidence that there are two types of dative EXPERIENCERS comes from Italian. The Italian verbs of disturbance *disturbare* ([disturb]) and *scomodare* ([incommode]) exceptionally allow for a dative EXPERIENCER if the verb denotes smaller inconveniences:

- (13) a. Le            disturba            se fumo?  
 You-FORM disturb-PRS.3SG if smoke-PRS.1SG  
 [Do you mind if I smoke?]
- b. Se a te    non scomoda,            dovresti  
 if to you not bother-PRS.3SG, shall-POT-2SG  
 restituire – mi il libro  
 return-INF me the book  
 [If you don't mind, would you give me back the book?]

While Italian *piacere* ([like]) is an unaccusative verb selecting *essere* ([be]) as the auxiliary for compound tenses (Belletti and Rizzi 1988), *disturbare* ([disturb]) and *scomodare* ([incommode]) construct the compound tenses with *avere* ([have]). That these verbs are, thus, unergative, even in the dative construction, follows from the fact, that there is a stronger activity contrast between the two arguments. Their EXPERIENCER may undergo a change of state in a particular situation, although this would be rather unexpected. Therefore, the CORRELATE is not the CAUSER of the emotion. When we ask a person politely whether we are allowed to smoke, we expect the person not to be disturbed. If the answer is "yes, I would mind", we would localise the responsibility



for the feeling of being disturbed in the sphere of this particular person and not in our behaviour.<sup>12</sup> The same holds for a polite request to give back a book that someone has borrowed. If this person declares that giving it back is inconvenient, we will not feel responsible for her or his emotional state. Hence, three types of EXPERIENCERS can be distinguished: the most passive one is a causatively affected EXPERIENCER, the most active one an EXPERIENCER expressing a subjective judgement. In between, there is an EXPERIENCER undergoing a change of state without being affected by an external cause. The internal disposition of the EXPERIENCER is responsible for the change of the emotional state in a given situation to a higher degree.

In Spanish and in Italian, the three types are coded in a different way. To understand the syntax of Spanish and Italian OE-verbs, it is necessary to distinguish between the lexical level and the level of constructions. In both languages, constructions such as passive constructions, the tough-construction or the imperative construction code a strong activity contrast of the participants and therefore hint at the fact that the EXPERIENCER is conceptualised as causatively affected. Some OE-verbs enter these constructions naturally; others do not fit in very well. Verbs of liking are clearly incompatible with these constructions.

The accusative and the dative construction also code particular types of EXPERIENCERS, but the coding is not identical in Spanish and Italian. As we have seen, we can easily distinguish two subconstructions of the dative construction by means of auxiliary choice in Italian. The unaccusative dative construction codes the most active EXPERIENCER, while the unergative construction corresponds to an EXPERIENCER with a middle degree of activity. However, as for Spanish, there is no clear morphological hint to distinguish the EXPERIENCERS of type (a) and type (b). Apart from semantic analysis of the emotion denoted, the only criterion is compatibility of different constructions with a specific verb. The dative EXPERIENCER of verbs that never allows for an accusative EXPERIENCER is the most active one (type c). With regard to the accusative construction, the coding is complex. In Italian, variation with the dative construction is restricted to very few verbs. Apart from *disturbare* ([disturb]) and *scomodare* ([incommode]), *soddisfare* ([satisfy]) allows for the two constructions. In contrast, there are dozens of OE-Verbs that do not fit well into the agentivity constructions. Some of them seem to be almost incompatible with these constructions – *allietare* ([cheer]), *attirare* ([attract]), *attrarre* ([allure]), *colpire* ([strike]), *consumare* ([consume]), *divorare* ([devour]), *interessare* ([interest]), *preoccupare* ([worry]), *rivoltare* ([revolt]), *sconvolgere* ([upset]), *trascinare* ([draw]) (Kailuweit 2005:298–299). If we consider with Dowty (1991) “causing a change of state” a proto-agent property and “being causatively affected” a proto-patient property, these verbs should be classified not only as non-agentive, but also as non-causative. Their EXPERIENCER is of a middle degree of activity. The lack of a high activity contrast between the two participants explains the psych-properties highlighted by Belletti and Rizzi (1988). It is interesting

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12. Nowadays, giving permission to smoke may not be as natural as it was decades ago. But the point is, that if somebody asks for permission, s/he will not expect a refusal knowing that the other person will probably consider smoke severely disturbing.



that at least *disturbare* ([disturb]) and *soddisfare* ([satisfy]) meet the agentivity-tests when constructed with an accusative EXPERIENCER. For these verbs the contrast of the two EXPERIENCERS is lexicalised.

With regard to Spanish, Marín compiles a list of clearly non-agentive OE-Verbs:

- (14) *aburrir* ([bore]), *acongojar* ([distress]), *afligir* ([upset]), *angustiar* ([frighten]), *anonadar* ([overwhelm]), *apasionar* ([excite]), *apenar* ([grieve]), *apesadumbrar* ([sadden]), *cabrear* ([infuriate]), *compungir* ([feel remorseful]), *conmocionar* ([shake]), *consternar* ([dismay]), *deprimir* ([depress]), *desesperar* ([despair]), *disgustar* ([disgust]), *enfadar* ([anger]), *enfurecer* ([enrage]), *enojar* ([annoy]), *enorgullecer* ([fill with pride]), *entristecer* ([sadden]), *entusiasmar* ([enthuse]), *fascinar* ([fascinate]), *(des)ilusionar* ([disillusion] / [delude]), *indignar* ([outrage]), *interesar* ([interest]), *mosquear* ([annoy]), *obnubilar* ([confuse]), *obsesionar* ([obsess]), *ofuscar* ([confuse]), *preocupar* ([worry]).

(Marín 2011: 33)

Marín (ibid.) also lists the verbs that are prototypically agentive:

- (15) *acosar* ([harass]), *agobiar* ([overwhelm]), *aliviar* ([alleviate]), *amedrentar* ([intimidate]), *(des)animar* ([discourage] / [encourage]), *apaciguar* ([pacify]), *asombrar* ([amaze]), *asustar* ([frighten]), *atemorizar* ([frighten]), *confundir* ([confuse]), *consolar* ([console]), *contrariar* ([oppose]), *deshonrar* ([dis] honour), *deslumbrar* ([dazzle]), *(des)motivar* ([de]motivate), *distraer* ([distract]), *entretener* ([entertain]), *espantar* ([shock]), *estimular* ([stimulate]), *excitar* ([excite]), *fastidiar* ([annoy]), *frustrar* ([frustrate]), *humillar* ([humiliate]), *importunar* ([pester]), *molestar* ([bother]), *ofender* ([offend]), *oprimir* ([oppress]), *perturbar* ([disturb]), *seducir* ([seduce]), *sorprender* ([surprise]).

This is not the place to discuss all these verbs in detail. My hypotheses would be that the non-agentive verbs rarely enter the accusative construction in European Spanish and that they are those which allow variation in Latin American Spanish. In contrast, I assume that the agentive verbs are strictly transitive in Latin American Spanish and allow for variation in European Spanish. Hence, in contrast to the Italian facts, morphological variation in Spanish does not indicate a clear distinction of a causatively affected (type a) and a non-causatively affected (type b) EXPERIENCER at the lexical level. As Cifuentes (this volume) points out, the accusative construction even appears with non-agentive subjects. Hence, there seems to be variation with clear tendencies – in Europe, the dative construction is more frequent, in Latin America it is the accusative construction. In any case, if an activity contrast with the two constructions is perceived, the accusative construction will be related to a higher activity contrast and the dative construction to a lower activity contrast. This observation is in line with Cifuentes' (this volume) analysis.

To sum up this section: From a semantic point of view, there are three types of EXPERIENCER: (a) a causatively affected EXPERIENCER, (b) an EXPERIENCER undergoing a change of state in a particular situation without being affected by an external CAUSER and (c) a more active EXPERIENCER expressing a subjective judgement. The three types

are prototypical categories with fuzzy edges. The boundaries are shifting, because, on the one hand, changes in the emotional state are not prototypical cases of causation (fluid borders between type (a) and (b)), and, on the other hand, as in the case of episodic pleasure, subjective judgements may occur in particular situations (fluid borders between type (b) and (c)). Romance OE-verbs code one or two of the three types at the lexical level. At the level of the constructional inventory, Romance languages code the types in different forms and to a different degree. There is no clear-cut morphosyntactic coding of type (a) and type (b). Both are represented by the accusative construction in all Romance languages.<sup>13</sup>

In Italian, there are two types of dative constructions, an unaccusative and an unergative one, corresponding to type (c) and (b) respectively. Nonetheless, the accusative construction also codes type (b) (the *preoccupare*-class of Belletti and Rizzi's (1988)). In European Spanish, there is a clear tendency to use the dative-construction, which is prototypically restricted to type (b) and type (c). However, even type (a) is occasionally represented with the dative-construction. In contrast, in Latin American Spanish, there is case-variation for type (b).

#### 4. Activity hierarchy

How could we formalise the results of the last section? In Kailuweit (2005, 2007 and 2013) I worked out a formalism to represent different degrees of activity for each argument of a predicate. I proposed an activity hierarchy based on feature-value-pairings. The approaches of Rozwadowska (1988) and Reinhart (2002) were the main sources of inspiration. Following Rozwadowska (1988), activity hierarchy takes three features into account: causative and/or control [c], mental (sentient) [m] and resultative (change of state) [r]. In line with Reinhart (2002), activity hierarchy allows the features to assume three values +, – and ±. Hence,  $3^3 = 27$  combinations are possible. The most important difference between activity hierarchy and the approaches of Rozwadowska (1988) and Reinhart (2002) is the fact that the features are weighted (see Table 2). The feature [c] is a strong actor feature, [m] is a weak actor feature and [r] is a strong undergoer feature. The presence [+] of a strong feature will duplicate the value of the presence of a weak feature. If an argument is underspecified for one feature [±], the value will be half of the [+] value.

Table 2. Semantic role features and values

+c	±c	–c	+m	±m	–m	–r	±r	+r
4	2	0	2	1	0	0	–2	–4

13. In contrast, Hungarian codes type (a) with a causative-marker *-t*, i.e. *bánt-t* ('upset-CAUS'), which is absent with type (b), i.e. *érdekel* ([interest]) (Michael Johnstone, Role and Reference Grammar Discussion List, 12.05.2001).

Weighing the features reduces the 27 possible combinations to eleven different degrees of activity. The combination [+c+m-r] represents the prototypical actor with the value  $4+2+0 = 6$ , while the prototypical undergoer corresponds to a combination with the value  $[-c-m+r] 0+0-4 = -4$ . Nine intermediate summations are mathematically possible. Once the degree of activity of each argument of a predicate is detected, the assignment of generalised semantic roles (GSR) and the linking of the argument to syntactic functions follow directly. If the construction is transitive, the active-GSR (actor) is assigned to the most active argument and the passive GSR (undergoer) to the most passive one. An active construction selects the actor as the subject and the undergoer as the direct object (marked by accusative case). If the construction is intransitive, only one GSR is assigned. Predicates denoting a stative subevent select an undergoer, which is realised as the subject. Since OE-verbs have stative subevents in their event-structure, they always select an undergoer.

Let us now consider the different classes of Romance OE-verbs. We have seen that the CORRELATE may or may not be the CAUSER of the change of the EXPERIENCER's emotional state. The difference can be easily represented by the following two feature-value-clusters: [+c-m-r] for the CAUSER-CORRELATE and for the CORRELATE that is not a CAUSER [-c-m-r].

Representing the three different types of EXPERIENCERS is more difficult. Should they correspond to three different feature-value-pairs? The following consideration will explain why this is not the case in the activity hierarchy approach. The solution I proposed in Kailuweit (2005, 2013) predicts that an EXPERIENCER undergoing a change of state is represented by the feature-value-cluster [-c+m+r], independent of causative affection. Predicates with a CAUSER+CORRELATE in their argument structure show a high activity contrast between the two arguments (degree -2 for the EXPERIENCER and degree 4 for the CAUSER+CORRELATE). Hence, the GSR assignment and linking follow directly.

- (16) Italian *offendere* ([offend]):  $([-c+m+r]EXP = -2 \Rightarrow \text{undergoer},$   
 $[+c-m-r]COR+CAU = 4 \Rightarrow \text{actor})$

Predicates without a CAUSER in their argument structure show a low activity contrast between the CORRELATE and the EXPERIENCER argument (degree -2 for the EXPERIENCER and degree 0 for the CORRELATE). The low contrast explains the “psych-properties” in the sense of Belletti and Rizzi (1988), but the CORRELATE is still more active than the EXPERIENCER. Therefore, it appears as the subject of a transitive construction:

- (17) Italian *preoccupare* ([to worry someone]):  $([-c+m+r]EXP = -2 \Rightarrow \text{UND},$   
 $[-c-m-r]COR = 0 = \text{actor})$

The representation of the Italian *piacere* and Spanish *gustar* ([to like]) is problematic because they can be non-episodic or episodic, according to context. As a non-episodic predicate, *piacere/gustar* would obtain the feature-value-cluster  $([\pm c+m-r]EXP = 4, [-c-m-r]COR = 0)$  like *amare/querer* ([to love]). In the episodic use, [r] should be [+] and would therefore neutralise the value of the actor-features

$[\pm c+m]$ :  $2+2-4 = 0$ . The same degree of activity would be attributed to both arguments, the EXPERIENCER and the CORRELATE, thus rendering GSR-assignment undecidable.

In Kailuweit (2013), I proposed ignoring the  $[r]$  value of a  $[+m]$  argument in the case of a draw. Hence, the representation of *piacere/gustar* in episodic and non-episodic contexts would be as follows:

- (18) Italian *piacere* / Spanish *gustar* ([to like]): (1MR  $[\pm c+m(r)]$ EXP = 4,  $[-c-m-r]$ COR = 0 => undergoer)

Unfortunately, this way of preventing a draw between the arguments would have to find a parallel for Italian episodic dative-EXPERIENCER verbs, such as *disturbare* ([disturb]) or *soddisfare* ([satisfy]). In addition, in European Spanish, non-causative predicates, such as *preocupar* ([to worry someone]), tend to equal the *gustar*-class in syntactical behaviour. Nonetheless, the EXPERIENCER of *preocupar* (type b) is less active, since s/he does not express a subjective judgment as the EXPERIENCER of *gustar* does (type c). It does not seem adequate to explain GSR-assignment and linking of the *preocupar*-class (that has a high type- and token frequency) by ignoring the  $[r]$ -feature as we have done in the case of the EXPERIENCER of the episodic uses of Italian *piacere* and Spanish *gustar*. A possible solution lies in reconsidering the relation between the lexical level and the construction level.

Deviating from Kailuweit (2013), I now assume the feature-value-cluster  $[-c+m+r]$  for all Romance verbs with an EXPERIENCER of type (a) or type (b) in their argument structure. Hence, these verbs are basically “accusative”, which seems to be correct from a typological and diachronic point of view. What happens in Spanish and in some exceptional cases in Italian is that the lexical representations can be overridden by a dative construction. The construction contributes with the activity-grid and linking information: (1MR  $[\pm c+m(r)]$ EXP = 4,  $[-c-m-r]$ COR = 0 => undergoer). However, the mismatch between the activity degree of the EXPERIENCER at the lexical representation and of the construction level has an impact on the syntax. It explains that the dative construction of lexically transitive verbs is unergative in Italian. In Spanish, the mismatch leads to the fact that the syntactic behaviour of lexically transitive OE-verbs shows a range of variation when they appear in the dative construction. For example, even verbs of Marín’s (2011) non-agentive group (examples in (15)) are marginally acceptable in the passive construction (Whitley 1995).

## 5. Conclusion and outlook

It has been shown in this paper that there is a puzzling heterogeneity of the aktions-art classifications concerning OE-verbs, not only in Romance languages, but also in English, German and other typologically unrelated languages. However, most authors claim that their analysis is universally valid, i.e. that (almost) all OE-verbs (of any language) are accomplishments, achievements, states or activities, respectively. It was not

my aim to refute the Vendler-Dowty classes in general, but to consider them as rough grids for classifying event types. Complex cases, such as the agentive and non-agentive transitive OE-verbs simply cannot be classified just with the help of aktionsart tests.

A finer-grained analysis of the subevents that OE-verbs denote elucidated that these verbs first of all denote a punctual perception of the CORRELATE, i.e. at a certain moment in time a situation including the deliberate behaviour of another participant is conceptualised as the CORRELATE of an emotion. This is accompanied with a change of state for the EXPERIENCER. The resultant emotional state rests for a while and finds a parallel in a mental state consisting in the awareness of the CORRELATE. Contradictory approaches have focussed on different parts of the complex event structure. While the accomplishment and activity analyses consider the provoking behaviour that may precede the perception and construction of the CORRELATE, the achievement analysis focusses on the punctual change of the emotional state. Finally, yet importantly, the state analysis deals with the ongoing mental states that are essential parts of the semantics of OE-verbs. Another problem consists in combining aktionsart descriptions with causativity. My claim in Section 2 was that only potentially agentive OE-verbs are causative, while non-agentive OE-verbs are not. I showed in Section 3 that the presence or absence of causativity explains the differentiation between two types of EXPERIENCER: (a) a causatively affected EXPERIENCER, (b) an EXPERIENCER undergoing a change of state in a particular situation without being affected by an external CAUSER. In addition, we find a third type: prototypically unaccusative (ergative) OE-verbs, such as verbs of liking, which select a more active EXPERIENCER expressing a subjective judgement. The three types are prototypical categories with fuzzy edges. The boundaries are shifting, because, on the one hand, changes in the emotional state are not prototypical cases of causation, and, on the other hand, as in the case of episodic pleasure, subjective judgements may occur in particular situations.

In Sections 3 and 4 it was shown that Romance OE-verbs code one or two of the three types at the lexical level. At the level of the constructional inventory, Romance languages code the types in different forms and to a different degree. In Italian, there are two types of dative constructions, an unaccusative and an unergative one, corresponding to type (c) and (b), respectively. Nonetheless, the accusative construction also codes type (b). In European Spanish, there is a clear tendency to use the dative-construction, which is prototypically restricted to type (b) and type (c), but even type (a) occasionally occurs with the dative-construction. In contrast, in Latin American Spanish, there is case-variation for type (b). Section 5 dealt with the formalisation of the results in the light of activity hierarchy (Kailuweit 2013). Deviating from Kailuweit (2013), I assumed that all Romance verbs with an EXPERIENCER of type (a) or type (b) in their argument structure are “accusative” at the lexical level. In Spanish, and in some exceptional cases in Italian, the lexical representations can be overridden by a dative construction.

The paper did not deal with the reflexive construction of Romance OE-verbs. In Kailuweit (2005), I considered this construction anti-passive. In future research, I

would like to revisit this analysis in the light of a constructionalist approach to linking that allows modifying the activity degree of arguments at the lexical level via a construction. The reflexive construction of Romance OE-verbs should be compared to different types of anti-causatives to delimit the degree of EXPERIENCER promotion that the reflexive construction implies.

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