

Analytical lexical strategies denoting agency and causativity. A synchronic and diachronic investigation in Italian and other Romance languages

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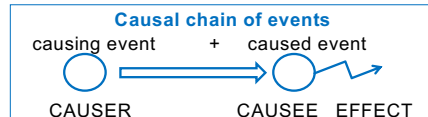
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INTRODUCTION

Despite the growing interest in the notions of agency and causativity (Cruse 1973; Shibatani 1976; Comrie 1976; DeLancey 1984; Song 1996; Dixon 2000; Talmy 2000; Haspelmath & Müller-Bardey 2001; Wolff & Song 2003; Lehmann 2017), the contribution of lexical (analytical) strategies concerning the use of **complex prepositions** to the designation of agentive and causative relations is still neglected. Complex prepositions are fixed word combinations having a prepositional function (e.g. *in terms of*, *in front of*, *in addition to*), that can express different types of agentivity (Piuanno & Ganfi 2019) and causation.

“Agentive” Complex Prepositions (CPs, Piuanno & Ganfi 2019) can signal:

- the AGENT of a predicate → *by the hands of*
- the CAUSER of a causative construction → *at the request of*, *under the supervision of*, *on behalf of*



OBJECTIVES

Analyzing the set of Complex Prepositions signaling the Agent of a predicate, as well as the causer of a causative construction

- (1) *L'uomo fu ucciso su mandato del cugino per mano di* un killer
'The man was murdered by a killer, as his cousin ordered'

- su mandato di* 'upon the mandate of' → conceives and orders the action performing
- per mano di* 'by, at the hands of' → materially performs the action

METHOD

This corpus-based investigation experiments a synchronic and diachronic cross-linguistic approach.

- Synchronic perspective: i) identification of different types of CPs denoting the Agent in Italian and comparison to Spanish and French, ii) classification according to the degree of agency, iii) correlation between CPs to the different types of causativity in the causativity scale.
- Diachronic perspective: i) evolution of Romance CPs across different historical phases, ii) relation between synchronic restrictions and the original syntactic environment within the grammaticalization contexts.

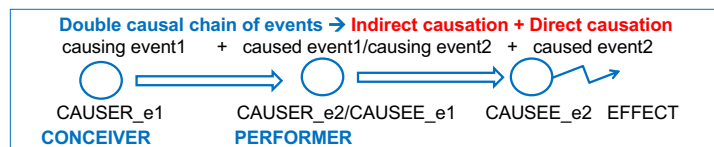
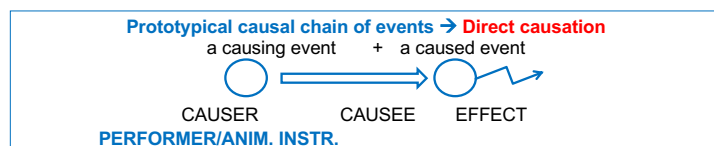
ANALYSIS

Synchronic perspective: 32 contemporary Agentive Complex Prepositions (Piuanno & Ganfi 2019) have been evaluated against agentive semantic traits, meaning and function, and have been distinguished according to the following agentive traits:

Intentionality →	the volitional involvement of the participant, who "intends to let the situation happen" (Lehmann 2017: 36)
Coercive power →	the authority of coercing someone to do something
Monitoring →	the authority of control over the performing of the action (Lehmann 2017)

	Intention	Coercive power	Monitoring
I PERFORMER	+/-	-	+
II ANIMATED INSTR.	+/-	-	+
III CONCEIVER	+	-	-
IV INSTIGATOR	+	+	-

I PERFORMER	<i>l'uccisione dell'uomo da parte del killer</i> 'The murder of the man by the killer'
II ANIMATED INSTR.	<i>un sasso lanciato per mano di bambini</i> 'A stone thrown by children'
III CONCEIVER	<i>Il killer uccise l'uomo su suggerimento di John</i> 'Upon suggestion of John, the killer murdered the man'
IV INSTIGATOR	<i>i carabinieri, su mandato di un magistrato sequestrano la casa</i> 'Upon the mandate of a magistrate, policemen seized the house'



	French	Spanish	Causer's Involvement	Causer's control of e1	Causer's control of e2	
Agentive CPs	PERFORMER	+ (de la part de)	+ (central)	-	+ (direct)	immediate agency
	ANIMATED INSTR.	+ (par la bouche de)	+ (central)	-	+ (direct)	
Causative CPs	CONCEIVER	+ (sur invitation de)	- (marginal)	+	- (indirect)	mediate agency
	INSTIGATOR	+ (sur ordre de)	- (marginal)	+	- (indirect)	

Diachronic perspective:

	Old Italian XIII century	Middle French XIV century	Old Spanish XIII century
PERFORMER	<i>ke li forse adcommannato da parte de Scipione</i> 'That it was ordered by Scipione' [St. de Troia e de Roma Laur., 1252/58]	<i>contre certaines lettres impetrées de la part de l'evêque</i> 'Against some letters demanded by the bishop' [BAYE, I, c. 1400-1410]	<i>moujmento del cielo o por parte de dios</i> 'The movement of the sky (made) by God' [Barrientos, Tratado de adivinar y de magia, 1445]
ANIMATED INSTR.	<i>le cose grave si trattavano per mano di chi non le intendeva</i> 'Serious things were faced by (the hand of) who did not understand them' [Guicciardini, F. Storie fiorentine, 1509]	<i>fu fais chevaliers [...] de la bouce dou roi de France</i> '(He) was made a knight by the mouth of the King of France' (Froiss, Chron. R., 1375-1400).	<i>por voz de seynnor demandare alguna cosa</i> 'Ask something by (means of) the voice of the lord' [Anonymous, Fuero de Viguera y Val de Funes, 1250]
CONCEIVER	<i>per consiglio di Mimacio [...] fu cognominato Augusto</i> 'upon the suggestion of Mimacio, he was named August' [Boccaccio, Esposizioni sopra la Comedia di Dante, 1374]	<i>les laissay à faire et tout par le conseil de mes amis</i> '(I) left them do and all upon the suggestion of my friends' [Anonymous, Miracle de un marchand et un larron, 1349]	<i>Los Reyes, a propuesta de Fernando, mandan...</i> 'The Sovereigns, upon the proposal of Ferdinando, order' [Anonymous, Documentación medieval abulense RGS, 1485]
INSTIGATOR	<i>Mauro al comandamento del padre suo si mosse</i> 'Mauro moved as his father ordered him' [Cavalca, Dialogo S. Greg., c. 1330]	<i>à l'instigation et requeste de monseigneur le duc</i> 'upon the instigation and the request of the duke' [Baye Nicolas de, JOURNAL, T.2, 1411-1417]	<i>miserunt ipsos fratres in sua casa per mandato de comite</i> 'they put their brothers [...] under the mandate of a soldier' [Anonymous, De Tobilla [Becerro gótico de Cardena], 957]

CONCLUSIONS

Semasiological viewpoint: CPs as agentive/causative markers are attested in all the Romance varieties, and in all their phases.

Onomasiological viewpoint: Spanish → X century → stable and consolidated causal CP configurations;

French and Italian → XIX century → pattern [sur/su NOUN de/di] → Path of constructionalisation of [sur/su NOUN de/di].

Further work: analysis of other Romance languages, of Latin, and of the earlier phases of evolution of Romance causative CPs.