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Events always take (place with) *ser*

Abstract: The present study aims to throw light on the behavior of the Spanish copulas *ser* and *estar* in locative sentences, beyond their classical distinction in terms of Individual-Level (IL) versus Stage-Level (SL) predicates. The behavior of the Spanish copulas in locative contexts constitutes an oddity that we aim to probe here: events (*concierto* 'concert'), despite their clear spatial and temporal anchorage, combine with *ser* (*El concierto es en París* 'The concert is in Paris'), which is the copula typically associated with IL or permanent predicates. To do so, we discuss the behavior of copulas as locative verbs in a broader empirical context, where not just events and individuals are considered, but also other types of nominals, such as qualities and states. We argue that *ser* emerges with events because time and place constituents combine directly with events, without the intermediation of extra predicational structure. When carrying a marked value, that extra predicational structure triggers the insertion of *estar;* when there is no predication structure (such as with events) and when the predication structure is unmarked (IL predicates), *ser* appears as the default copula.

Keywords: copulas; events; locative sentences; path; Spanish; types of nominals

1 Introduction: the problem

Most studies on the distribution of Spanish *ser* and *estar* focus on 'adjective + copula' constructions, and to a lesser extent on passive constructions. In this line, most theoretical approaches that try to explain the contrast in (1) through aspectual information related to the Individual-Level versus Stage-Level distinction or the contrast between perfectivity and imperfectivity (Arche 2006; Carlson 1977; De Miguel 1992; Fernández Leborans 1999; Leonetti 1994; Luján 1981; Milsark 1974; Roby 2009; Romero 2009; see Fábregas 2012; Leonetti et al. 2015 for an overview). Lately,

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this aspectual distinction has been operationalized through the dichotomy between central versus terminal coincidence prepositions contained within the complement of the copulative verb (Brucart 2012; Gallego and Uriagereka 2016; see also Camacho 2012 for a related approach that stems from Hale 1986 and its application to Spanish in Mateu 2002).

(1) a. *Eva   {es/   *está}   inmortal.*
     Eva   is^{ser}/ is^{estar} immortal
     'Eva is immortal.'

   b. *Pedro {está/ *es} desnudo.*
     Pedro is^{estar}/ is^{ser} naked
     'Pedro is naked.'

With the exception of works that concentrate on the prepositional contrast as a way to approach the distinction between copulas, far fewer contributions are devoted to locative constructions, which constitute a quite intricate puzzle (cf., among others, Brucart 2010, 2012; Camacho 2012; Gallego and Uriagereka 2016; Zagona 2012). Briefly, the standard view assumes that animate entities and physical objects – or individuals – are located with *estar*, while events are located with *ser* (cf., for instance, Brucart 2012; Fernández Leborans 1999; RAE and ASALE 2009: Ch. 37.8):

(2) a. *El   cuchillo {está/ *es} en   la   cocina.*
     the   knife   is^{estar}/ is^{ser} in   the   kitchen
     'The knife is in the kitchen.'

   b. *Pedro {está/ *es} en   Roma.*
     Pedro is^{estar}/ is^{ser} in   Rome
     'Pedro is in Rome.'

(3) a. *El   concierto {es/   *está} en el   anfiteatro.*
     the   concert   is^{ser}/ is^{estar} in   the   amphitheater
     'The concert is in the amphitheater.'

   b. *La   fiesta {es/   *está} en mi   casa.*
     the   party is^{ser}/ is^{estar} at   my   house
     'The party is at my house.'

This creates minimal pairs like (4), where the choice of the copula is in principle the only element that disambiguates between the two readings of *examen* 'exam' in Spanish: an event where someone is examined (4a), and an object, the written exam on paper or some other format (4b).

(4) a. *El   examen {es/   *está} allí.*
     the   exam   is^{ser}/ is^{estar} there
     'The examination takes place there.'

   b. *El   examen   {*es/   está}   allí.*
       the   exam   is^ser/ is^estar there
       'The (written) exam is there.'

In this study, we aim at discussing how to better account for this distribution. Thus, the goal of this article is modest, but we believe it necessary as a first step to attempt, with enough empirical support, a full account of the locative uses of *ser* and *estar* in an integrated theory of Spanish copulas.

Many of the existing approaches (see in particular those discussed in Section 4) treat Spanish copulas in locative contexts as determined by one single contrast: locating events versus locating individuals. In this article, we want to contribute to a deeper understanding of the use of the Spanish copulas in locative contexts by framing this traditional contrast in a broader empirical context where other nominal classes are considered. We observe that the use of *ser* and the incompatibility of *estar* with events are systematically left unexplained because the distribution of the copulas in Spanish has been simplistically reduced to a binary explanation, mostly in terms of IL versus SL predicates. This narrow dichotomy, we argue, does not fully account for all the entities that have the potential to combine with the Spanish copulas. This wider examination will let us determine whether the association be-tween *ser* and the location of events is a positive or a negative property, that is, whether *ser* combines with locating events because *ser* somehow selects events, or whether *ser* combines with events because *estar*, its competitor, is specialized in states and *ser* is the default form. We propose that once contextualized in a broader empirical examination, it is possible to argue that *ser* is a default copula that lacks any type of feature specification and, at the same time, explain why it combines with events, without the need of proposing that *ser* has any specific feature that selects events.

As mentioned, to propose a unified theoretical analysis for this particular distinction from a synchronic point of view is not a simple matter, especially if one wants to give an account that is compatible with the copular distribution with ad-jectives or in passive contexts. One of the reasons why locative structures are usually left unexplained by the theoretical analyses is that these proposals primarily dealt with copular verbs in combination with adjectival attributes; even fewer studies have attempted to explain the copular alternation also present in locative structures. A significant example is Camacho's (2012) detailed analysis of the aspectual prop-erties of the two copulas in adjectival contexts; when moving to locative copular sentences, the proposal is simply to treat the locative PP as an adjunct. Let us show first why the distribution of copulas in locative contexts is theoretically problematic in a proposal that attempts to unify its distribution with adjectival contexts.

a) First of all, the information to which the copula is sensitive in locative contexts has a presumed origin in a syntactic position different from the one found in adjectival copulative sentences (cf. Demonte 1979). In (1) above, the copulas are differentiated by the nature of the complement of the copula, while in the locative sentences (2)–(4) it is the subject that determines the distribution. Indeed, the semantics of these subjects, particularly the ontological properties of nouns and not the type of location expressed by the complement of the copula is what seems to be behind the choice between *ser* and *estar*.

b) Most of the studies that describe the contrast between *ser* and *estar* with a focus on the uses with adjectives emphasize their aspectual differences (although acknowledging the existence of other factors; Luján 1981; Marín 2004; Schmitt 1992; Schmitt and Miller 2007), proposing that *estar* is [+perfective] and *ser* [–perfective] or unmarked for aspect, or differentiating the copulas by the type of predicate they create: predicates that apply to individuals (IL predicates) go with *ser* and are usually described as more permanent; predicates that apply to stages or happenings of individuals (SL predicates), usually go with *estar,* and are typically transient, bounded spatially and temporally (Camacho 2012; Fernández Leborans 1995; Lema 1995; Marín 2010). This description is at odds with the distribution in locative contexts for two reasons. The first one is that events, which are spatiotemporally anchored, exceptionally combine with *ser* in locative contexts. What a sentence such as (5) describes is neither permanent, nor involves an individual entity as a subject, but it clearly has a spatiotemporal argument.

(5) *El   discurso fue   entre   las 7 y   las 8 en el   parlamento.*
The   speech   was[ser] between the 7 and the 8 at the parliament
'The speech was between 7 and 8 in the parliament.'

c) At the same time, the distribution of *estar* in locative contexts is equally puzzling. For instance, a sentence such as (6) cannot be explained by the temporal or transient properties of *estar*, its perfective aspectual characteristics, or even the SL predicate it creates because it has the distribution and behavior of an IL predicate.

(6) *Barcelona   está   en   el   Mediterráneo.*
Barcelona   is[estar]   in   the   Mediterranean
'Barcelona is in the Mediterranean.'

Therefore, one of the main questions we want to address in this study is the following: what makes an event special so that it combines with *ser* and cannot combine with *estar* as any other expression of location does? A further goal of this study is to introduce some intriguing and novel linguistic puzzles in this debate.

Whereas we will not provide a full and definite answer to the questions posed by these puzzles at this point, we hope these will open a new debate in the field.

The structure of this article is the following: In Section 2 we will enrich the empirical picture about locative copular sentences and conclude that this empirical picture could give the *prima facie* impression that *ser* positively selects for events and cannot be considered a default copula. Section 3 explores two more contexts, beyond locative copular sentences, where an association between *ser* and the event reading can be found. These suggest that there might be a broader previously unnoticed generalization here, namely that the contrast between *ser* and *estar* cannot be based on a single aspectual dimension – IL versus SL or imperfective versus perfective – but has to be enriched to explain why *ser* is systematically associated to events. The analytical problem, which is discussed in the last two sections of the article, is how this apparent positive selection of events by *ser* can be made compatible with the status of *ser* as a default copula. Section 4 assesses a number of theories about the distinction between the Spanish copulas in locative contexts under the light of the empirical picture painted in Sections 2 and 3, differentiating among three main analytical options: (i) a unification of locative and other uses through one single feature, (ii) a unification of these uses with a system containing more than one sensitive feature, and (iii) a non-unifying approach where the locative copulas are distinct from the predicative copulas and the extension of *ser* and *estar* to locative sentences is the result of a surface syncretism. Section 5 concludes the article by proposing a possible way to integrate locative uses and the association between events and *ser* without giving up the claim that *ser* is the default copula in Spanish.

2 Ontological categories and location

Almost all syntactic approaches interpret *estar* as a more complex and specified element than *ser*, to the point that in some approaches, *ser* is assimilated to a spurious element without selectional properties that, like some analyses of English *be*, is introduced as a dummy element to support agreement (see Arche et al. 2019 for an overview, and also Brucart 2012; Escandell 2018; Escandell and Leonetti 2002; Gumiel-Molina et al. 2020; Sánchez Alonso 2018; Zagona 2012). There are good empirical reasons to make this proposal, revised in the works cited above. Some of those reasons are that *estar* coerces predicates to SL readings while *ser* does not coerce to an IL reading (Escandell 2018; Escandell and Leonetti 2002; Fábregas 2012); or that *ser* appears in identificational contexts lacking any predicative value (Fernández Leborans 1999) and is compulsory with relational adjectives that do not express properties (Gumiel-Molina et al. 2020).

However, the view in which *ser* is a default copula faces problems when one considers locative contexts because in such cases *ser* seems to be positively specified for events. As we will see in this section, *ser* combines with events, and *estar* combines 'by default' with anything else. Taken at face value, this goes against an approach in which *ser* is the elsewhere copula, and *estar* is specified for some type, as in (7).

(7)   *estar*: type A
        ser: Elsewhere

There is a second logical possibility that has the negative consequence that it would force us to abandon the idea that *ser* is the default copula. Under this alternative view, *ser*, like *estar*, has its own selectional restrictions that become apparent in specific contexts. From this perspective, *ser* emerges in the event location contexts because of their positive selectional requisites: the two copulas divide the space of eventualities between each other, each one of them associated with one domain.

(8)   *estar*: type A
        ser: type B

In this section, we will show that, indeed, in the locative domain it seems that *estar* is the default form, and *ser* is the verb that is specified for a particular class of subjects. We do this in order to show that there is a real descriptive and empirical problem here. Ultimately in this article, we will sketch a way to make these puzzling facts compatible with the well-established fact that *ser* is the default copula (Section 5), which we want to keep in our analysis. In this section and the next (Section 3), we want to convince the reader that the empirical pattern gives the impression that there is a positive selection of events by *ser*, even though we will later on show that this association is an epiphenomenon.

In the remaining of this section, we focus on the semantic properties of the nouns that can be located with *ser/estar*, and by doing so, we observe that this description needs not be limited to objects or individuals on the one hand, and events on the other hand (Section 2.1). As we will see in Section 2.2, there are other classes of nouns such as *states* (*alegría* 'joy') and *qualities* (*firmeza* 'firmness') that need to be considered, as these can also be located. After analyzing the semantic properties of the nominal classes, it becomes clear that there is only one ontological class that combines with *ser*, that of events, while states and any other entity that is not an event is systematically located with *estar*.

2.1 Object nouns and event nouns

Following the classification proposed by Fábregas and Marín (2012), we call 'Object Nouns' those nouns denoting any physical entity: either concrete objects, such as *table* or *house*, or animate individuals, such as *teacher* or *Rosalía* (9). On the other hand, 'Event Nouns' refer to non-physical entities that have a spatial and temporal anchor; i.e., entities that 'take place' (10).

(9)   *Juan, Marta, Saussure, alimento* 'food', *novio* 'boyfriend', *vaso* 'glass', *bala* 'bullet', *artículo* 'paper', *cirujano* 'surgeon', *avión* 'airplane', *víctima* 'victim', *lámpara* 'lamp'.

(10)   a.   *cena* 'dinner', *boda* 'wedding', *fiesta* 'party', *guerra* 'war', *accidente* 'accident', *concierto* 'concert', *conferencia* 'conference', *vacaciones* 'holydays', *congreso* 'congress', *entrevista* 'interview', *huelga* 'strike'.
       b.   *reunión* 'meeting', *discusión* 'discussion', *operación* 'operation', *reparación* 'repair', *manifestación* 'demonstration', *asesinato* 'murder'.

Note that in (9) and (10a) we have focused on underived nouns; some deverbal nominalizations (10b), of course, also denote events (Grimshaw's 1990 'complex event nouns'), which pattern like the nouns in (10a) in terms of locative copulas; other nominalizations (Grimshaw's 1990 'result nouns') denote participants in the event (11), and as such, they pattern with (9):

(11)   a.   *La   construcción   de   piedra   está   allí.*
            the   building   of   stone   is^{estar} there
            'The stone building is there.'
       b.   *La   construcción   del   puente   por   los   obreros   es   allí.*
            the   building   of.the   bridge   by   the   workers   is^{ser} there
            'The event of building the bridge by the workers takes place there.'

As explained before, Event Nouns need to be located with *ser* (12a) and Object Nouns with *estar* (12b); this copula specialization holds strong for definite nous, but when locating an indefinite noun, -so no definiteness effects arise-, being the indefinite an event or an object, then both types of nouns combine with the same existential predicate, *haber*. Thus, the specialization is idiosyncratic to copular verbs:

(12)   a.   *El   concierto   {es/   *está}   en   Barcelona.*
            the   concert   is^{ser}/ is^{estar} in   Barcelona
            'The concert is in Barcelona.'
       b.   *La   mesa   {está/   *es}   en   la   cocina.*
            the   table   is^{estar}/ is^{ser} in   the   kitchen
            'The table is in the kitchen.'

(13) a. *Hay   un   concierto   en   Barcelona.*
      have   a   concert   in   Barcelona
      'There is a concert in Barcelona.'

     b. *Hay   una   mesa   en   la   cocina.*
      have   a   table   in   the   kitchen
      'There is a table in the kitchen.'

As already advanced, a subset of nouns such as *cena* 'dinner', *examen* 'exam', *fuegos artificiales* 'fireworks', *obra de teatro* 'theater play' can be located with both copulas, *ser* and *estar*, depending on their interpretation (Perpiñán et al. 2020). When *clase* 'classroom' refers to the physical space, it needs to combine with *estar* (14b), but when it refers to the lecture given during that class it combines with *ser* (14a).

(14) a. *La   clase   es   a   las   10.*
      the   class   is^{ser} at   the   10
      'The class is at 10.'

     b. *La   clase   está   en   el   primer   piso.*
      the   classroom   is^{estar} on   the   first   floor
      'The classroom is on the first floor.'

In the following paragraphs, we will present the most relevant differences and similarities between these two types of ontological entities in order to later account for their distribution with the Spanish copulas.

Objects and events share the property of being countable: *dos mesas* 'two tables'; *tres reuniones* 'three meetings', and they both can be located, but they differ in several other properties. As shown in the following examples, taken from Huyghe and Azzopardi (2019), objects can be modified in their different physical dimensions, as in (15), whereas events, as abstract entities, cannot, as in (16).

(15) a. *un hilo amarillo/una silla naranja.*
      'a yellow thread/an orange chair.'

     b. *una manzana de 200 gramos/un barco de tres toneladas.*
      'a 200 g apple/a three-ton ship.'

     c. *una mesa de vidrio/una falda de algodón.*
      'a glass table/a cotton skirt.'

(16) a. *#una conferencia amarilla/#un congreso naranja.*
      'a yellow conference/an orange congress.'

     b. *#una reunión de 200 gramos/#un entierro de tres toneladas.*
      'a 200 g meeting/a three-ton burial.'

     c. *#un concierto de vidrio/#un juicio de algodón.*
      'a glass concert/a cotton trial.'

Objects and events also differ in their temporal dimension. Observe, first, that events (17) convey a temporal extension that objects lack (18).

(17) a. *una reunión de dos horas.*
          'a two hours meeting.'
      b. *La reunión duró poco más de dos horas.*
          'The meeting lasted just over two hours.'

(18) a. *#una mesa de tres horas.*
          'a three hours table.'
      b. *#La mesa duró un poco más de tres horas.*
          'The table lasted just over three hours.'

Second, event nouns – but not object nouns – can function as temporal frames or locators and, hence, be introduced by temporal prepositions, as in the following examples, also taken from Huyghe and Azzopardi (2019).

(19) a. *durante la manifestación.*
          'during the demonstration.'
      b. *a lo largo de la ceremonia.*
          'throughout the ceremony.'
      c. *en el momento del rodaje.*
          'at the time of filming.'

(20) a. **durante la estantería.*
          'during the shelving unit.'
      b. **a lo largo del yogur.*
          'throughout the yogurt.'
      c. **en el momento del tenedor.*
          'at the time of the fork.'

Third, event nouns can combine with predicates such as *verse interrumpido* 'to be interrupted' or modifiers such as *en curso* 'in progress' (Fábregas et al. 2012); a possibility that objects do not exhibit. *Verse interrumpido* requires an internal argument that exhibits some temporal progression so that it can be interrupted before its natural end, and this is only satisfied by event-denoting nouns that involve a dynamic change. In the same way, *en curso* requires internal dynamic change that physical entities lack.

(21) a. *El rodaje se ha visto interrumpido.*
          'Filming has been interrupted.'
      b. *una operación en curso.*
          'an operation in progress.'

(22) a. **La estantería se ha visto interrumpida.*
          'The shelving unit has been interrupted.'
      b. **el tenedor en curso.*
          'the fork in progress.'

But probably the most significant difference between these two types of nouns is that events take place, both in space and time, (23), while objects, (24), do not.

(23) a. *La reunión tuvo lugar ayer en París.*
          'The meeting took place yesterday in Paris.'
      b. *El concierto tendrá lugar el mes que viene en Barcelona.*
          'The concert will take place next month in Barcelona.'

(24) a. **La mesa/casa tuvo lugar ayer/en París.*
          'The table/house took place yesterday/in Paris.'
      b. **El gato tendrá lugar el mes que viene en Barcelona.*
          'The cat will take place next month in Barcelona.'

From here – the fact that events but not objects can be located in time – it naturally follows that *ser* is the only copula that can locate in time; by the same token, *estar* is not compatible with expressions that locate in time.

(25) *El   concierto   {es/   *está}   {a   las   10/   ahora/   más   tarde}.*
      the   concert   is[ser]/   is[estar] at   the   10/   now/   more   late.
      'The concert takes place at 10 o'clock/now/later.'

2.2 State nouns and quality nouns

According to several authors (Arche and Marín 2014; Fábregas 2016; Jaque and Martín 2019), in addition to individuals and events, there are at least two other ontological noun types: states (26) and qualities (27). The nouns in (26) are used to denote temporal periods associated with eventualities, but lack any type of dynamicity or change: either when they denote the resulting state or other types of states, the nouns in (26) are not events.

(26) *admiración* 'admiration', *alegría* 'joy', *deseo* 'desire', *desprecio* 'contempt', *decepción* 'disappointment', *disgusto* 'dislike', *enfado* 'anger', *envidia* 'envy', *fascinación* 'fascination', *frustración* 'frustration', *indignación* 'indignation', *inquietud* 'restlessness', *irritación* 'irritation', *nostalgia* 'nostalgia', *odio* 'hate', *perplejidad* 'perplexity, *preocupación* 'worry', *rabia* 'rage', *sorpresa* 'surprise', *tristeza* 'sadness'.

With respect to (27), they denote the abstract name of a quality, defined typically by their morphological base, which is an adjective.

(27)   *altura* 'height', *audacia* 'audacity', *belleza* 'beauty', *excelencia* 'excellence', *firmeza* 'firmness', *fortaleza* 'strength', *frescura* 'freshness', *hermosura* 'loveliness', *honestidad* 'honesty', *inteligencia* 'intelligence', *modestia* 'modesty', *prudencia* 'prudence', *sabiduría* 'wisdom', *sencillez* 'simplicity', *valentía* 'courage', *verosimilitud* 'verisimilitude'.

Notably, these two types of nouns have an uncontroversial abstract denotation at least in the sense that they do not denote physical objects with a spatial location, a characteristic that has sometimes been adduced to explain the different behavior of events in comparison to objects and in particular to explain its late acquisition in L1 and L2 (Sera 1992). From this perspective, one could expect that *estar* will not be the copula to locate them, especially if *estar* selects physical objects as the subjects it locates. Thus, if *estar* is the only copula with selection restrictions and *ser* is the default, it is surprising that both states (28) and qualities (29) always require *estar* in locative sentences, despite its abstractness.

(28)   a.   *Toda su frustración {está/ *es} en lo que ha escrito.*
          all her frustration is[estar]/ is[ser] in it that has written
          'All her frustration is in what she has written.'
      b.   *La {alegría/ nostalgia} {está/ *es} solo en su cabeza.*
          the joy/ nostalgia is[estar]/ is[ser] only in her head
          'Joy/nostalgia is only in her head.'
      c.   *¿Dónde {está/ *es} ahora la {preocupación/ rabia} que tenías?*
          where is[estar]/ is[ser] now the concern/ anger that had.2sg
          'Where is now the concern/rage you had?'

(29)   a.   *La belleza {está/ *es} en el interior.*
          the beauty is[estar]/ is[ser] in the inside
          'Beauty is in the inside'
      b.   *¿Dónde {está/ *es} tu firmeza?*
          where is[estar]/ is[ser] your determination
          'Where is your determination?'
          (adapted from Brucart 2012)
      c.   *No sé dónde {está/ *es} la {inteligencia/ valentía} de*
          not know where is[estar]/ is[ser] the intelligence/ bravery of
          la que tanto presumía.
          the that much bragged
          'I don't know where the intelligence/bravery she bragged so much about is.'

Considered from this perspective, then, the question is what makes events incompatible with *estar*. With this in mind, we will now describe the properties of state and quality nouns compared to those of object and event nouns. Only with a complete picture of the grammatical characteristics of all ontological types of nouns that can be located, will we be able to properly account for the place events occupy in this classification. We will test state and quality nominals with the same diagnostics used to describe objects and events in the preceding section.

Observe, first, that both states (30a), and qualities (30b), are not count nouns, unlike event nouns, particularly those that are underived from verbs (31).

(30) a. *Los jóvenes tienen muchas indignaciones/tristezas.*
          'Young people have many indignations/sadnesses.'
      b. *Los monjes tibetanos tienen tres fuerzas/sabidurías.*
          'Tibetan monks have three forces/wisdoms.'

(31) *Hay   programados   cuatro   conciertos.*
      there   are   scheduled   four   concerts
      'There are four concerts scheduled.'

States and qualities, unlike events, take place neither in space nor in time:

(32) a. *La indignación/tristeza (de tu hermano) tuvo lugar en París/ayer.*
          '(The) outrage/sadness (of your brother) took place in Paris/yesterday.'
      b. *La fuerza/sabiduría (del monje) tuvo lugar en el Tíbet/el mes pasado.*
          '(The) force/wisdom (of the monk) took place in Tibet/last month.'

(33) *El concierto tuvo lugar en Barcelona/hace un año.*
      'The concert took place in Barcelona/a year ago.'

Event nouns can combine with predicates such as *verse interrumpido* 'to be interrupted' or modifiers such as *en curso* 'in progress' (Fábregas et al. 2012); this is not possible with states or qualities.

(34) a. *El rodaje se ha visto interrumpido.*
          'The filming has been interrupted.'
      b. *una operación en curso.*
          'an operation in progress.'

(35) a. *La admiración se ha visto interrumpida.*
          'Admiration has been interrupted.'
      b. *la perplejidad en curso.*
          'perplexity in progress.'

(36) a. **La belleza se ha visto interrumpida.*
          'Beauty has been interrupted.'
      b. **la honestidad en curso.*
          'honesty in progress.'

As we have seen in the preceding section, event nouns are compatible with temporal locators; in contrast, neither states nor qualities are, as they do not denote eventualities that can progress along a temporal scale:

(37) a. **durante la indignación.*
          'during indignation.'
      b. **a lo largo de la alegría.*
          'throughout happiness.'

(38) a. **durante la hermosura.*
          'during beauty.'
      b. **a lo largo de la prudencia.*
          'throughout prudence.'

However, this does not mean that quality and state nouns do not contain any type of temporal information. While it is still a matter of debate whether quality nouns convey some type of temporal information (cf. Zato 2020 and references therein), there is little doubt about the temporal dimension of states, as shown in (39), where they allow temporal modifiers introduced as prepositional phrases. Some partial evidence for the temporal information of quality nouns might come from the fact that, like state nouns and event nouns, they can be the subject of a verb like *durar* 'to last'.

(39) a. *un cabreo de dos horas.*
          'an anger of two hours'
      b. *??una belleza de varios años.*
          'a beauty of several years'

(40) a. *El cabreo me duró toda la tarde.*
          'The anger lasted all afternoon.'
      b. *Su pobreza duró muchos años.*
          'Her poverty lasted many years.'
      c. *El concierto duró toda la tarde.*
          'The concert lasted all evening.'

The fact that state nouns and possibly quality nouns, like event nouns, have a temporal dimension is very informative regarding whether a subject is located with *ser*

or *estar*. It is particularly illuminating to compare event nouns and state nouns, as they both belong to the set of eventualities (Bach 1986). Attending to the fact that events are located with *ser* and states are located with *estar* we have to conclude that it is not the temporal dimension *per se* that triggers events to combine with *ser*. As we have seen, state nouns, despite having a duration and allowing temporal anchoring, combine with *estar*. In this respect, the main difference between these two classes of nouns is that events include in their temporal denotation the idea of change, action or progression, which is completely absent from the case of state nouns. Therefore, the main difference between these two classes of nouns is their inner aspect, not their coarser properties, such as whether they are concrete or abstract or even whether they are bounded or not (Table 1).

In a nutshell, events constitute an altogether different class of nouns, presumably because only eventive nouns include in their denotation the idea of internal phases in their development, as emphasized – among others – in Grimshaw (1990) or Borer (2013). That is, event nouns are *dynamic* in a strict sense.

As a conclusion of this section, the behavior of state nouns and quality nouns shows that all nouns except for events are located with *estar*. This contradicts the general view that *ser* is a default copula that lacks any selectional capacity: in locative contexts, *ser* positively selects events and *estar* combines with anything else. One is then tempted to propose the generalization in (41).

(41)   *Ser* selects events in locative copular sentences.

Note in this respect that the location of an event is eventive itself. Assuming that the progressive periphrasis -always with *estar*- is a good test for eventivity, note that (42) behaves as an eventive location, while the location of anything that is not an event is stative. We hasten to nuance the claim about (42) being an eventive location to emphasize that, of course, (42) does not involve an eventive location in the sense that there is a displacement across a trajectory (in fact, see Section 3.1 below about the

Table 1: Semantic characterization of the ontological types of nouns.

	Events	Objects	States	Qualities
Count	+	+	−	−
Duration	+	−	+	−
Take place	+	−	−	−
En curso 'in progress'	+	−	−	−
Temporal locator	+	−	−	−
Estar	−	+	+	+
Ser	+	−	−	−

so-called path locations); however, it involves an eventive location in the sense that there is a progressive change or action that is identified by its temporal and spatial location.

(42) a. *La   entrevista   es   en   el   tercer   piso.*
          the   interview   is^ser   on   the   third   floor

     b. *La   entrevista   está   siendo   en   el   tercer   piso.*
          the   interview   is^estar being^ser on   the   third   floor

The claim in (41) is theoretically undesirable. It would imply that we have one default copula in the locative domain (*estar*) and a second default copula in non-locative uses (*ser*). This would make it impossible to unify the uses of copulas because it would force us to treat locative copular sentences as different from other types of copular predicates. Still, we want to preserve the idea that *ser* is always the default copula, but at the same time establish as an empirical fact that there is a real correlation between *ser* and events that requires an explanation.

At this point, two questions emerge. The first one is whether it is possible to identify other instances of *ser* with events beyond the purely locative context that has just been revised, and the second is how the association between events and *ser* can be made compatible with the general observation that *ser* is an IL copula and, more generally, a default copula in any other type of copulative structure. The next section is devoted to the first question, which we believe should be answered affirmatively: there are other contexts where *ser* combines with events.

3 *Ser* and events: path copular sentences and passives

We have already shown that in the domain of locative copular sentences, the empirical picture suggests that *ser* is a copula that specifically locates events, and *estar* is the copula that locates anything that is not eventive.

(43) *{Juan/   su   belleza/   su   preocupación}   está   allí.*
       Juan/   his   beauty/   his   concern   is^estar there

(44) *El   concierto   es   allí.*
       the   concert   is^ser   there

What we will show in this section is that *ser* combines with events in a broader set of contexts than previously acknowledged. Here we will concentrate on two of them, path copular sentences (Section 3.1) and eventive passives (Section 3.2).[1]

3.1 Path copular sentences

Thus far, we have drawn the following generalization: objects, as well as states and qualities, are located with *estar*, while the location of events requires *ser*. However, this is not completely accurate, as certain objects may combine with *ser* when their interpretation is deictically linked. The following sentences, taken from Brucart (2012), exemplify the phenomenon we refer to:

(45) a. *El   aeropuerto   es   por   ahí.*
          the   airport   is[ser]   by   there
          'The airport is that way.'

---

1 Another context in which it has been claimed that *ser* combines with eventive predicates is the one defined by so-called dispositional evaluative adjectives (DEAs), such as *cruel* 'cruel' or *honesto* 'honest' (Fábregas et al. 2013; Kertz 2006; Landau 2009) in sentences of the type of (i). These adjectives denote different types of (human) behaviors that can be manifested when performing particular events. In (i) the event, which can be expressed as an overt syntactic constituent, is underlined.

(i)   *Juan fue   {cruel/ injusto} con su hermana <u>no invitándola a la cena</u>.*
      Juan was[ser] cruel/ unfair   with his sister   <u>not inviting-her to the dinner</u>
      'In not inviting her to dinner, Juan was {cruel/unfair} to her sister.'

However, note that the adjectival predicate does not denote an event, but a manner or way of behaving, something that establishes an asymmetry with the rest of cases. In fact, the nominalization of those adjectives does not combine well with the predicate *tener lugar* 'to take place' (iia) and does not license the use of *ser* in locative contexts (iib).

(ii) a. **Su crueldad con María tuvo lugar en la   fiesta.*
          his cruel-ty with María took place at the party
      b. **La injusticia con Pedro fue {en la   oficina/ a las   tres}.*
          the injustice with Pedro was at the office/ at three   o'clock

While we lack a full analysis of these adjectives, it is clear that they do not show internal signs of denoting events. Accordingly, these adjectives can combine with the verb *estar* (cf. (iii), which is parallel to (i)), as we expect if the adjective itself does not introduce an event.

(iii) *Juan estuvo cruel con su hermana <u>no invitándola   a la cena</u>.*
      Juan was[estar] cruel with her sister   <u>not inviting-her to the dinner</u>
      'In not inviting her to dinner, Juan was cruel to her sister.'

We are grateful to an anonymous reviewer for directing our attention to this asymmetry.

b. *El   decanato   es   en   frente.*
    the   dean's office is[ser] in   front
    'The dean's office is facing us.'

c. *La   parada   de   taxis   es   en   la   próxima   esquina.*
    the   stand   of   taxi   is[ser] on   the   next   corner
    'The taxi stand is on the next corner.'

According to Brucart (2012: 33), this pattern involves a path interpretation of the relevant preposition where the entity in the subject position, although not an event, is located at the end of the path that is defined in the post-copular expression. For Brucart (2012) this path interpretation is what makes the use of *ser* available. Although quite productive, in Brucart's description, the pattern is constrained by pragmatic conditions: (i) "it usually implies a prior request for information about the location of the corresponding place by the hearer"; (ii) "the subject typically denotes a fixed place where certain activities and services take place"; (iii) the utterance situation should be "deictically anchored to the entity that is spatially located", and perhaps most crucially, (iv) "the sentence denotes the route that the hearer must follow to reach the goal of the path" (Brucart 2012: 33). For us, the crucial property is the last one: the hearer must follow the path to reach the location as a goal. The question is whether this dynamic interpretation is part of some kind of pragmatic condition, as Brucart proposes, or not. If there is such a pragmatic requirement, the sentences in (45) take *ser* because of the presence of a path; if there is not such a pragmatic requirement, then the presence of an event reading – even if the event is intended and not instantiated – determines the presence of *ser*. We believe that the second explanation is the correct one. Importantly, paths can be combined with both copulas, as shown in (46) (see Zagona 2012).

(46) a. *La   farmacia   está   hacia   el   puente.*
          the   pharmacy   is[estar] towards   the   bridge

      b. *La   farmacia   es   hacia   el   puente.*
          the   pharmacy   is[ser] towards   the   bridge

In both cases, the path preposition is interpreted in a way similar to what Svenonius (2010) calls 'end-of-journey' or 'Cresswellian locations', that is, the figure is located at the end of the path that the prepositional structure defines. Zagona (2012) proposes that in sentences like (46) the preposition lacks the path component, but it is clear that this path component is interpreted and the figure is located at the end of that intended path that extends to a location close to the bridge. Thus, the notion of path itself cannot be what distinguishes (46a) from (46b). And still, the interpretation of (46a) is different from (46b), where we understand that an unidentified speech participant is supposed to follow that path. Our claim is that what makes (46a) and

(46b) different is that only in (46b) does one interpret that there is an intended event that is required to reach the intended location: in (46b), but not necessarily in (46a), the addressee not only must have asked for directions to arrive to the pharmacy, as Brucart already noticed, but she also had the intention of going to that place, presumably to do something there – a secondary point that we will get back to in a moment.

In fact, it is possible to license the alleged path copular structures with *ser* in contexts where there is absolutely no path at all to follow, but where the idea of the presence of an intended event is valid. Consider (47).

(47) -¿Dónde   es   la   farmacia?
      where   is[ser]   the   pharmacy?
      -La   farmacia   es   aquí.
      the   pharmacy   is[ser] here

(47) can be an exchange where someone is looking for a pharmacy and asks somebody at the door of a shop; that person answers that the addressee is already in the location of the pharmacy. That is: there is no further path that has to be traversed to arrive at the pharmacy, but there is an intended arrival, which seems to license the *ser* copula in this context. Secondarily, the notion of intended event is present in these constructions, which we now know are wrongly called 'path copular sentences, through the nature of the subject. These types of sentences, as pointed out by Salazar (2002), tend to sound natural to the extent that the figure located is in a place where one typically performs some kind of action or event, which can be 'buying' (as in 47), 'visiting' (48a), 'receiving a treatment' (48b) or many other types of actions. Locations that are difficult to conceptualize as places where one can perform an event are more difficult to accept unless one contextually assigns an event function to them (as in [49c], if we decide that rock is the goal in a marathon or determine that it is a touristic attraction that one visits).

(48) a. La   iglesia   es   por   ahí.
          the   church   is[ser]   by   there
          'The church is over there'
      b. El   hospital   es   por   ahí.
          the   hospital   is[ser]   by   there
          'The hospital is over there'
      c. El   puerto   es   por   ahí.
          the   harbor   is[ser]   by   there
          'The harbor is over there'

(49) a. #*La   estrella   polar   es   por   ahí.*
          the   star   polar   is[ser]   by   there
          'The polar star is over there.'

   b. #*El   centro   de   la   tierra   es   por   ahí.*
          the   center   of   the   earth   is[ser]   by   there
          'The center of the earth is over there.'

   c. #*La   roca   es   por   ahí.*
          the   rock   is[ser]   by   there
          'The rock is over there.'

This – that the copula *ser* is only licensed if the interpretation implies an intended event, be it a path that has to be traversed or some action that one performs in the location if the path disappears – is how we interpret the following Brucart's observation: "if *ser* is commuted by *estar* in these sentences, the notion of route is weakened and the new construction becomes an ordinary locative attributive" (Brucart 2012: 33). Hence, sentences of the type of (50), including a directional preposition, can only accept *ser*:

(50) a. *Al   aeropuerto   es   por   ahí.*
          at.the   airport   is[ser]   that   way

   b. **Al   aeropuerto   está   por   ahí.*
          at.the   airport   is[estar]   that   way.'

In our view, the reason for this contrast is that the path preposition forces the interpretation of an intended event that involves the interlocutor, at a minimum 'arriving at the airport'. This forces an event interpretation, and like in the case of the locative copular sentences, the copula used must be *ser*. Thus, if sentences with *ser* like (45) can be licensed by a path interpretation, this is because the notion of path can be used to give content to the intended event that the copula requires, not because the path itself licenses that copula. So-called 'path copular structures', we believe, should be rather called 'intended event copular sentences' (see also Sánchez Alonso 2018, who independently reaches a similar conclusion based on a different argumentation; see also Section 4.2 below), even if the path reading is the easiest way to give content to the intended event. Likewise, we argue, there might be a second set of structures that, like locative copular sentences, involve an event interpretation of the whole clause, only that in this case it would be an intended event.

3.2 Passives and structures with participles

According to Coussé (2011) and Marín (2016), among others, participles of telic verbs – i.e., those verbs including an endpoint (a *telos*) – can denote both events and states; it

depends on the temporal perspective adopted with respect to the boundary. In certain cases, as in (51), the temporal perspective ends at that point, since it is denoted by an event that culminates. In other cases, (52), the perspective adopted starts just after that point, since it is denoted a resultant state.

(51) a. *La   puerta   ha   sido   cerrada/ pintada.*
          the   door   has   been[ser] closed/   painted
      b. *El   tornillo ha   sido   apretado/ retorcido.*
          the   screw   has   been[ser] fastened/ twisted

(52) a. *La   puerta   está   cerrada/ pintada.*
          the   door   is[estar] closed/   painted
      b. *El   tornillo está   apretado/ retorcido.*
          the   screw   is[estar] fastened/ twisted

As illustrated, eventive passives are built with *ser* (51), while stative passives are built with *estar* (52) (Bosque 1990; Fernández Leborans 1995; Jaeggli 1986; Luján 1981, among many others). This is what we observe for telic predicates, whose participles have the double possibility to denote the resulting state of a previous event, as in (52), or to denote the complete event, as in (51). Crucially, in the case of activities or processes, only eventive passives are available because the participle does not have the possibility to denote the resulting state that follows the completion of the event, as these events are atelic and lack a natural endpoint. Thus, only *ser* is allowed because the participle must denote an event.

(53) a. *El   coche   {fue/   *estuvo}   empujado.*
          the   car   was[ser]/ was[estar]   pushed
      b. *La   gata   {es/   *está}   acariciada.*
          the   cat   is[ser]/ is[estar]   caressed

In the passive, then, we have another context where *ser* directly associates to event interpretations, this time not expressed by the subject but rather by the complement of the copula. As in the case of locative copular sentences, this property should be *a priori* unexpected if the only information that the copulas care about is the distinction between IL and SL predicates. This would be incompatible with a view in which *ser* is the default member of the set of copulas and lacks any type of selectional restrictions.

Of course, we should keep in mind that, in general, Individual Level predicates are associated with the copula *ser*, and Individual Level predicates are the purest form of non-eventive element, something that is – in principle – difficult to integrate with the present empirical overview, where *ser* is related directly to eventive

interpretations. The picture is, then, extremely puzzling: what should IL predicates have in common with events, to the exclusion of SL predicates?

Then, we move on to the second problem mentioned at the end of Section 2, namely, whether it is possible to integrate this empirical picture with the more general uses of the copulative verbs in other predicative contexts. In order to do so, we will revise a number of approaches to the locative copula and the nature of copulative verbs in general, to see which ingredients they provide as tools to potentially explain this connection.

4 An assessment of existing accounts and a possible way forward

As we have already illustrated, the facts in Section 2 suggest that it is not possible to give a general unified account of the *ser/estar* distribution based on a single difference, such as the IL versus SL distinction, at least if locative and adjectival uses of the copulas are to be treated as reflecting the same structure. The empirical view in the case of locative copular sentences is as follows:

 (i) Within the domain of locative sentences, *ser* selects eventive locations
(ii) Within the domain of locative sentences, *estar* selects stative locations

In this section, we will review several prominent analyses of the locative uses of *ser* and *estar*, and critically assess them in terms of what these analyses are able to capture and what they leave unexplained. In this review, we will also make the effort of confronting some other analyses that do not directly discuss the locative uses, to see how they can be extended to cover these cases. Given the extremely high number of studies about the Spanish copulas, it will be impossible to cover all analyses with their variations, and we will focus on a relatively small set that we consider representative of the main approaches to the contrast.

We will divide the approaches using two parameters: (i) whether their goal is to unify the use of *ser* and *estar* within the same type of contrast and (ii) whether *ser* is assumed to be an absolute default lacking any specification. See Leonetti et al. (2015) for a different type of overview, where they concentrate on the problem of whether the distinction is lexical, syntactic, or semantic.

In this overview, we present five approaches that attempt to unify the locative uses with the use in combination with adjectives, and one that treats them as different (Section 4.6). Among the unifying approaches, two treat *ser* as lacking a feature that *estar* has (Sections 4.1 and 4.2), two associate different positive

specifications to each copula (Sections 4.3 and 4.4) and one assimilates the location of events to the building of IL predicates (Section 4.5).

4.1 Unifying approaches based on underspecified *ser* (1): prepositional nature

There is a first family of analyses that try to account for locative copular sentences by integrating them with other uses of the copula within a system that adopts one single aspectual distinction that is based in the IL/SL or the imperfective/perfective dichotomy. Two works that, from different perspectives, fall into this class are Brucart (2010, 2012) and Zagona (2012).

The two works share the crucial assumption that the copula *ser* is the underspecified copula, which emerges when some additional information is missing or when that additional information has been licensed by some other element, typically an internal property of the predicate or subject.

Moreover, their analyses relate *estar* to some prepositional content. In both Brucart and Zagona, but with different perspectives, *estar* is marked by a prepositional feature that needs to be licensed by material in the copula, following initial intuitions of Benveniste (1966) that treat some more complex light verbs as manifestations of a default copulative verb combined with a preposition.

Brucart (2012) proposes to reinterpret the traditional IL/SL dichotomy in a locative framework by assimilating it to the central coincidence versus terminal coincidence contrast in the prepositional domain (Hale 1986; Hale and Keyser 2002). This way, individual-level predicates would be characterized by central coincidence relations, and stage-level predicates would correspond to terminal coincidence relations, which are also the ones used to express paths of motion. Following Gallego and Uriagereka (2016), Brucart proposes that *estar* is the copula that licenses a terminal coincidence relation, and is therefore introduced when the complement of the copula contains such preposition (54). *Ser* is unmarked with respect to the coincidence relation and therefore emerges whenever the terminal coincidence relation is not present or has been licensed by another element, which is the crucial property in the context of locative copular structures.

(54) a. $[_{vP}$ estar $[_{RP}$ … R_T …]]
 b. *Luis está cansado.*
  Luis is[estar] tired
 c. *El coche está en el garaje.*
  the car is[estar] in the garage

(55)   a. $[_{vP}$ ser $[_{RP} \dots R_C \dots]]$

       b.   *Luis   es   honesto.*
           Luis   is^{ser} honest

       c.   *La   fiesta   es   en   el   garaje.*
           the   party   is^{ser} in   the   garage

The configuration illustrated in (54a) corresponds to the combination of *estar* with a stage-level adjective. The structure includes a terminal coincidence preposition contained in the complement of *estar*, where the assumption is that a predication structure marked as terminal coincidence is projected above the predicate. This terminal coincidence predication is licensed by the copula *estar*, which contains an ad hoc feature to license this type of relation. Brucart, furthermore, proposes that all locations contain a terminal coincidence preposition. When the located entity is a physical object, the *estar* copula has to be introduced in order to license the terminal coincidence relation.

     The use of *ser* with event subjects and with path subjects emerges because in those configurations, even though the locative structure introduces a terminal coincidence relation, the subject that is located in the prepositional structure is able to license the terminal coincidence relation before the copula is introduced (2012: 18).

(56)   a. $[_{vP}$ ser $[_{RP} [DP^{RT}] R_T \dots]]$

       b.   *El   concierto   es   a   las   tres.*
           the   concert   is^{ser} at   the   three
           'The concert is at three o'clock.'

       c.   *La   parada   de   taxis   es   por   allí.*
           the   stop   of   taxis   is^{ser} over   there
           'The taxi stand is that way'

For (56b), Brucart's proposal is that the event noun in the subject position is initially introduced as the specifier of the terminal coincidence relation. This subject, denoting an event, contains a feature R_T that licenses the locative relation. This makes it unnecessary to introduce *estar* to license this feature. Consequently, *ser* is introduced as a default copula. Similarly, in (56c), the subject is interpreted as a path and therefore also contains a feature R_T, which again licenses the locative relation without *estar*. In this spatial theory of aspect, then, terminal coincidence relations identify with paths of movement, and events are defined as containing a path that is mapped as the progression of the event itself.

     Brucart's account has several shortcomings. We have already argued in Section 3.1 that path copular sentences are in fact possible without any type of relevant path interpretation. One could also raise questions about the syntactic locality of the relation that allows a DP subject to license the R_T feature of the prepositional

structure: presumably, event nouns, which are projections headed by determiners and quantifiers, would carry the information about their eventive nature in the lexical N layer, that is, this information would be embedded within a complex constituent in a specifier position, which is a configuration that has been treated as a syntactic island in many approaches (cf. Uriagereka 1992, for instance).

However, perhaps the main problem of Brucart's analysis is to know the nature of this R_T feature, and how its content maps onto identifiable and recognizable properties of the structures involved. It is crucial in Brucart's account that all kinds of locative relations are defined by the feature R_T even though they seem to be basically stative, while at the same time, the feature R_T must be contained in event nouns but not in other nominals with temporal properties, such as state nouns. Remember from Section 2 that state nouns are also located with *estar*, which means, for Brucart's approach, that they cannot contain the feature R_T. It is less than optimal that R_T is a property that needs to identify all locative structures, but at the same time, it is severely restricted in the nominal realm to only event nouns and nouns interpreted as paths.

Zagona's (2012) approach shares with Brucart's the intuition that the copula *ser* is a default element, and in her approach *ser* inherits or projects whatever aspectual information is contained in its complement. The analysis proposes that the range of complements that *estar* can select is determined by a formal feature [uP] *estar* has, and forces it to combine with a prepositional structure.

(57)   estar: [v [*u*P] …]

Ser would then be introduced as a default option. Zagona (2012: 305) assumes a relational theory of aspect and tense (Klein 1994) where, categorially and configurationally, aspectual relations are expressed through prepositional structures, and proposes that *estar* has a unified selectional capacity, selecting an abstract aspectual P – for instance, when used as an auxiliary in the progressive (58) – or a locative P, which explains the extended use of *estar* in locative contexts even when the interpretation is not an SL one.

(58)   *Juan   está   comiendo.*
         Juan   is[estar]   eating

In terms of the nature of [*u*P], Zagona (2012) states that *estar* only selects for (stative) prepositions expressing a single location. Complex prepositions that include a path or a direction are not compatible with *estar*. This is why, Zagona argues, (59a) is grammatical, while (59b) is not: in her approach, *a* is a path preposition equivalent to 'to', and *estar* forces the path prepositions to be absent from the structure.

(59)   a.   *Juan   está   en   casa.*
           Juan   is^{estar} in   home
           'Juan is at home.'

       b.   **Juan   está   a   casa.*
           Juan   is^{estar} to   home
           'Juan is to home.'

In (59b), the [*u*P] feature of *estar* cannot be checked by *a*. According to Zagona (2012), this also explains why *estar* is ungrammatical with PPs that locate events (60): like in Brucart's analysis, the eventive nouns contain a feature equivalent to a path preposition, and this feature is incompatible with licensing the [*u*P] feature of *estar*.

(60)   *La   reunión   {es/   *está}   a   las   ocho.*
        the   meeting   is^{ser}/   is^{estar} at   the   eight
        'The meeting is at eight o'clock.'

Along the same lines, Zagona (2012) argues that the participial phrases in (61a) and (61b) differ in structure in a manner analogous to the location versus directional PP sentences discussed above, with eventive readings having a path preposition and stative readings having a place preposition and no path preposition. Since eventive passives contain a path, only *ser* can be chosen as an auxiliary verb.

(61)   a.   *Los   exámenes   serán   corregidos   mañana.*
           the   exams   will.be^{ser} marked   tomorrow

       b.   *Los   exámenes   estarán   corregidos   mañana.*
           the   exams   will.be^{estar} marked   tomorrow

Zagona's analysis faces a crucial problem, similar to Brucart's, with respect to the configurational relation where the path preposition interferes with the presence of *estar*. In fact, for Zagona (2012) it should be crucial that path prepositions are ungrammatical with *estar* complements, but we already saw (Section 3.1) that this is far from being evident, and in fact prepositions that normally denote paths give a Cresswellian End-of-journey reading with *estar*. This is in principle problematic for her analysis, as she would need to derive the semantic interpretation involving a location at the end of a path from a structure that in theory should not contain a path structure. Of course, Zagona (2012) could argue with Svenonius (2010) that the Cresswellian location reading is caused when the path preposition is embedded under a locative preposition (62a), and that in such context the path preposition does not block the presence of *estar* because it is embedded under a more complex constituent. However, if (62a) saves the derivation, it is unclear why the presence of a (temporal) path in event nouns would be incompatible with *estar*, as presumably that feature, contained in the lexical layer of the nominal constituent, would be

embedded under determiners, quantifiers, and potentially significant chunks of functional structure (62b).

(62) a. [Ploc   … [Ppath …]]
     b. [DP/QP   … [NP^Ppath …]]

Finally, a problem of Zagona's analysis that Brucart's does not have relates to the default presence of *ser*. Note that in Brucart (2012), *ser* is the default because it does not license any other structure; if the structure that the copula combines with needs to be licensed, *estar* is introduced. In contrast, in Zagona (2012), *ser* is the default because it does not need to be licensed by another structure; the structure below the copula does not need to be licensed by *estar* in any case. In practice, this means that in Zagona's analysis *ser* could combine with locative structures in any case, and thus that there is no direct way to block (63).

(63) *El   libro   es   en   la   mesa.*
      the   book   is^ser on   the   table
      Intended: 'The book is on the table'

Zagona acknowledges this problem and offers two preliminary suggestions, one of which is that the structure of the locative copula might be different from the one used otherwise, defining *estar* as the main locative copula. The second possibility is that *ser,* being the default, can be introduced when no more specific element (in this case, *estar*) is introduced, but note that in her analysis nothing of the PP structure calls for the presence of *estar* – it is the opposite, *estar* calls for the prepositional structure.

4.2 Unifying analyses based on underspecified *ser* (2): anchoring to an external situation or contextual parameter

There are also analyses that argue that *ser* lacks a specification that *estar* contains, but do not play around with prepositional contents. Here we will highlight two works, one that proposes that *estar* spatiotemporally anchors the predication to a reference situation (Escandell 2018), and one that uses the notion of contextual boundedness (Sánchez Alonso 2018).

The starting point of Escandell (2018) is that, within the domain of adjectival predicates, *estar* introduces the presupposition that there should be a relevant and specific situation that the predication relates with; in contrast, the function of *ser* is only to support the predicative relation. Adopting the notation in Maienborn (2005), Escandell (2018; see also Arche 2006; Escandell and Leonetti 2002) adopts the entry in (64b) for *estar*, where, in contrast to *ser*, *estar* introduces an abstract relation A between the predication e and an external situation s_e.

(64)   a.   ser: λPλxλe [P(x)≈e]
       b.   estar: λPλxλe ∃s$_e$ [[P(x) ≈e] & [A(e,s$_e$)]]

When *estar* combines with a stage-level predicate, which in itself predicates from spatiotemporal stages or slices of the individual, there is a complete matching in features. When, on the other hand, the predicate is the individual level, there is a mismatch in features that is resolved by the meaning of *estar* imposing a coerced interpretation of the predicate forcing it to adopt a stage-level-like interpretation. The lexical properties of the adjective do not get altered, and the combination be-tween *estar* and the adjective is a case of semantic composition where the copula imposes its interpretation. This makes it possible to explain so-called evidential uses of *estar* (Mangialavori 2013), where *estar* does not impose the reading that the properties are temporally bound when exhibited by the subject, or that there is any comparison between stages of the individual, but rather that the speaker commits herself to the belief that the property is truthfully predicated from the subject and that she has first-hand experience of that property (Escandell 2018: 79). In (65), the speaker signals that she has tasted the paella and has concluded, in this first-hand experience, that is exquisite.

(65)   *Esta   paella   está   exquisita.*
       this   paella   is^{estar} exquisite

It is difficult, from our perspective, to understand exactly how this account can cover the location of events and the path of copular sentences that have been described above. The use of *estar* in the location of individuals, states, properties and so on might be included in the analysis if, along Brucart (2012), one proposes that any location act is in fact an act that requires to take as a point of reference an external entity, defining as 'external' the reference point employed to locate the subject. However, the question that would emerge is what makes that reference point different when the located entity is an event: would that reference point, then, be internal to the situation and not external? The approach might be able to make a claim along these lines if it accepts the core claims of Leonetti (1994) (see Section 4.5 below), where the temporal and locative dimensions are inherent properties of events that are not predicated from them. If it is possible to extend the event account to path copular sentences, this approach might be successful in accommodating also these facts, but we believe that it is fair to say that the approach has not developed an explicit account of these cases yet.

Another work that follows the same spirit, where *estar* relates the predication to some external parameters is Sánchez Alonso (2018). Also inspired by Maienborn's (2005) presuppositional account, Sánchez Alonso proposes that *estar*, as the marked copulative verb, introduces a boundedness-presupposition. Following Maienborn

(2005), *ser* signals that the circumstance of evaluation *i* is not the minimal verifying circumstance: in other words, it signals that when the parametric properties of the circumstances of evaluation change – time, space, degree expectation, etc.– the predication with *ser* continues to be true. In contrast, *estar* signals that the truth of the evaluation depends on a changeable contextual parameter so that the claim made is boundedly true with respect to one of the contextually determined parameters (Sánchez Alonso 2018: 92): that is, for instance, how she captures that *Juan está guapo* 'Juan is[estar] handsome' does not allow us to guarantee that Juan is handsome if the contextual temporal value changes. This boundedness to a contextual parameter can be temporal (referring to a time period, (66a)), spatial (66b) or signal-lowered contextual standards (66c) where a speaker had a previous expectation that is not confirmed (Sánchez Alonso 2018: 95). For instance, in a sentence such as *Los zapatos me están anchos* 'The shoes are[estar] wide for me', Sánchez Alonso (2018: 104) argues that *estar* is possible because context provides a certain degree of wideness that is exceeded by the shoes.

(66) a. *Estás   muy   monja   últimamente.*
          are[estar]   very   nun-like   lately
          Intended: 'You act a lot like a nun lately.'

      b. *En el   kilómetro tres   la   carretera está   ancha.* [adapted]
          in   the   kilometer three   the   road   is[estar] broad
          'The road is broad at km 3'

      c. *Vale,   ese   edificio   está   alto.*
          ok,   that   building   is[estar]   tall

These results are very solid when adjectival attributes are considered (see, in fact, Sánchez Alonso et al. 2017, for experimental results), but they are difficult to extend to the location of events and path structures. The authors would need to argue that events lack any type of contextually-relevant parameters that could vary across time, space or degree, but (see below, Section 4.4) there are clear cases where events involve change across degree values. In this case, for us, the problem is that it becomes very difficult to interpret in which sense a sentence like (65), which is normally taken to be an IL location, involves some sort of contextually determined parameter that makes the sentence boundedly true.

(65) *España   está   en   Europa.*
      Spain   is[estar]   in   Europe

Sánchez Alonso (2018: 96) needs to say that in such cases there is a neutral reading of the verb *estar*, which follows from the absence of a difference between the expected (spatial) value p and its value in the context of evaluation. It is unclear to us, however, why Spanish would not simply use *ser* in such cases where using the stronger *estar*

has no effect. Sánchez Alonso's (2018: 112) approach is extended for locative cases so that what is contextually bound in sentences like (65) is the world parameter, that is, the speaker compares to all other worlds which are identical in any property but the location of the subject, which would take us to the metaphysical question of whether the speaker who says (65) automatically entertains the possibility that Spain might have been on any other continent. We do not discard that such examples can be included in a further extension of the approach, but it is fair to conclude that this integration has not been performed yet.

Finally, Sánchez Alonso (2018) addresses the case of path copular sentences, which she treats as a subcase of the location of events – a position that we have independently adopted in this article. The so-called path copular sentences are, in fact, sentences that locate an entity where an event will take place, for instance, an exiting event in (66).

(66)   *¿Dónde   es   la   salida?*
       where   is[ser]   the   exit?

In her proposal, what is crucial in (66) is that the exit is not at-issue content (Simons et al. 2017), because the content of *la salida* is presupposed to be known on the common ground. This means that there cannot be falsifying circumstances: the addressee is assumed to know the existence of the exit, and the question is not about the location of that exit, but about how one can get out of the building (Sánchez Alonso 2018: 116). As there can be several ways of exiting the building, one cannot assume that the answer would be the only one that maximally satisfies the circumstances of evaluation, and as such *estar* cannot be used in this context. This is, however, more complex when the verb appears outside of a question, and a speaker answers something like (67), where it is explicitly stated that there is only one way to exit the building. *Ser* can still be used in this context.

(67)   *La   única   salida   es   en   el   segundo   piso.*
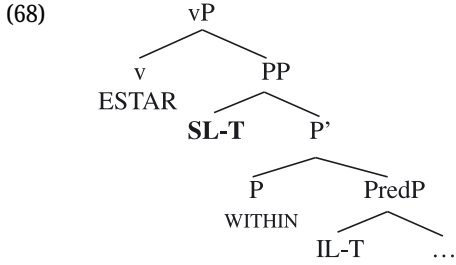   the   only   exit   is[ser]   in   the   second   floor

This is an interesting approach that gives an answer to many of the puzzles that other theories cannot cover, and at least makes an explicit proposal about how it can be extended to the uses of *ser* with events and paths, which are assumed also to connect to events. However, this is done at the cost of making some potentially problematic assumptions about the intention of the speaker when stating (65) or (66): one has to assume in the first case that the speaker always entertains the possibility that an object could be located in some other place, and in the second case one has to assume that the subject is never at-issue content and other alternatives to perform the event are present.

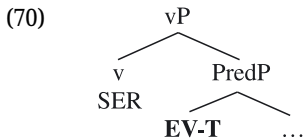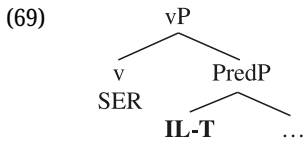## 4.3 Unifying analysis with non-default *ser* (1): IL predicates, events and temporal intervals

The previous approaches discussed share with many other analyses of the copula the assumption that *ser* is the default element, and *estar* is the only one that specifies its selectional restrictions. We start here with an overview of theories that treat *ser* as equally specified as *estar*: the two copulas are associated with a contrasting pair of elements, time intervals or degree objects. These approaches avoid overgenerating structures, as they block that *ser* combines with arguments that in principle must combine with *estar*. In contrast, they face the problem of how they can group together IL predicates and events to the exclusion of SL predicates, which is empirically required by the distribution of the copulas. Here, we will divide these theories into three main approaches: one where the distinction is based on the nature of the temporal objects that each copula selects (Section 4.3), one where the distinction has to do with the class of comparison or the scale associated with the adjective (Section 4.4), and one based in the more standard IL versus SL distinction (Section 4.5), but attempting to integrate it with locative copular sentences.

To the best of our knowledge, the best example of the first type of analysis is García-Pardo and Menon (2020). These authors propose that the contrast between *ser* and *estar* has as its origin the nature of the time arguments of the predicates that are selected by each one of the copulas. The specification of each copula is equally definite: *ser* combines with predicates whose time argument denotes an interval, irrespective of whether that interval corresponds to an event or a state. In contrast, *estar* is selected when the time argument associated with the predicate denotes a point in time, that is, a nonextended temporal object (cf. Piñón 1997 for a substantiation of the ontological assumptions behind this, with boundaries and bodies that combine to produce full-fledged temporal objects).

Even if both *ser* and *estar* have equally definite selectional restrictions, in line with other authors Fábregas (2012), Zagona (2012), and García-Pardo and Menon (2020) propose that SL predicates are derived from IL predicates. As illustrated in (68), stage-level predicates contain in their structure individual-level predicates. Individual-level predicates consist of a simple predicational structure with only one temporal argument (IL-T). The stage level predicate builds, on top of the predication, a relational PP structure that carries a prepositional head with a WITHIN meaning – roughly comparable to Brucart's central coincidence relation – which introduces a second temporal argument. The SL-T argument is a point in time (Stage-Level Time) which is located by the P WITHIN as being part of the interval denoted by the IL-T (Individual-Level Time) introduced by Pred.

(68)
```
              vP
          ┌────┴────┐
          v         PP
        ESTAR    ┌───┴───┐
               SL-T      P'
                     ┌────┴────┐
                     P        PredP
                  WITHIN    ┌───┴───┐
                          IL-T     …
```

IL predicates only have a predicational structure marked with an IL-T, which denotes the whole interval in which the individual manifests a given property (69). Importantly, both SL and IL predicates are different from eventive predicates, which only have an EV-T argument (Event Time) that denotes the whole interval in which the event holds – that is, like IL predicates, the temporal argument of events denotes an interval in (70).

(69)
```
            vP
        ┌────┴────┐
        v        PredP
       SER     ┌───┴───┐
             IL-T      …
```

(70)
```
            vP
        ┌────┴────┐
        v        PredP
       SER     ┌───┴───┐
             EV-T      …
```

As can be seen in (69)–(70), in contrast to (68) the copula emerges as *ser*. The reason why, according to these authors, is that *ser* picks time intervals – and it does not care if these time intervals are stative (69) or eventive, as in (70) – whereas *estar* picks moments in time, i.e. instants (68). This unifying approach splits the domain of temporal objects into two parts, equally positively defined. Its main problem is, however, how to characterize in a unified way the type of temporal object that *estar* selects. There is no clear evidence that *estar* chooses instants; prima facie, it is rather the opposite. Note, to begin with, that most *estar* predicates have a duration that in fact can be explicitly marked with a phrase involving *desde* 'since' or *durante* 'for', which denotes that the situation described by the predicate holds

at any single temporal point in the interval defined by the modifier. This is the case in adjectival copulative sentences (71a), locative sentences (71b), and passives (71c).

(71) a. *Eva   está   enferma   desde   ayer.*
     Eva   is[estar]   sick   since   yesterday

   b. *Juan   estuvo   en   la   oficina   (durante)   varias   horas.*
     Juan   was[estar]   in   the   office   for   several   hours

   c. *El   coche   está   reparado   desde   ayer.*
     the   car   is[estar]   repaired   since   yesterday

At the same time, it is not clear that *ser* always picks intervals; according to the standard characterization of achievements since Vendler (1967), achievements express events that lack a temporal extension. At least initially, one should accordingly expect that event nominals corresponding to achievements (72a) or the eventive passive of achievements (72b) should combine with *estar*, not with *ser*, but that expectation goes against the attested facts.

(72) a. *{Su   llegada/   su   desaparición}   {fue/   *estuvo}   a   las   tres.*
     her   arrival/   his   disappearance   was[ser]/   was[estar]   at   the   three
     'Her arrival/His disappearance took place at three o'clock.'

   b. *El   cadáver   {fue/   #estuvo}   encontrado   a   las   3:05   de   la   mañana.*
     the   corpse   was[ser]/   was[estar]   discovered   at   the   3.05   of   the   morning

   c. **El   cadáver   fue   encontrado   durante   varias   horas.*
     the   corpse   was[ser]   found   for   several   hours

Yet, perhaps the strongest problem of this approach is that, as we have repeatedly observed, it is not true that any locative copular sentence with *estar* is an SL predicate. Sentences like (73) seem to behave as IL predicates, and in fact intuitively express situations that denote intervals and not points included within an internal, but still take *estar*. Like Brucart's (2012) problem that he has to consider any location an SL location, this approach would have to treat any location (not involving an event) as an SL location, against facts such as (73b).

(73) a. *Barcelona   está   en   el   Mediterráneo.*
     Barcelona   is[estar]   in   the   Mediterranean

   b. **Siempre   que   Barcelona   está   en   el   Mediterráneo,   vamos*
     always   that   Barcelona   is[estar]   in   the   Mediterranean,   we.go
     a   la   playa.
     to   the   beach
     Intended: 'Whenever Barcelona is in the Mediterranean, we go to the beach.'

4.4 Unifying analysis with non-default *ser* (2): scales and comparison classes determine the distribution

In a series of works, Gumiel-Molina and Pérez-Jiménez (2012) and Gumiel-Molina et al. (2015, 2020: Ch. 5) advocate for the idea that the degree properties of the predicate underlie the distribution of the two copulas. These authors have modified their proposal across time: in their (2012) work, inspired by Husband (2010), their proposal was that adjectives whose internal scales are open act as homogeneous properties, while those that have closed scales behave as quantized predicates. *Estar* would signal the presence of a quantized predicate, that is, a predicate with a closed scale. In (2015) and (2020: Ch. 5), however, their claim – still concentrating on the degree structure of the adjective – is that what is crucial is not the scalar structure of the adjective per se, but the distinction between relative and absolute adjectives reflected on the type of class of comparison that their DegP head introduces as a second argument. The reason is that they find that some adjectives with a closed scale (74) (cf. the modifier *completamente* 'completely', restricted to closed scales; Kennedy and McNally 2005) can combine with *ser* (Gumiel-Molina et al. 2015: 959).

(74)   *La   cortina   {es/   está}   completamente   transparente.*
         the   curtain   is^ser/   is^estar   completely   transparent

On the reasonable assumption that the scalar properties of an adjective are lexically determined, they modify the analysis so that the distinction is defined on the functional structure that dominates the adjective, specifically depending on a degree head *pos* defined as (75) (Gumiel-Molina et al. 2015: 982).

(75) $[[_{Deg}pos]] = \lambda g\lambda P\lambda x.g(x) \geq M(g)(P)$

The class of comparison defines a set of properties (P) and, following Fults (2006) it is interpreted as the second argument of the M function that sets the standard degree. Gumiel-Molina et al. (2015) assume that relative adjectives involve comparison between individuals and absolute adjectives involve comparison within an individual, involving different stages of the same subject. This is a distinction that goes back to Crespo (1946) and has Falk (1979) and his distinction between general and individual norms as one of its modern proponents. Given this, the distinction between *ser* and *estar* is one that depends on whether the comparison class defines a set of individuals for comparison (between individuals) or different stages or slices of one individual (within one individual) (cf. also Sassoon and Toledo 2011).

We find two problems with this particular approach. In order to account for the use of *ser* with event subjects (as (12a) above), it is crucial for these authors that events lack scalar structure that allows them to participate in within-individual

comparison. The problem is that, according to many theories, scalar structure and degree structure underlie at least some event types, particularly degree achievements (Filip 2008; Hay et al. 1999; Kearns 2007) and predicates with incremental objects that measure the degree of change (Krifka 1986; Leisi 1953; Mourelatos 1978; Tenny 1987; Verkuyl 1972). Specifically, it is possible to construct event nominals built on verbs that contain an incremental change that affects an internal argument, and which is measured according to the degree properties of a base adjective (76). That argument, as far as we can tell, is associated with a within-individual comparison that compares different stages of the individual as the event proceeds.

(76)　　*Juan calienta el agua de la bañera a las cuatro cada día.*
　　　　Juan warms　the water of the bathtub at the four　　each day

The equivalent event nominalization, used as a subject, uses *ser* even though a within-individual comparison is present in the associated event.

(77)　　*El calentamiento del agua es cada día a las cuatro.*
　　　　the warming　　of-the water is^ser each day at the four

Gumiel-Molina et al. (2015) could argue that the degree information is not local to the V node where the copulative is introduced, but note that in their analysis (Gumiel-Molina et al. 2015: 991) the relation between Deg and V does not need to be local: at a minimum, PredP is interposed between the two. In fact, in an example like (77), Deg is closer to V than in a normal copulative structure, because Deg is contained within the subject of predication, which c-commands Pred.

　　　The second problem is that within-individual comparison is impossible in some cases where *estar* is used. Bazaco (2017) is another example of an analysis that uses degree to explain the distribution of the two copulas. In his case, scalar structure – not comparison classes – is the entity directly associated with the two copulas: *estar* associates with cales that have an endpoint When an adjective naturally lacks it, a natural process must be inferred that provides a scalar interval to interpret the situation. Admittedly, Bazaco explains that his approach only considers adjectival attributes with degree. One such example of a scalar interval is the so-called evidential use of *estar* (Mangialavori 2013):

(78)　　*El nuevo disco de U2 está genial.*
　　　　the new　album　by U2 is^estar great
　　　　(Bazaco 2017: 161)

In (78), there is no possible within-individual comparison and there is no access to any slices of the individual. Bazaco's claim is that what licenses *estar* here is that one reports his or her experience in interacting with the subject, and that experience defines that the property genial is attained in a higher degree than expected: the

evidential use introduces a standout interval of comparison for the subject (Bazaco 2017: 165). Given that there is some distance that is exceeded, an endpoint becomes a relevant part of the semantic interpretation of the scale even for adjectives that lack a closed scale.

Note, however, that, as Bazaco (2017: 92) admits, his scalar-based analysis is restricted to adjectival predicates. Paths are conceptualized often as spatial instances of scales, i.e., sets of exhaustively ordered points across a dimension. In Bazaco's analysis, the path copular sentences (remember examples like 43) should use *estar*: the meaning of (79) is that the addressee should follow a path whose endpoint is the location of the subject and as such that path has an endpoint. However, it is constructed with *ser*.

(79)   *La*   *farmacia*   *es*   *al*   *otro*   *lado*   *del*   *puente.*
         the   pharmacy   is[ser]   at-the   other   side   of-the   bridge
         'To arrive at the pharmacy, you have to go to the other side of the bridge.'

4.5 Unifying analyses with non-default *ser* (3): locating events produces an IL predicate

There is a third significant attempt to unify the copulas in a system where none of the copulas is a default element in the strict sense that one of the two verbs lacks any positive specification. Within this view, the location in space or time of an event results in an IL predicate, in the relevant sense that the time and place where an event takes place are in fact inherent and definitional characteristics of an event. Thus, these properties cannot be treated as stage-level properties, that is, as external properties of the situation where the event is placed. To the best of our knowledge, this reasoning has been proposed for Spanish by Leonetti (1994); see also Huyghe and Azzopardi (2019) for a modern manifestation of this idea.

The crucial intuition is that events are intrinsically coded with space and time information. An instantiation of an event is judged as the same or different from another instantiation of the same event according to whether their temporal and spatial coordinates are the same or not. If John and Mary argue at Peter's party on April the 4th and then again John and Mary argue on their car when going back home two hours later, we interpret that as two different events of John and Mary arguing, while we consider that we are talking of the same John and Mary, even if they are located in different places and times in the two eventualities. From this perspective, the time and the place where an event take place are definitional properties of the event, and any location of an event in space or time would build an IL predicate. Then, (80a) is an instance of an IL predicate, like (80b), and the differences – for instance that (80a) can

be quantified over time and (80b) cannot – could follow simply from the nature of the subject involved, which contains event information that allows the quantification; the copula and the predicate would not introduce a temporal variable in either case.

(80) a. *La   llegada   del   tren   es   a   las   dos.*
       the   arrival   of.the   train   is[ser]   at   the   two
    b. *Juan   es   alto.*
       Juan   is[ser]   tall
    c. *Siempre que {la llegada del   tren es   a las dos/ *Juan es   alto}* …
       always   that the arrival of.the train is[ser] at the two/ Juan is[ser] tall

Note that, at any instance, this approach would put the focus of the explanation not on the type of objects with which each one of the copulas combines, but rather on the interpretative result that is obtained once the copula is combined with the predicate and its subject. The approach in principle does not consider that in one case there is eventive information and in the other, there is not. This is so because in this approach a PP like *en el tercer piso* 'in the third floor' would not be grammatical or ungrammatical with either copula until the subject is identified in the structure, and it is the combination of the subject and the predicate – that is, the predication structure as a whole – that would be licensed as IL or SL, and therefore compatible with one or the other copula. To put it differently, in this approach there is no property of the copula or of its complement that has to be licensed by the other element. In this sense, it is only relevant that the property defined in the predicate, applied to that specific subject, counts as IL or SL. Romero (2009), who also emphasizes the role of the subject in the choice of the copula, arrives at a similar conclusion and can be characterized as roughly compatible with the general philosophy of these approaches.

There are, however, some shortcomings of this approach. Starting with a theoretical one, while there is a general consensus that the running time and temporal location of an event can be viewed as inherent properties of the event, it is not so clear that the same cannot be said about the spatial location of some individuals. It is clear that the location of an individual does not define such an individual, but with geographical names (remember for instance (73) above) one could expect that these nouns are defined inherently as having a location, in the same way that events inherently can be argued to have a location.

There might be some way out by introducing a second dimension beyond the IL versus SL property. Arche (2006), who does not address the combination of events with *ser*, proposes that *ser* has a classificatory function: *ser* is used whenever the predicate expresses a class where the individual falls. She proposes that locations are an external property of any individual, irrespective of its type, and this is how she accounts for the need for *estar* when locating all kinds of individuals. For Arche (2006), since the location of an individual does not define a class of the individual,

Juan es en Brasil 'Juan is[ser] in Brazil' is ungrammatical simply by this rule. *Estar* would be used, then, for properties that are external to the definitional properties of the individual. Perhaps, if the temporal and spatial location of an event can be interpreted as properties that define classes of the event – or its instantiation s– the approach could be adapted in a way that the distinction between IL and SL in *estar* locative sentences is reinterpreted as irrelevant.

4.6 Non-unifying analyses: locative copulas as structurally different

One last option would be not to unify the locative copular structures with the adjectival copulative cases. To be clear, the claim in such a type of analysis would be that the underlying structure of the locative copular predicates is substantially different from the one that is obtained in the cases where the copula combines with an adjective. This claim, although not directly made anywhere to the best of our knowledge in the literature on Spanish, is implicit, we believe, in some works that emphasize the existence of different structural conditions. We have already mentioned in passing that Zagona (2012), when acknowledging that her approach overgenerates the set of structures that can appear with *ser*, suggests that perhaps locative copular structures and 'normal' predicative structures with copulative verbs might have different structures. Although she does not provide structures to illustrate exactly what she has in mind or expands on her claim, she suggests that properties of DPs are 'simple predicates' while locations are transitive predicates that express a relation between a theme and a DP of location –roughly, a figure and a ground–. If so (and note that this approach would have to reject any type of relational structure for predicates, contra Brucart), one could propose that *estar* is the default copula for locative predicates while *ser* is the default copula for simple predicates.

Camacho (2012) also suggests that locative copular sentences have a different structure than other copular structures, proposing that locative copular structures might involve in fact a configuration where the locative is adjoined and not a complement (2012: 471).

Either way, we take it that if the proposal has to involve the claim that the locative copular structure is significantly different from the rest of the uses of the copula, the unification between the uses of the copula has not been reached. At best, in such cases, one would be talking about two structural configurations involving two different types of copulas, with a possible relation of syncretism on the surface that makes the two types of copulas be spelled out by the same set of verbs, *ser* and *estar* – unlike what happens, for instance, in languages like Portuguese, where the locative copula and the predicative copula can be expressed by different verbs.

In her extensive typological study, Pustet (2003: 47–54) documents a good number of languages where different copulas are used to express location in time or space, typically in combination with adverbials and adpositional phrases. Spanish, on the surface, does not seem to be this type of language, but if the analysis turns out to confirm that the structure of locative and other types of copular structures is different, the conclusion that Spanish in fact differentiates a set of locative copulas could be granted.

From this non-unificational perspective, the results presented in Section 2 would show that there is an asymmetry between the locative copulas and the other sets: in the locative copulas (81), the copula *estar* would be the default one, and *ser* would be the one that has the positive selectional restrictions that focus on events.

(81)   Locative copulas

   a.   *ser* = selects events
   b.   *estar* = elsewhere

In the set of adjectival copulas (82), *ser* would be the default copula. The two sets of copulas would hold a syncretism relation such as that both would be expressed with the same two verbs, *ser* and *estar*, and where presumably the association of *ser* to the event-taking copula in the locative domain might be facilitated by the general use of *ser* in predicative contexts as the opposite of a verb *estar*, that specializes in SL predicates.

(82)   Predicative copulas

   a.   *estar* = selects SL predicates
   b.   *ser* = elsewhere

As this study does not attempt to provide a unified analysis, its predictions are weaker and therefore it does not face the shortcomings of the other approaches. Its exploration, presumably, would require a broader typological study that focuses on whether Spanish has the syntactic and semantic properties that one finds commonly associated with languages that have locative copulas. With this, we finish our overview of the current proposals.

# 5 Conclusions: avenues for further research

In this contribution, we have put emphasis on providing a more complete empirical picture of the distribution of the Spanish copulas which integrates their locative and path uses and highlights the correlation between an event interpretation and the copula *ser*. The result suggests that, at least in the locative domain, the usual claim that *ser* is the default copula has to be nuanced: in this domain, it seems that *ser*

associates directly with events, while every other semantic category combines with *estar*. A second conclusion obtained from the empirical overview provided in this study is that the traditional approach, which only considers the IL versus SL distinction, breaks down in the locative domain unless important qualifications based on the ontology of nominals are introduced.

As a conclusion, we would like to consider two possible future lines of research that, in our opinion, can be used to define a more coherent analysis that integrates within the explanation the relation between *ser* and events.

Let us sketch the first option, which plays around with a possible way of structuring types of eventualities. One observation that seems to be common to the overview of all the approaches that have been revised in Section 4 is that it is not empirically correct to give a general, unified account of the *ser/estar* distribution based on a single aspectual opposition, such as IL versus SL, or terminal versus central coincidence. It seems that one has to consider more than one aspectual dimension.

On this note, Perpiñán et al. (2020) propose that the eventuality domain should be partitioned as in (83).

(83)
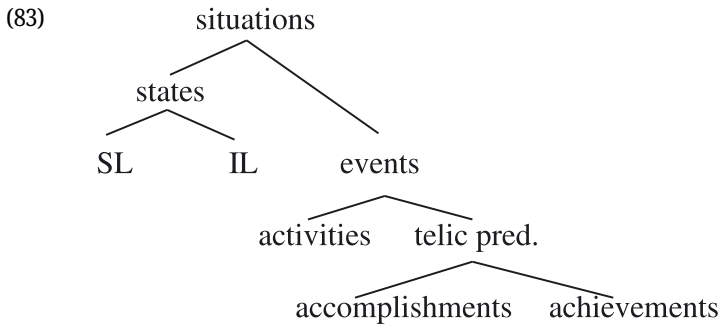
Within this hierarchical organization, it is possible to associate *estar* to only one branch in the eventuality domain, as represented in (84).

(84)
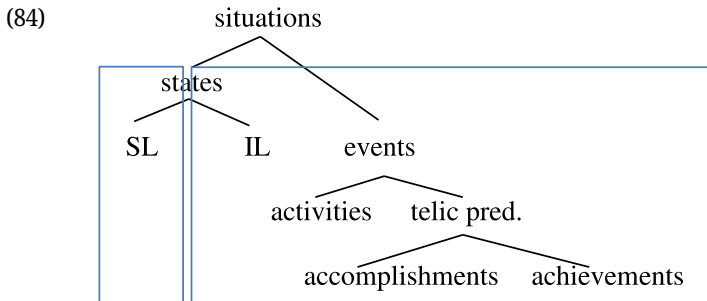
This type of approach would be one way of capturing the fact that *ser* acts in practice as a default copula: it emerges in all categories except for one. This type of assumption, we believe, could be implemented in most of the approaches adopted above – with the exception of the approaches in Sections 4.1 and 4.4, which explicitly attempt a unification based on one single feature or focus on degree and scales, which are outside of the domain of eventualities. A relevant question here, however, is why events and SL predicates – both characterized by spatiotemporal variables (Kratzer 1995) – would select different copulas. A second potentially problematic question would be the place that qualities used as subjects of predication should occupy in the above classification (cf. (29) above), given that nominalized IL qualities also combine with *estar*.

Let us now sketch the second approach, which we believe is more promising. The goal of this second approach is to fully integrate locations in the account of *ser/estar* while taking seriously the idea that *ser* is a default element. This approach starts from the intuition behind the approaches in Section 4.5, in particular, Leonetti (1994): with events, time and place location is not a property predicated from them, but an inherent parameter that defines the event as such. Note that time and, in many cases, place are factors that we use to identify an event and to determine whether two events are distinct or the same. If we see Juan writing in his office at 3 o'clock on the 3rd of May 2022, and then we see Juan writing in the kitchen at noon on the 4th of June 2022, we conclude that there are two distinct events of writing, but we do not conclude that there are two distinct individuals 'Juan'. This is what we expect if time and place are inherent parameters in an event but the spatial and temporal location, at any instance, are predicated as secondary properties of an individual.

We propose to implement this difference as follows: locating events in time and space is done directly, combining the event-denoting subject directly with the prepositional structure that specifies its time and place (85a). Locating any non-event in space requires additional functional structure, specifically Bowers' (1993, 2000) and Baker's (2002) Predication Phrase (85b) – cf. Fábregas (2012) – so that the prepositional structure corresponding to time and place is interpreted as a predicate of the subject. We assume a layered prepositional structure divided into the functional pP and the lexical PP layers, cf. Svenonius (2010).

(85) a.
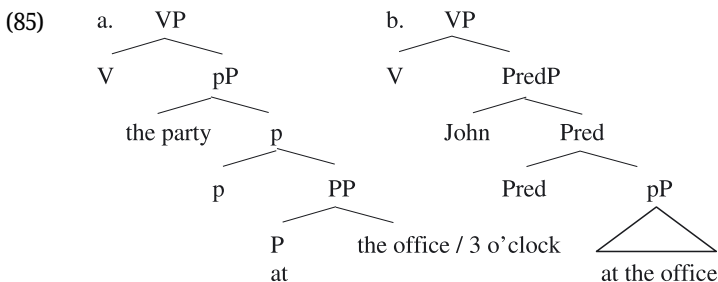
Additionally, in accordance with approaches in Sections 4.1–4.3, the predication structure used to introduce additional properties is different in the case of an IL predicate and an SL predicate, with the second involving a more marked version – where markedness might reflect an extra prepositional specification of terminal coincidence, a feature that imposes a presupposition of boundedness, association to an external situation, etc., depending on the specific implementation. This means that (85b) would have two versions, one specified as IL and one specified as SL.

In this account, *estar* reflects the presence of the more complex/more marked PredP structure, which accounts for its marked value. With Brucart (2012), we assume that the location in space of an individual is always interpreted as a secondary property that requires association with an external point of reference: from here it follows that the PredP with marked value will always be used with them.

In this approach, *ser* is defined as the default form in the following sense: it spells out V when there is no marked PredP, which includes both the structures with unmarked Pred and the structures like (85a). Once one introduces the proposal that time and place are directly combined with an event-denoting noun, *ser* emerges for lack of a PredP structure, and this guarantees its default nature. The coercion associated to *estar* (Section 4.2) would be an effect of the more complex specification of Pred. As in Escandell (2018) and Sánchez Alonso (2018), this approach allows us to keep the internal properties of the adjective invariable across IL and SL manifestations.

This connects with a second observation that we have emphasized in this article: there is a sufficient amount of empirical evidence that shows that the connection between *ser* and eventivity goes beyond the domain of locations. In the approaches discussed in Section 4.1, where *ser* is a default copula, the type of ingredients that events contain are incompatible with *estar* or make it unnecessary, and therefore impossible. In Sections 4.2 and 4.5, the association between *ser* and eventivity is due to events and IL predicates being indistinguishable under certain conditions, which can refer to the nature of the predication established with them or the type of arguments that they carry with them.

Although a complete integration of these approaches in one single organic account is out of the modest goals of this contribution, we hope that the observations and reflections that we have advanced in this article have thrown some light on the nuances of the locative copular construction in Spanish, and provided a broader empirical domain for the future discussion of these issues.

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