TWO TYPES OF IMPERSONAL SENTENCES IN SPANISH: LOCATIVE AND DATIVE SUBJECTS

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Abstract. This paper gives further support for the claim that the EPP feature in T and \( \varphi \)-features agreement/nominative Case assignment can be fulfilled by different elements. Some Spanish impersonal sentences will be analyzed that contain predicates selecting for a locative or dative as an external argument. The predicates under study are of two types: stative and eventive. The existential verb *haber* (which incorporates a locative clitic in the present tense verbal morphology) belongs to the first type. The verbs *suceder*, *ocurrir*, ‘to happen’, as well as meteorological verbs, belong to the second class. Data regarding word order, idiom formation, existential interpretation, raising, extraction from coordinate structures, and nominalization show that with these impersonal predicates the locative/dative PPs behave as real subjects, and contrast with those which appear in locative-inversion constructions, which involve anteposition of an internal argument. It will be shown that these arguments bear quirky Case and are generated in the highest node in the extended VP projection.

1. Introduction

In this paper I give further support for the claim that the so-called EPP feature in T and \( \varphi \)-feature agreement/nominative Case assignment have to be kept separate. More specifically, I pursue the idea that a nonagreeing, nonnominative phrase can fulfill T’s requirement to have a specifier, and that nominative Case can be assigned in postverbal position to an NP with the appropriate features, thereby triggering verbal agreement.\(^1\) I begin with a discussion of sentences that have traditionally been considered impersonal in Spanish grammar. The predicates involved in these sentences display a special behavior that makes them differ both from regular transitive or unergative and from unaccusative constructions. The common property of the predicates I analyze is that they select for a locative argument that can be shown to occupy the subject position. An argument with dative Case can also appear with this predicates. The paper is organized as follows. In section 2 I present the

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Spanish data regarding two types of constructions with locatives in preverbal position: one of them involves an eventive predicate, and the second one involves a stative predicate. The verb *ocurrir* ‘to happen’, as well as meteorological verbs are members of the former class (as in *En esta carretera ocurrió un accidente*, Lit. ‘in this road happened an accident’). Predicates with *faltar* ‘to miss/lack’, *constar* ‘to state’ (as in *En este impreso consta el nombre del responsable*, Lit. ‘in this form states the name of the responsible one’), as well as the existential verb *haber*, belong to the stative type. It will be shown first that the preverbal position for the locative is unmarked (i.e., it does not involve anteposition of this constituent). Data concerning idiom formation, existential interpretation, raising, extraction from coordinate structures, position in interrogatives, and nominalization also show that locative PPs behave as real subjects in impersonal constructions and contrast with those which appear in so-called locative-inversion constructions (LIC). In section 3 it is shown that the locative subject in Spanish impersonal sentences bears quirky Case. Evidence for this claim comes from restrictions on the choice for the preposition, as well as from floating quantification data, binding, and the behavior with infinitives. In section 4, I present some Spanish constructions which are similar to the ones with locatives but in which the quirky subject appears in the dative Case. The locative and the dative, in fact, will be shown to be in complementary distribution in these constructions. The raising verb *parecer* ‘seem’, which also takes a dative that blocks raising of the theme NP, will be analyzed. I also show some impersonal constructions with both locatives and datives as another instance of quirky (dative) subject construction. In section 5 a structure will be proposed for the two types of impersonal constructions (eventive/stative), based on the proposal that there is an additional node above VP. For the eventive cases I will accept that this node is an Event Phrase of the BECOME/HAPPEN type (Harley 1996) and will propose that its specifier can be filled by a locative. Static impersonal predicates will be claimed to present a structure similar to the one proposed for *have*, the locative occupying the higher node in the VP. The agreement pattern in impersonal constructions will be presented in section 6; the conclusion will be that AGREE may be a long-distance operation in Spanish, as it is in equivalent constructions in other languages (e.g., Icelandic). In section 7, other instances of locative/dative alternation will be analyzed. Data from Catalan and (Old and Modern) Spanish will suggest that the feature [+animate] is behind the alternation.

2. Locative Subjects: Two Types of Verbs

In Spanish there are two types of verbs that select for a locative PP which usually appears in preverbal position. The corresponding sentences that contain them have traditionally been considered as impersonal. The first type is represented by a class of unaccusative, stative verbs such as *faltar* ‘to miss/lack’, *sobrar* ‘to exceed/to be extra’, *constar* ‘to state’, among others. The
existential verb *haber* also belongs to this class. This verb has the peculiarity of incorporating a locative clitic *y* (the same as French *y* or Italian *ci*, which also appear in existentials), which used to exist in Old Spanish, into the present-tense verbal ending (*hay* = *ha* + *y*, ‘have + CLloc’).\(^2\) Below I give some examples:

(1) a. **En este impreso** consta que eres el responsable.
   ‘In this form it states that you are the responsible one.’

   b. **Aquí falta** / sobra café / un vaso.
   ‘Coffee / a glass is missing here.’

   c. **En esta tienda** hay pan.
   ‘In this shop there is bread.’

Verbs belonging to the second type are mostly eventive. The typical instances of this case are meteorological predicates, which can be a lexical verb or a combination of a light verb plus a noun or adjective with meteorological meaning. The verbs *suceder*, *ocurrir* ‘to happen’ also belong to this class. These verbs also take a locative that appears in sentence-initial position. The relevant examples are those in (2).

(2) a. **En Madrid** llueve / nieva / amanece.
   ‘It rains/snows/dawns in Madrid.’

   b. **En Barcelona** hace frío / calor / está nublado.
   ‘It is cold/hot/cloudy in Barcelona.’

   c. **En Barcelona** ha ocurrido un accidente.
   ‘An accident has happened in Barcelona.’

Although the evidence might not be fully conclusive, it seems reasonable to think that these verbs seem to be unergative, because they can take cognate objects (*llueve una lluvia finita* ‘it is raining a small rain’) (Pesetsky 1995; Marantz 1984) and they select for the equivalent to auxiliary *have* for perfect tenses in languages like Italian\(^3\) or French.\(^4\) Similarly, in Basque,\(^5\)

\(^2\) Freeze (1992) claims that existential verbs have locative subjects and proposes a derivational analysis in which a complement NP plus the preposition that selects for it raise to [Spec, IP] if the theme is [−definite]. My proposal differs from Freeze’s in that I will claim that the locative does not generate in complement but in subject position.

\(^3\) In Italian, in fact, these verbs alternate between choosing *be* and *have*. I thank an anonymous reviewer for bringing this fact to my attention.

\(^4\) See Ruwet 1989 for a different proposal.
meteorological verbs are formed with the equivalent to make plus a noun (so to rain translates into euria egin, ‘rain make’) just like most unergatives.

It has been observed for weather verbs that they must have a subject with some semantic content (Bolinger 1972; Chomsky 1981; Pesetsky 1995; among others). This is in fact what explains the well-known control phenomena shown in (3).

\[ (3) \]

\begin{enumerate}
\item a. Siempre llueve antes de nevar.
\hspace{1em} always rains before snowing
\hspace{1em} ‘It always rains before it snows.’
\item b. A veces nieva sin hacer frío.
\hspace{1em} sometimes snows without being cold
\hspace{1em} ‘Sometimes it snows without being cold.’
\item c. Siempre oscurece después de llover.
\hspace{1em} always darkens after raining
\hspace{1em} ‘It always darkens after raining.’
\end{enumerate}

The locatives in the sentences above always indicate the place in which the event or state originates and they are not (internal) arguments of the verb. There is, in fact, evidence that indicates that in all these cases the locative is the subject of the construction. First, the event/state is predicated of the preverbal PP in (1) and (2). Also, it is important to note that these constructions differ from those that involve anteposition of the PP, such as locative-inversion constructions, among other things, in that they show the unmarked order of constituents. In fact, information-structure considerations indicate that the locative appears in the position usually occupied by (agentive) subjects. The preferred position for the locative in the cases under study is preverbal, and it is interpreted as unmarked, topic, just like subjects usually are. More specifically, if focus propagates in a direct path from the most embedded element (Zubizarreta 1998; Cinque 1993), it would never get to the locative if this had moved from complement or adjunct position. The consequence would be that the whole structure containing a preverbal locative could never be interpreted as focused, but this is contrary to fact. A way to test the unmarked status of some particular word order is provided by the possibility of the sentence to be an answer to a question like what happens/ happened?, as proposed by Contreras (1983) among others. The behavior of locative subjects is very telling in this respect. In contrast with elements preposed by topicalization, focalization, or left dislocation, the occurrence of a locative in preverbal position with impersonal verbs does not alter the “neutral” information structure of the sentence. The following are examples of impersonal constructions, all of which can be appropriate

\[ ^5 \text{I owe this data to Karlos Arregui Urbina.} \]
\[ ^6 \text{See also Contreras 1983, Suñer 1982 for a detailed discussion of neutral information structure of sentences in Spanish.} \]
answers to the initial question. Examples (4c,d,e) show that this is not the case for postverbal agentive subjects and for other preposed arguments and locative PPs:

(4) ¿Qué pasa / pasó?
what happens / happened?
‘What’s happening?/What happened?
a. En esta casa falta café.
in this house misses coffee
‘Coffee is missing in this house.’
b. En esta clase sobran estudiantes.
in this classroom are-extra students
‘There are too many students in this classroom.’
c. # Ha roto el vaso Juan.
has broken the glass Juan
d. # El vaso lo ha roto Juan.
the glass CLAC has broken Juan
e. # En el parque me regaló el anillo.
in the park me he-gave the ring

Some qualification concerning the nature of this locative argument is in order. First, the preverbal PP in impersonal sentences might not refer to a place but to a point in time. This is especially true for meteorological verbs, which very often take a temporal argument (ahora ‘now’) rather than a locative (aquí ‘here’), so it would be more accurate to talk about a spatio-temporal rather than locative subject. I will abstract away from this distinction for ease of exposition. Another important fact is that a locative adjunct can obviously appear with these verbs. In this case, it might cooccur with the spatio-temporal subject (Hoy llueve en Barcelona, ‘today it is raining in Barcelona’, En este colegio faltan sillas en las clases, Lit. ‘at this school lack chairs in the classrooms’). The judgments in (4) are to be understood with these qualifications.

I therefore assume that the locative in impersonal sentences is in [Spec, TP]. This means that the locative can satisfy the EPP feature in T. There is much work in current literature in which it is claimed that Case marking and formal licensing have to be kept separate (Harbert & Toribio 1990; Schütze 1993; among others). A similar split has to be claimed for the EPP feature in T and nominative Case assignment (Collins 1997). That is to say, the element that raises to [Spec, TP] does not necessarily bear nominative Case nor check T’s agreement features. In Collins’s account, this can be done by covert movement of the internal argument. Chomsky (1998) claims that the EPP feature is a selectional feature — that is, T selects for a specifier. This type of feature can only be satisfied by actual merging (with or without Move) of an element in that position. The φ-features of T can be checked by “long-distance agreement” with an appropriate NP. The consequence of this is that
we can have structures (such as locative inversion or dative subjects in Icelandic) in which an “oblique” element appears in [Spec, TP] and the nominative element appears postverbally, if some requirements are met. For the case of impersonal sentences like the ones in (1) and (2), what I will try to show is that the locative merges in the external argument position, therefore being the optimal (closest) candidate to move to [Spec, TP.] The (at least number) agreement obtained between the verb and the theme NP (when present) is the result of a long-distance operation (see section 6). So the idea I would like to pursue is that the verbs in (1) and (2) take a locative as their external argument. There is some evidence that seems to indicate that the preceding claim is on the right track.

2.1 Locatives as subjects

In this subsection I present some data about Spanish that show that locatives in impersonal sentences actually appear in subject position. The proposal I would like to put forward is that the locative appears in the highest position inside the VP domain (see section 4 below). The following data, as far as I know, are quite standard and do not seem to be subject to dialectal variation, so the contrasts are obtained in most if not all dialects of Spanish.

2.1.1 Idiom formation

Marantz (1984) observes that the external argument of a predicate is never involved in idiom formation unless this also includes the internal argument. Idiomatic (noncompositional) interpretation is usually obtained from a verb plus its internal arguments, the nature of the external argument being irrelevant. What one would expect, if our proposal is correct, is to be able to form idioms with locatives in ditransitive structures, but not with those which appear with impersonal verbs, because they should behave as any other external argument. As shown in (6), idiomatic expressions in impersonal constructions are only possible with the theme argument, never with locatives, in the cases under consideration. In fact, idiomatically interpreted locations are in general bad when appearing with this kind of verbs (although they accept others like estar ‘to be located’). The examples in (5) show idioms formed both by a direct object and a locative. What (6) shows is that idioms are possible with the existential haber and verbs like faltar, but the locative is never involved in the idiomatic interpretation. Examples (6d–f) are

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7 See also O’Grady 1998 for a proposal in terms of thematic hierarchy.
8 A possible exception to this generalization might be the expression: hay moros en la costa (‘there is Arabs on the coast’, ‘this is not a right place to talk about something because one might be heard’). One could just think that this expression involves both the theme and the external argument, but this seems to be a fixed full predicate that can itself be predicated about a place (Aquí hay moros en la costa, ‘Here there are Arabs on the coast’). In fact, the locative PP in this expression can never be preverbal (*En la costa hay moros).
meant to show that idiomatically interpreted locations are impossible with impersonal verbs, although they can appear in different contexts.

(5) a. poner una pica en Flandes
to-put a flag in Flandes
‘to do something nobody has been able to do before’
b. dejar a alguien en la estacada
to-leave to someone in the fence
‘to stand someone up’
c. poner a alguien en un brete
to-put to someone in the cage
‘to put someone on the spot’
d. mandar a alguien a la porra
to-send to someone to the baton
‘to send someone to hell’
e. poner / estar entre la espada y la pared
to-put / to-be between the sword and the wall
‘between a rock and a hard place’
f. poner el dedo en la llaga
to-put the finger in the wound
‘to touch on a sore point’

(6) a. Hay gato encerrado.
‘There is some catch.’
b. Hay tomate.
‘There is more to it that meets the eye.’
c. faltar (a alguien) un hervor / un tornillo
to-miss to someone a boil / a screw
‘to be dumb/crazy’
d. *Faltan hombres entre la espada y la pared.
miss men between the sword and the wall
e. *Entre la espada y la pared hay mucha gente.9
between the sword and the wall is a lot of people
‘is-extra someone in a spot / in the fence / in the baton

That is, as expected, the locative, being the highest argument, cannot form an idiom with the verb, excluding the (closer) theme.

9 In fact, this would be a good sentence with the PP in postverbal position. In this case, as expected, a locative would be understood of which the state would be predicated (Aquí hay mucha gente entre la espada y la pared, ‘Here there are many people between a rock and a hard place’). What is impossible is for V to form an idiom with LOC, excluding the theme.
2.1.2 Raising constructions

Another fact that suggests that the locative in Spanish impersonal sentences is in subject position is that, like agentive transitive subjects, it is the locative which raises in raising constructions: raising of the theme is impossible, unless it is focalized or left dislocated. This is shown in (7).

\[(7) \quad a. \quad \text{Aquí parece \{sobrar / faltar / ocurrir\} algo.} \quad \text{‘Something seems to be extra/missing/happening here.’} \\
\quad b. \quad \text{#Algo parece \{sobrar / faltar / ocurrir\} aquí.} \quad \text{‘Something seems to be extra/missing/happening here.’} \\
\quad c. \quad \text{En esta caja parece faltar \{dinero / el dinero\}.} \quad \text{‘In this box seems to miss money / the money.’} \\
\quad d. \quad \text{#{Dinero / el dinero} parece faltar en esta caja.} \quad \text{‘Money / the money seems to miss in this box.’} \\
\quad e. \quad \text{En Barcelona parece llover mucho.} \quad \text{‘It seems to rain a lot in Barcelona.’}\]

This is also the case when the locative undergoes \textit{wh}-movement. Island effects are also obtained, in which the locative behaves like a subject. Example (8a) is a case of long-distance extraction out of a “bridge” structure, (8b) is a cleft structure, and (8c) and (8d) show that, as expected, there is a contrast between extraction of the locative over an adjunct and extraction of an adjunct across the locative.

\[(8) \quad a. \quad \text{¿Dónde dijiste que parecía faltar azúcar?} \quad \text{‘Where did you say that sugar seemed to be missing?’} \\
\quad b. \quad \text{Aquí es donde parece haber café.} \quad \text{‘This is the place where there seems to be coffee.’} \\
\quad c. \quad ?¿Dónde no sabes por qué parecía faltar leche? \quad \text{‘Where do you not know why seemed to lack milk?’} \\
\quad d. \quad *¿Por qué no sabes dónde parecía faltar leche? \quad \text{‘Why do you not know where seemed to lack milk.’}\]

2.1.3 Bare NPs

Another piece of evidence is provided by the interpretation of locatives appearing in impersonal sentences. Diesing (1992) shows that elements that generate under VP are mapped into the nuclear scope in the logical

\footnote{In Spanish, as in Italian, extraction of a subject across \textit{wh}-islands does not trigger ungrammaticality (see Rizzi 1982).}
representation of the sentence. Elements outside VP (in [Spec, IP] in her framework) will be mapped into the restrictive clause. This correlates with the interpretation of nominals. In English, bare NPs are interpreted as existential if they appear internal to VP (being subject to existential closure). External arguments (which appear in the restrictive clause) are typically under the scope of the GEN operator and therefore interpreted as generic.\(^\text{11}\) Spanish differs from English in that generic NPs need a definite article to precede them,\(^\text{12}\) bare NPs being interpreted as existentials, not as generics. The consequence of this is that these type of NPs can never be external arguments, irrespective of their position (*Niños comen dulces/*comen niños dulces ‘children eat candy’). The interesting fact I would like to point out is that locative phrases which appear with the verbs under study can never be bare plurals and therefore existential. This distinguishes them from other (internal) locative PPs, as seen in (9b,d,f,h).

\[(9)\]

\begin{itemize}
  \item a. *En lugares públicos sobran empleados.
    \hspace{1cm} in public places are-extra employees
  \item b. En lugares públicos no me gusta hablar.
    \hspace{1cm} I-don’t-like to-speak ‘I don’t like to speak in public places.’
  \item c. *En ciudades grandes ocurren catástrofes.
    \hspace{1cm} in cities big happen catastrophes
  \item d. En ciudades grandes no me gusta vivir.
    \hspace{1cm} in cities big I-don’t-like to-live ‘I don’t like to live in big cities.’
  \item e. *En restaurantes grandes faltan camareros.
    \hspace{1cm} in restaurants big miss waiters
  \item f. En restaurantes grandes no hay que invertir dinero.
    \hspace{1cm} in restaurants big one not is that invest money ‘One must not invest money in big restaurants.’
  \item g. *En impresos oficiales constan los responsables.
    \hspace{1cm} in forms official state the responsible
  \item h. En impresos oficiales no se debe escribir con pluma.
    \hspace{1cm} in forms official not should write with fountain-pen ‘One must not write on official forms with a fountain pen.’
\end{itemize}

\(^{11}\) See Diesing 1992 for more details. I am abstracting away from the fact that there is also a correlation between the interpretation of the subject and the individual-/stage-level distinction. In particular, it is a fact that the (internal) subject of a stage-level predicate is susceptible of receiving a generic interpretation once raised to [Spec, IP]. I am not necessarily making the assumption that the predicates under consideration are individual level, provided that bare NP subjects are forbidden in Spanish in general. The important fact is that arguments that are generated outside VP can only be interpreted as generic in Spanish, so no reconstruction process seems to be available, as is the case in other languages such as Chinese (as J. Bobaljik points out to me, personal communication). This is the case, I want to claim, for locative subjects of the kind I am analyzing.

What this seems to suggest is that these locatives are in fact external arguments, which appear in subject position.\textsuperscript{13}

2.1.4 Extraction from coordinate structures

There is still another set of data that I would like to analyze. Bresnan (1990) gives some interesting contrasts based on the parallelism constraint on extraction from coordinate structures. She claims that only subjects can be extracted out of both members of a conjunction.\textsuperscript{14} As the examples below show, locatives that appear in impersonal constructions are extractable from coordination constructions. Again, other locatives (either internal or adjuncts) display a different pattern.

\begin{enumerate}[label=(\alph*)]
\item a. Aquí es donde {hace frío / llueve} y faltan paraguas.
   \begin{flushright}
   here is where is cold / rains and miss umbrellas
   \end{flushright}
   ‘This is the place where it is cold / it rains and there are no umbrellas.’
\item b. En esta ciudad es donde {nieva / sobran coches} y ocurren cosas raras.
   \begin{flushright}
   in this city is where snows / are-extra cars and happen strange things
   \end{flushright}
\item c. *Aquí es donde llueve y acampan los turistas.
   \begin{flushright}
   here is where it-rains and camp the tourists
   \end{flushright}
\item d. *Aquí es donde huele a podrido y estudian los chicos.
   \begin{flushright}
   here is where it-smells like rotten and study the children
   \end{flushright}
\end{enumerate}

2.1.5 Position in interrogatives

In interrogative sentences, as expected, the locative argument occupies the position in which the subject usually appears. In the sentences in (11), the locative PP may occupy the position between an auxiliary or modal and the main verb, in contrast with other PPs (cf.11b, d), and together with agentive subject NPs:

\begin{enumerate}[label=(\roman*)]
\item a. No me gusta hablar en lugares públicos (cf. (9a))
\item b. *Ocurren catástrofes en ciudades grandes (cf. (9c))
\item c. No me gusta vivir en ciudades grandes (cf. (9d))
\end{enumerate}

I thank V. Demonte for bringing up this data to me.

\textsuperscript{13} Interestingly enough, the contrast is obtained even if the locatives are in postverbal position (just like it is the case with subjects of transitive structures), which suggests that in fact locatives in impersonal sentences are generated in subject position.

\textsuperscript{14} As Den Dikken & Naess (1993) point out, it is not obvious that this is a clear diagnostic for subjecthood. Even if this is the case, these data would still show at least that locative arguments of the hacer type have the same status as those of the faltar type and differ from complement and adjunct PPs.
(11) a. ¿Habrá aquí ocurrido lo mismo? (Cf. Habrá Juan hecho lo mismo?)
   ‘Has the same happened here?’ (Cf. ‘Has Juan done the same?’)
b. ¿Habré aquí puesto los libros?
   ‘Have-1SG here put the books?’
c. ¿Cómo puede en un sitio así no haber aire acondicionado?
   ‘How can there not be air conditioning in a place like this?’
d. ¿Cómo puedes en un sitio así dejar el coche?
   ‘How can you in a place like this leave the car?’

2.1.6 Nominalizations

Data concerning nominalizations also indicate that with the verbs under study the locative behaves as a subject. In Spanish nominalizations, both the subject and the direct object are preceded by the nominal (genitive) preposition _de_. Other internal arguments (including datives) and adjuncts retain the same preposition they take in the corresponding verbal constructions, as can be seen in (12).

(12) a. el descubrimiento de América en 1492
   ‘the discovery of America in 1492’
b. la marcha de los soldados a través del desierto
   ‘the marching of the soldiers through the desert’
c. el paseo de Juan por el parque
   ‘Juan’s walk by the park’
d. la entrega de premios a los ganadores
   ‘the gift of prizes to the winners’

Crucially, when the impersonal verbs under study are nominalized, the locative must necessarily be introduced by _de_, never by _en_, as expected if they are true subjects (see (13)).

(13) a. la nevada de / *en Sevilla
   ‘the snowing of in Seville’
b. la colocación del libro en / *de la estantería
   ‘the storage of-the book on / of the shelf’
So there is evidence showing that some predicates take a locative as their subject. It can be shown, furthermore, that the structures under study are not instances of something like locative inversion — that is, they do not involve raising of an internal argument to [Spec, TP]. This will be shown in the next section.

2.2. Motion verbs and locative inversion

I would like to note at this point that the structures I am dealing with differ in some significant ways from those that involve anteposition of a constituent, such as locative inversion constructions (LICs), in which a locative element in the VP has been preposed. The first difference that should be pointed out is that in LICs a special interpretation is obtained in which the postverbal NP is somehow focused. In other words, in LICs the unmarked or canonical order of constituents has been altered. This, as we saw, is not the case for Spanish impersonal constructions (see examples in (4)). In fact, none of the sentences in (14), which involve motion verbs with a preposed locative, can be possible answers to a question like ¿qué pasó? ‘what happened?’.

(14) a. #Por la colina rodó el carrito del niño.
      down the hill rolled the carriage of the child

       b. #A esta casa llegaron estudiantes.
         to this house arrived students

Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995) give examples of different types of verbs that allow locative inversion and claim that the class is not restricted to unaccusatives, not even to intransitives. They also show that the locative does not appear in external argument position and relate the phenomena to informational properties such as topic/focus. Bresnan (1994) also notes that LICs involve a special interpretation: specifically, the postverbal NP must correspond to new information.¹⁵ Den Dikken & Naess (1993), on the other hand, also claim that the locative PP in these cases originates in a VP-internal position (in a small-clause complement of V) from which it moves to a specifier of a TOP phrase through [Spec, IP]. This cannot be translated to the cases under consideration, as I have shown. In fact, none of the properties described for the impersonal sentences under study apply to LIC. First of all,
LIC cannot appear in coordination with impersonal sentences with locative subjects of the type in (10), as shown by the ungrammaticality of the following examples.

(15) a. *Aquí es donde llueve y llegan (los) turistas.
   here is where rains and arrive (the) tourists
   b. *Por aquí es where llueve y ruedan (las) piedras.
      around here is where rains and roll the stones

Furthermore, LICs do not permit the locative to raise in raising constructions. The examples in (16) are unacceptable unless the locative bears strong contrastive stress.

(16) a. *A esta casa parece haber llegado Juan.
     to this house seems to-be arrived Juan
     b. *Por esta colina parece rodar el carro del bebé.¹⁶
     down this hill seems to-roll the carriage of-the baby

On the other hand, as expected, one can find idioms formed with motion verbs of this class plus the locative, as shown in (17).

(17) a. Mi artículo se fue a la porra.
     my article went to the baton
     ‘I lost my article / the main idea does not work.’
   b. Juan ha llegado al límite.
      Juan has arrived to-the limit
      ‘Juan has reached the top.’
   c. {irse / andarse} {por las ramas / por los cerros de Ubeda}
      to-go / walk by the branches / by the hills of Ubeda
      ‘to lose the main point of the conversation’

Babyonyshev (1996) gives evidence for PPs in LICs in Russian to appear in a position in which the EPP is satisfied and shows that their occurrence is crucial for the “subject” NP to be postverbal (i.e., for the verb to be in sentence-initial position). She also shows that, as was pointed out by Beninca (1988) for Italian, this argument can be null, the only requirement being that V selects for it.¹⁷

¹⁶ This does not seem to be the case in English. In this language the preposed locative is able to raise, so sentences equivalent to the ones in (16) are acceptable for most speakers. This suggests that English locative inversion constructions are different from Spanish ones in some respects. I will not pursue this matter here, the relevant point being that in Spanish impersonal sentences only the locative is able to undergo raising, as we saw in (7), contrary to both English and Spanish LIC.

¹⁷ The relevant examples (taken from Benincà 1988) are like those in (i).

(i) a. E arrivato Gigi/un bambino.
    has arrived Gigi/a child
    ‘Gigi/a child has arrived.’
Babylonyshev supposes that the locative is generated inside VP (as the fact that it is selected by the verb indicates) and notes that it is usually a goal/end point. In the cases under study, on the contrary, the locatives can never be goals: they always denote the place in which the state or event originates (see section 2 and below) and, as the facts concerning idiom formation (among others) indicate, they are not arguments of the verb. So even if it can be claimed that the locative in the LIC is in [Spec, TP] at some point in the derivation (Collins 1997; Hoekstra & Mulder 1990; among others), and that there is reason to believe that its appearance with unergatives has consequences for the status of the subject (Torrego 1989; Borer 1997), it is clear that it is not generated in the external argument position, as seems to be the case for impersonal constructions.

Another respect in which LICs differ from Spanish impersonal constructions concerns the status of the theme argument. A fact that seems to indicate that the theme in impersonal constructions, in contrast with LICs, never appears in the external argument position is that impersonal constructions do not allow subject-oriented secondary predicates. This, one might argue, could be due to the fact that stative predicates never allow subject-oriented secondary predicates (*John knows the answer tired; see Demonte 1988), but a verb like suceder / ocurrir ‘to happen’ does not accept secondary predicates either, as the examples in (18) show. This, again, is not the case with locative inversion verbs: the subject in these cases can have a secondary predicate. The reason, I would like to claim, is that in impersonal constructions there is no way in which the secondary predicate can be c-commanded by the theme argument, because it never occupies the external argument position (unlike in regular unaccusatives):

(18) a. Juan llegó cansado.  
   Juan arrived tired  
   ‘Juan arrived tired,’

b. Las flores crecieron podridas.  
   the flowers grew rotten  
   ‘The flowers grew rotten.’

c. *El accidente sucedió terrible.  
   the accident happened terrible

d. *Falta Juan cansado. 18  
   misses Juan tired

These examples show that in Spanish impersonal constructions it is the locative that occupies the higher position in VP. The theme remains in the

b. *Ha riso Gigi/un bambino.  
   has laughed Gigi/a child

18 As an anonymous reviewer points out to me, the equivalent to (18c) is also ungrammatical in English. This indicates that verbs like happen do not allow for secondary predicates at all for some reason. I do not have an explanation for this fact.
lower position throughout the derivation, so it never establishes the required c-command relation with a subject-oriented secondary predicate.

It is well known that, within a given language, there are constructions in which the properties usually displayed by subjects seem to be scattered between more than one NP, because of the fact that the nature of those properties is also different (structural position in which they merge, structural position to which they move, thematic role, Case, agreement, etc.).\textsuperscript{19} So even if in LICs an argument different from the nominative NP is in [Spec, TP], I would like to propose that these structures involve a different kind of movement of an internal argument (similar to quotative inversion in Collins 1997). In Spanish impersonal constructions, on the contrary, the event/state is predicated of the locative, which therefore behaves as the subject of the construction in a wider sense, because it not only raises to [Spec, TP] but also is generated in the highest position within the clause.\textsuperscript{20} Certainly, one can claim that for this to be possible what is needed is a locative that can behave as a referential expression (Lyons 1967). This is no doubt a necessary condition, but there is also evidence that the preposition in this cases does not have the same status as in other PPs — that is, these locatives are marked with quirky Case. This is what I try to show in the following section.

3. Quirky Case

In the previous section I argued that the locative in the constructions under study is generated in the highest VP position and from there moves to [Spec, TP] to satisfy the EPP feature in T. In this section I would like to argue that these locatives are marked with quirky Case. More precisely, my claim is that the locative phrase is marked with inherent case that is visible for attraction, so as to satisfy the EPP feature in T. This is parallel to what happens with other quirky arguments such as datives in Icelandic.\textsuperscript{21} Furthermore the behavior of this locative phrase indicates that the preposition is not the head of a PP but a (quirky) Case marker. I present some evidence for this claim in what follows.

The first thing that can be seen when looking at the structures I am analyzing is that not every locative can function as an external argument in Spanish impersonal constructions. The following examples show that locatives with prepositions other than \textit{en} and a few more (basically \textit{encima de}, ‘on top of’, \textit{debajo de}, ‘under’, \textit{al lado de} ‘next to’), which have the property of being “intransitive,” in the sense that they can appear in

\textsuperscript{19} See Harley 1995 for a discussion of the properties usually attributed to subjects and how they behave in different constituents.

\textsuperscript{20} In this analysis, no distinction between a specifier position to which the subject raises and a position in which the EPP is satisfied (such as the one proposed in Branigan 1992) is necessary.

\textsuperscript{21} See Chomsky 1998.
isolation) are not possible external arguments of impersonal verbs but are not incompatible with them.22

(19) a. *Hacia el sur ocurren cosas.
    toward the south happen things
b. *Desde el bosque hay margaritas.
    from the forest is daisies
c. *Alrededor del parque falta césped.
    around the park misses grass
d. *Contra la pared hay niños.
    against the wall are children
e. *Hacia el sur faltan árboles.
    towards the south miss trees
f. *Desde Girona llueve mucho.
    from Girona rains a-lot
g. *Por / para el norte amanece temprano.
    from / to the north dawns early
h. *Contra la pared hace frío.
    against the wall makes cold

(20) a. En este país ocurren cosas hacia el sur.
    in this country happen things towards the south
   ‘In this country, things happen towards the south.’
b. En el pueblo hay margaritas desde el bosque.
    in the village is daisies from the forest
   ‘In the village, daisies are from the forest.’
c. En este pueblo faltan árboles hacia el sur.
    in this village miss trees towards the south
   ‘In this village, trees are missing to the south.’
d. En este pueblo falta césped alrededor del parque.
    in this village miss grass around the park
   ‘In this village, grass is missing around the park.’
e. En esta clase hay niños contra la pared.
    in this classroom is children against the wall
   ‘In this classroom, children are against the wall.’

This is another significant way in which impersonal sentences differ from locative inversion constructions. Preposed locatives in LIC may be introduced by many prepositions, both in English and in Spanish. The following English examples are taken from Levin & Rappaport Hovav (1995). I provide some Spanish examples in (22).

(21) a. Over her shoulder appeared the head of Jenny’s mother.
    (L & RH (5a))

22 This is the reason why sentences in (19) improve if the LOC is postverbal. In this case, they are interpreted as the ones in (20), with an implicit locative (Aquí ocurren cosas hacia el sur).
b. Through the orchards rattled the field satiation’s Ford pickup.
   (L & RH (10))
c. Around her heaved and shuffled the jeaned and T-shirted crowd.
   (L & RH (20c))
d. Back across the clouds flapped the cormorant.
   (L & RH (25))

(22) a. Alrededor del parque fluye un arroyo.
   ‘Around the park flows a stream.’
b. Hacia la casa corría el niño.
   ‘Towards the house ran the kid.’

There is further evidence that indicates that the preposition *en* ‘on/in/at’
does not behave as a true preposition but as a (quirky) Case marker. The first
piece of evidence comes from quantifier floating data. Sadakane & Koizumi
(1995) claim that Japanese *ni* (which appears with datives) is ambiguous
between a Case marker and a true preposition. Miyagawa (1997) shows that
DPs with both types of *ni* appear in different syntactic positions — that is, a
dative with Case marker *ni* precedes an accusative NP and a dative with a true
preposition follows it. More specifically, his claim is that in the first case
(when *ni* is a Case marker) the dative is structurally above the accusative.
One of his arguments has to do with floating quantification: numeral
quantifiers can be floated only when associated with Case marker *ni* (see
Miyagawa 1997 for Japanese examples). This contrast also obtains for
locative subjects in Spanish. If there has to be a c-command relation between
the nominal phrase and the floated quantifier, as most of the approaches to
this topic accept,23 one would expect that a true preposition would block this
relationship. This is so for locatives that are internal arguments or adjuncts
but not in the sentences under study here. The relevant data are given in (23).

(23) a. En los Renoir aparece en los dos el nombre del director.
   ‘The name of the director appears in both Renoirs.’
b. *En mis casas viven en las dos estudiantes graduados.
   in my houses live in the two students graduate
c. En los hoteles Radison hay en todos un fax a disposición
   of-the customer
   del cliente.
   ‘In all Radison hotels there is a fax for the customer’s use.’

23 Both in the case of those who take the floating quantifier to be an anaphor (Kayne 1980;
Belletti, 1982; Jaeggli 1982), as well as those who claim for a movement relation (Sportiche
1988).
d. *En los hoteles Radison ha hablado en todos Juan.
in the hotels Radison has spoken in all Juan

e. En sitios así ocurre en todos lo mismo.
in places like this happens in all the same

f. *Contra esas paredes apoyé contra las dos una estantería. 24
against those walls leaned against the two a shelf

Another piece of evidence comes from binding data. Here too, locative subjects seem not to behave as regular PPs but as quirky case-marked DPs. In fact, a binding relation can be established between a quantifier in the locative and a pronoun in the theme NP. Again, this is not the case for other locatives:

(24) a. En cada trabajo publicado constará / figurará el nombre de su autor.
on each work published will-state / appear the name of its author
   ‘The name of the author must appear on each published work.’

b. En cada escena debe suceder su desgracia correspondiente.
on each scene must happen its disgrace corresponding
   ‘A (corresponding) disgrace must happen in each scene.’

c. *En cada estantería debes poner su libro correspondiente.
on each shelf you-must put its book corresponding

d. *Contra cada pared debes apoyar su estantería correspondiente. 25
against each wall you-must lean its shelf corresponding

These data also show that the locative is higher than the theme. This is another way in which impersonal constructions differ from LICs. In the latter, binding of a pronoun in the theme is impossible, as shown by the ungrammaticality of the following sentences:

to every party arrived its guests

b. *Por cada colina rodaba su carrico.
down every hill rolled its carriage

These data suggest that locatives in impersonal sentences of the type that concern us here are quirky Case marked. Quirky Case-marked elements are supposed to move only to fully Case-marked positions — that is, they cannot appear in a position in which (no Case or) null Case is assigned, such as the

24 Of course, sentences like (23b) and (23f) are good without quantifier floating (Contra esas dos paredes apoyé una estantería, ‘Against those two walls I leaned a shelf’), although we get a marked word order triggered by anteposition of the (internal) locative.

25 Again, these sentences are good without the quantifier-pronoun relation.
subject of an infinitive (Chomsky 1998). This is, in fact, the case for locatives under discussion, as can be seen in the following example:

(26) *Me pregunto por qué llover en este lugar / por qué en este lugar  
     I wonder why to-rain in this place/ why in this place  
     to-rain

(llover.26

Again, this is not the case with locative inversion constructions. A sentence like (27) is perfectly grammatical in Spanish.

(27) Me pregunto por qué llegar tarde a la fiesta.  
     I wonder why to-arrive late at the party  
     ‘I wonder why to arrive late at the party.’

This cannot be attributed to the fact that the subject of the infinitive has to be interpreted as human. As example (28) shows, a human NP in the dative can also appear in these constructions and the impossibility of the infinitive also obtains, contrary to what happens with goal datives.

(28) a. *Me pregunto por qué faltarle a uno los amigos.  
     I wonder why to-lackCL to one the friends

(27) b. Me pregunto por qué darle un premio a Juan.27  
     I wonder why to give a prize to Juan  
     ‘I wonder why one should give a prize to Juan.’

26 Locatives with infinitives in these cases seem to be accepted precisely in those contexts in which (postverbal) agentive subjects are generally allowed (as can be seen in (ic) and (id)), such as with certain prepositions and in exclamative structures such as the one in (ib):

(i) a. Al empezar a llover en la fiesta todos se marcharon.  
     at to-start-rain at the party all left  
     ‘When it started to rain at the party they all left.’

b. !¿Nevar en Málaga?! Imposible!  
     to-snow in Málaga. impossible
     ‘Snowing in Málaga. No way!’

c. Al decirme eso Juan, cambie de opinión.  
     at to-tell-me that Juan, I-changed-my-mind
     ‘When Juan told me that, I changed my mind.’

d. ¿!Comprar la tarta Juan?! ¡Imposible!  
     to-buy the cake Juan impossible
     ‘Juan buy the cake?! No way!’


27 Something that might prima facie look like a problem is that none of these locative subjects appear in ECM constructions, as one would expect to be the case, this being a Case-marked position. But Spanish does not seem to have regular ECM constructions, in which an infinitival verb appears — that is, structures such as (i), with an adjective, are fine, but the equivalent with a verb is unacceptable.
So the locatives analyzed here seem to bear quirky Case: they show morphological Case selected by a lexical item. One property that quirky Case-marked phrases have is that they are visible for attraction — that is, we can define quirky Case as an inherent (morphological) case that allows a phrase that bears it to move to Case-marked positions — for example, to satisfy the EPP feature in T. Let us assume that something like (29) is true.

(29) A quirky Case-marked element can merge as an external argument and be visible for further attraction.

This means that the difference between, say, Spanish and English is that the latter does not have quirky Case-marked subjects. In Spanish, as we have seen, some prepositions can be Case markers. These include locative *en*.

The proposal I would like to put forward is that Spanish impersonal sentences have a locative phrase as an external argument, which is quirky Case marked and satisfies the EPP feature in T. In most of these cases, the theme argument triggers (at least number) agreement on the verb, as can be seen in examples such as (4a,b), repeated here. I would like to claim that these are instances of long-distance agreement (Chomsky 1998). For ease of exposition, I will delay details until section 6.

(4) a. En esta casa falta café.
   In this house missesSG coffee
   ‘Coffee is missing in this house.’

b. En esta clase sobran estudiantes.
   In this classroom are-extra students
   ‘There are too many students in this classroom.’

If the hypothesis developed so far is on the right track, one would expect that other phrases marked with quirky Case may appear in subject position. As I show in the following section, this is the case for some dative Case-marked NPs that do not receive a goal thematic role.

4. Dative Subjects

In this section I examine some Spanish data which contain a special kind of dative NPs that behave like subjects. This has been proposed for experiencers

(i) Considero a Juan (*ser) inteligente / (*ser) inteligente a Juan.
   I-consider to Juan (to be) intelligent to-be intelligent yo Juan
   ‘I consider Juan to be intelligent.’

   I will not pursue this matter here, but it seems that the fact that there are no ECM constructions with the verbs I am analyzing, as shown in (ii), is not telling us anything about the nature of the locative.

(ii) *Considero aquí llover / faltar café.
    I-consider here to rain / miss coffee
of psych verbs such as *gustar* ‘like’, *preocupar* ‘worry’, and *molestar* ‘bother’. In Belletti & Rizzi’s (1988) study of these verbs in Italian, for example, it is claimed that the experiencer is an external argument. In his study about Spanish, Masullo (1993) points out that experiencers are in fact quirky subjects. In any case, there is evidence that these datives must appear above the theme, as is shown in the mentioned works, among other places.  

But there are other types of constructions which, to my knowledge, have not been analyzed so far in the literature and which involve dative subjects. First of all, in most of the sentences in (1) and (2), a personal argument in the dative Case can appear instead of the locative, both with stative and eventive predicates. This dative also behaves as the subject of the construction. In fact, the dative is in complementary distribution with the locative. I give some relevant examples in (30)–(32).

(30)  

a. Aquí pasa algo.  
here happens something  
‘Something is going on here.’

b. Me pasa algo.  
to-me happens something  
‘Something is happening to me.’

c. ??Aquí me pasa algo.  
here to-me happens something

(31)  

a. Aquí consta que eres el responsable.  
here states that you-are the responsible  
‘Here it states that you are the responsible one.’

b. Me consta que eres el mejor.  
to-me states that you-are the best one  
‘I am sure that you are the best one.’

c. *Aquí me consta que eres el responsable.  
here to-me states that you-are the responsible

(32)  

a. Me falta café.  
to-me misses coffee  
‘I am missing coffee.’

b. Aquí falta café.  
here misses coffee  
‘Coffee is missing here.’

c. ??Aquí me falta café.  
here to-me misses coffee

28 It has been proposed that shifted datives in Spanish are always clitic doubled — that is, dative clitic-doubled constructions in Spanish instantiate cases of the double-object construction (see Demonte 1995). It is also well known that experiencers of psych verbs are always clitic doubled. This might indicate that experiencer datives in fact occupy the highest position inside VP. Of course, all datives analyzed in this section are obligatorily doubled by a clitic. As in the case of locative subjects, preverbal position seems to be unmarked for the dative NP, so one cannot claim that doubling is due to left dislocation.
In the (c) cases of the examples above, if the dative is present, the locative is impossible unless it is interpreted as an adjunct ((32c), for example, would mean something like ‘when I am here I miss coffee’). The same is true for verbs like sobrar (‘to be extra/exceed’) and bastar/valer (‘to be enough’). These verbs have another interesting property: together with an NP or a clause, they can appear in a construction with a prepositional object, in which case no NOM is assigned at all.

(33) a. {Me / le} basta con eso / con que vengas a verme.
    to-me / to-him suffices with that / with that you-come to see-me
b. {Me / le} sobra con tres días.
    to-me / to-him is-extra with three days
    ‘I / he have / has more than enough with three days.’
c. Me vale con que lo entiendas.
    to-me suffices with that it you-understand
    ‘It is enough for me if you understand it.’

There are other cases of impersonal constructions with datives similar to the ones analyzed so far. The verb dar ‘to give’, for example, can take a dative as an external argument instead of as a goal complement, when constructed with temporal expressions such as the ones in (34). Also, when followed by such expressions as igual/lo mismo, ‘the same’, this verb expresses a psychological state in relation to something, usually realized as a clause, and takes a dative subject, as in (35). In these cases, the dative appears in the higher position, contrary to regular change of location ditransitive use.

(34) a. Nos dieron las dos.
    to-us struck the two
    ‘The clock struck two on us.’

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29 This should not be interpreted as a psych-verb construction, meaning something like ‘I fondly remember coffee’ or ‘I long for coffee’; it means that ‘I do not have enough coffee’ or that ‘I ran out of coffee.’
30 Sometimes there is a change in meaning between the two variants with and without preposition, as in:

(i) a. Me sobran cien pesetas.
    me is-extra a-hundred pesetas
    ‘I have a hundred pesetas extra.’
b. Me sobra con cien pesetas.
    me is-extra with a-hundred pesetas
    ‘I have more than enough with one hundred pesetas’

31 See Rigau 1996 for similar cases in Catalan.
32 The meaning of this construction with dar is not exactly what could be deduced from the glosses; the construction means in fact something like ‘it got as late as two o’clock on us (without us realizing it)’, not just that the clock stroke two and we heard it. In fact, this meaning is impossible, given that, as can be seen in (34c), if the sentence has a subject (el reloj ‘the clock’) the dative is impossible, as expected. Nevertheless, there seems to be some dialectal variation here. Some speakers consider sentences like el reloj nos dio las dos mientras estábamos bailando ‘the clock stroke two on us while we were dancing’ are perfect. In my dialect, this sentence is possible only if the dative is interpreted as ethic or benefactive. I thank Margarita Suñer for pointing this out to me.
b. El reloj dio las dos.
the clock struck the two
‘The clock struck two.’
c. *El reloj nos dio las dos
the clock to-us struck the two
d. Nos dio tiempo de hacerlo.
to-us gave time to do-it
‘We had plenty of time to do it.’

(35) a. A María le da igual que te vayas o que te quedes.
to María CL gives the-same that you go or that you stay
‘Maria does not care whether you leave or stay.’
b. A Pedro le daba lo mismo decírmelo o no.
to Pedro CL gave the same to-tell-me or not
‘Pedro did not care about telling me or not.’

The same holds for the verb ser ‘to be’ or resultar ‘to result’, followed by an adjective, as in (36). The verb ir ‘to go’ can also take a dative subject. In this case, there is no element in the nominative case either, as can be seen in (37).

(36) a. Me {es / resulta} imposible entender-te.
to-me it results impossible to-understand-you
‘It is impossible for me to understand you.’
b. Le resulta fácil hacerlo.
to-him results easy to-do-it
‘It is easy for him to do it.’
c. Me es indiferente cómo lo hagas.
to-me is indifferent how it you-do
‘I don’t care how you do it.’

(37) a. Me va muy bien con mi nuevo ordenador.
to-me goes very well with my new computer
‘Everything’s ok with my computer.’
b. A Marta le fue bien en Buenos Aires.
to Marta it went well in Buenos Aires.
‘Marta had a very good time in Buenos Aires.’
c. Te va a ir fenomenal cuando descanses.
to-you is-going to-go wonderful when you-rest
‘Things are going to be wonderful for you once you take a break.’.

4.1. Evidence for subject status of datives

An interesting property shown by some of these dative arguments is that, unlike goals (cf. (38d)), they can take subject-oriented, depictive secondary predicates. This possibility suggests that, in fact, the dative in this case occupies a higher position in the structure:
a. Mal me fue ausente pero peor presente.
   ‘Things were bad for me while absent but worse when present.’
   (Lope de Vega, La Dorotea, 126a.)

b. Nos dieron las dos borrachos.
   ‘It got as late as 2 o’clock on us and we were drunk.’

c. Le ocurrió un accidente borracha.
   ‘An accident happened to her while being drunk.’

d. *Le entregaron el premio a Juan borracho.
   As in the case of locative subjects, in all these constructions it is the dative
   argument that raises with raising verbs, as the following examples show:

(39) a. A Juan parece haberle ocurrido un accidente.
   ‘Juan seems to have had an accident.’

b. A Pedro parece faltarle tiempo para todo.
   ‘Pedro seems to lack time for everything.’

c. A María parece darle tiempo de hacer cualquier cosa.
   ‘Maria seems to have time to do anything.’

d. A Pedro parece irle muy bien en Buenos Aires.
   ‘Things seem to be going very well for Pedro in Buenos Aires.’

e. *Un accidente parece haberle ocurrido a Juan.

f. #Un / el accidente parece haberle ocurrido a Juan.

Sentences (39f) and (39g) are good only if a Juan is interpreted as focused
(‘It seems that it has been to John that the accident has happened’), just as it
happens when an agentive subject of a transitive or unergative verb (or the
internal subject of a regular unaccusative) remains in postverbal position of the
subordinate clause. That is, a sentence like Parece haber hablado el rey (Lit. ‘it
seems to have spoken the king’) also means something like ‘it seems that it has
been the king that has spoken.” I give further evidence for the subject status of
dative arguments below.

33 See Demonte 1988 for Spanish.
4.1.1 The position in interrogatives

A further contrast between dative subjects and (internal) dative goals is found in interrogative sentences. As shown for locative subjects, in impersonal constructions only the dative can appear between the auxiliary and the main verb. Dative goals, as expected, cannot occupy this position.

(40) a. ¿Me podría a mí ocurrir lo mismo?
   ‘Could the same happen to me?’

b. *¿Me podrían a mí dar el premio?
   ‘Could they give the prize to me?’

c. ¿Cómo puede a una persona tan lista faltarle valor en este momento?
   ‘How can such a smart person lack courage in a moment like this?’

d. *¿Cómo pueden a una persona tan tonta darle un premio como ese?
   ‘How can they give a prize like that to a person so stupid?’

4.1.2 Nominalizations

As in the case of locatives, data concerning nominalizations also indicate that with the verbs under study the dative behaves as a subject. When the impersonal verbs under study are nominalized, the dative must necessarily be introduced by de, never by a, as expected if they are true subjects. They contrast, in this respect, with goal datives as can be seen in (41).

(41) a. la falta de valor de / *a Juan
   ‘Juan’s lack of courage.’

b. la entrega del premio de / a Juan
   ‘The gift of the prize to Juan.’

So, locatives and datives share the property of being quirky Case marked and the ability to appear as subjects of impersonal predicates. They can both satisfy the EPP feature in T by movement. Nominative Case and agreement features are checked “long distance” against the theme or not checked at all, if there is no element available. I would like to suggest that the choice between dative and locative depends on the argument bearing or not the feature [+human]. Datives would, thus, be a sort of “human locations.” In fact, there are other cases in which locatives and datives alternate. I will
present them in section 7. First, I would like to analyze the behavior of datives as arguments of the raising verb *parecer*, ‘to seem’.

4.2. Raising constructions and datives

The raising verb *parecer* ‘to seem’ (which has also been considered as impersonal in most traditional grammars of Spanish) can also take a dative that behaves as a subject. In support of this conclusion is the fact that this dative blocks raising of the lower subject, as can be seen in the following examples:

(42) a. *Juan me parece trabajar mucho.*

Juan to-me(CL) seems to-work a-lot

b. *A Pedro le parece Juan tener prisa.*

to Peter CL seems Juan to-be-in-a-hurry

c. *Pedro le parece a Juan trabajar mucho.*

Peter CL seems to Juan to-work a lot

This seems to suggest that the dative and the subject of the infinitive are competing for the same position of subject of the raising verb *parecer*. In other words, in Spanish, as in Icelandic (see Sigurðsson 1989; Zaenen & Maling 1984; Zaenen, Maling & Thráinsson 1985; Boeckx 1998), the dative argument of *seem* can raise to satisfy the EPP feature in T. The difference between the two languages is that in Spanish this is, in fact, the only possibility available. A potential explanation for this fact is that, in the case of the Spanish raising verb, the dative merges in the external argument position, thus being the “closest” element for attraction in these cases.

Data involving extraction from coordinate structures also suggest that the dative argument of *parecer* is of the same kind as the ones analyzed so far and would therefore be generated in the highest position in the structure. When the dative is present, *parecer* can coordinate with all of the verbs that we claim to take dative subjects and the dative is further extracted. As the ungrammaticality of (43c) shows, this is not the case if the second verb takes a goal (internal) dative.

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34 These facts were noted by Torrego (1996).

35 The only case in which an infinitive can appear with *parecer* when it takes a dative is when the subject is understood as controlled by the dative, as in:

(i) a. Me parece haberlo entendido.

  to-me seems to-have-it understood
  ‘It seems to me that I have understood it.’

b. A Pedro le parece haber hecho bien el examen.

  to Pedro CL-DAT seems to-have done well the exam
  ‘It seems to Pedro that he has done the exam well.’
(43) a. A Juan es a quien le parece que la idea funciona y le faltan argumentos para probarlo.

Juan is the one to whom it seems that the idea works and he does not have enough evidence to prove it.

b. A Galileo era a quien le parecía que la tierra giraba y le constaba que podía probarlo.

Galileo is the one to whom CL seemed that the earth moved and he was sure that he could prove it.

c. *A Galileo es a quien le parecía que la tierra giraba y le decían que era un hereje.

According to these data, the raising verb in Spanish can be added to the list of predicates that can take a dative subject. In the next section I propose a derivation for the constructions under study.

5. The Structure of Impersonal Constructions

I would now like to propose a structure for the impersonal sentences analyzed so far. I rely here on recent proposals, which I will briefly sketch.

In recent frameworks dealing with different aspects of grammar, it has been proposed that there is an additional node above VP: VoiceP (Kratzer 1996) EventP (Harley 1995), VP (Koizumi 1993), TrP (Collins 1997), and (small) v (Larson 1988; Chomsky 1995, 1998). It is widely accepted also that this node is directly related to the external argument. As well, it has been shown that some aspects of argument structure are syntactically definable. More specifically, in Hale and Keyser’s (1994, 1997) framework, the nature of argument structure follows from the properties of heads and the structural relations specifier and complement. Adjuncts and external arguments are not part of this l-syntax because they are both excluded from the internal structure of verbs. According to this framework, there are four types of heads. Some heads do not take complements or a specifier (usually nouns fall under this category) and some categories take both (as in the case of prepositions, which are “dyadic,” in the authors’ terms). The other two types of (verbal) heads take a complement. If this complement is nominal in nature, we have a transitive or an unergative verb (if the noun conflates with the verb, as in run). This type of head, which Hale and Keyser call “monadic,” can take an external argument in syntax: the agent of the predicate. There are also heads that take a complement of an adjectival

36 See Hale & Keyser 1997 for more details. I am concerned here by the other two types.
rather than a nominal nature. This situation is more complex because the nature of adjectives makes them require a specifier. In order to achieve this, the adjective will have to be “parasitic” on a verbal head that provides the specifier. This would be a “complex dyadic” structure that gives rise to unaccusative verbs. If the verb head has phonetic content, the result is a structure such as (44a); if it is phonetically empty, the adjective conflates with it and the result is something like (44b).

(44) a. The leaves turn red.
    b. The screen cleared.

That the preverbal NP in (44) is an internal argument can be seen by the fact that the structure can be further embedded into a simple (monadic) verb, that is, transitivized, as in:

(45) a. The wind turns the leaves read.
    b. John clears the screen.

So, in Hale and Keyser’s view, external arguments (agents or causers) are introduced in the syntactic structure by a separate verbal head, different from the one that contains the lexical verb and its internal arguments. The presence of an agent is thus structurally derived by projecting an adequate specifier position.37

On the other hand, Harley (1995) provides the head above VP with content and supposes that it can be of two different types: CAUSE versus BECOME/HAPPEN. This head, which she calls EventP, appears with all eventive verbs. Harley further claims that only the first one (CAUSE) can have a specifier, which will end up being an external argument with an agent/causer thematic role. It should be noted also that this argument has the property of being the initiator of the event. Harley (1995) states the facts from another perspective: she claims that the head that is added to both (di)transitives/unergatives and unaccusatives is an abstract head with semantic content. If it is CAUSE, it takes a specifier (an external argument). If this abstract head is of the type HAPPEN/BECOME, it will not merge with an external argument. It thus appears with unaccusatives.

I accept this distinction between two types of EventP, but the proposal I would like to pursue is that [Spec, EvP] can be filled in both cases (CAUSE and BECOME/HAPPEN). That is, the nature of the abstract head will not determine the emptiness of its specifier (as in Harley’s account) but the type of argument that it will take as its specifier. The idea I would like to

37 Kratzer (1996) makes a similar proposal. The claim is also that the external argument is not an argument of the verb and has to be added via a sort of secondary predication. She further proposes that there is a VoiceP node above VP, which is a functional category that introduces the external argument and is also responsible for accusative Case assignment. Marantz (1984) also argues for the proposal that external arguments do not appear in the lexical representation of verbs.
put forward is that the event node, when it is BECOME/HAPPEN, can have its specifier filled by a locative (or dative) argument in some cases. The locative argument is in some sense an initiator of Ev (the head of EventP), given that it always denotes a place (or a point in time or a human being) where the event or state originates. This fact, I would like to claim, is related to its ability to appear in subject position. In LICs, on the contrary, the locative is (or can be) a goal.38

In essence, my proposal differs from Hale and Keyser’s (1994, 1997) in that I take the node above VP to be not a (monadic) verb but a head with semantic content — in particular, one which determines the nature of its specifier. On the other hand, I depart from Harley’s (1995) view in that I will try to show that a specifier position can also be projected in the case of the EVENT/BECOME head. This would give us the following structure for the eventive verbs in (2):

![Diagram](image)

This is the structure I would like to propose for verbs of the eventive type, such as **ocurrir** ‘to happen’ and meteorological verbs. In the case of **llover** ‘to rain’, for example, the (empty) lower verb would take an N complement with which it will conflate and a locative will appear in [Spec, EvP]. In the case of **ocurrir/suceder** ‘to happen’, the verb will take a DP complement that will appear (and remain) in internal position.

A piece of evidence in favor of the structure in (46) is that a verb like **ocurrir** does not show any definiteness effect, similar to a regular transitive one:

(47) a. Aquí sucedió el accidente del que te hablé.  
    here happened the accident of that you I-told.  
    ‘The accident I told you about happened here.’

b. Ocurrió lo que todos esperábamos.  
    happened what that all we-were-expecting  
    ‘What we were all expecting happened.’

As for the noneventive structures, which denote states that are predicated of a place, there seems to be no reason to suppose that an Ev node is present.

38 This is probably a way to restate Grimshaw’s (1990) idea of an “aspectual dimension,” which is parallel to the thematic hierarchy. In her framework, elements that participate in the first subevent of the predicate are realized as external arguments.
Nevertheless, it is clear from the phenomena analyzed so far that the locative is higher than the theme. This resembles very much what has been proposed for the verb *have*.\(^{39}\) I take the verbs in (1) to have a structure like (48), with a locative in [Spec, VP].

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{V} \\
\text{V} \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{LOC} \\
\text{V} \\
\text{N/DP}
\end{array}
\]

The locative, being the closest element, moves to [Spec, TP]. This captures the idea that these verbs are unaccusative. Alternatively, one could follow Kratzer’s (1996:122) idea that “states are subkinds of events (or ‘eventualities’ in the terminology of Bach, 1977)” and also have a VoiceP that introduces a *holder*. We could assume that a location can bear this thematic role. Although this seems an appropriate analysis, one would have to explain why accusative Case is not assigned in these constructions, because VoiceP is present. The cases under study are most likely equivalent to the structure that Kratzer claims to have a nonactive VoiceP and therefore no external argument. In this case, an argument within the VP can become a derived subject via preposition incorporation to Voice. This is the analysis she proposes for psych verbs and it is perfectly compatible with my proposal.

A fact indicating that the structures above might be adequate is that none of the impersonal verbs I am analyzing can be transitivized, in Hale & Keyser’s (1994, 1997) sense. That is, none of them accept the addition of an external argument in the syntax. For the stative cases, it could be argued that the noneventive nature of the predicates is responsible for the impossibility of a transitive (causative) structure. But transitivization is also impossible with *suceder/ocurrir*, ‘to happen’, which one cannot claim to be stative (see (49c)). As can be seen in (50), these predicates cannot take analytical causatives either, so it cannot be argued that they merely constitute a gap in the lexical paradigm.

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{a. *Juan ha faltado café/ ha constado que eres el responsable.} \\
\text{Juan has missed coffee/ has stated that you-are the responsible-one} \\
\text{b. *Juan ha llovido/ nevado/ hecho calor.} \\
\text{Juan has rained/ snowed/ made heat}
\end{array}
\]

\(^{39}\) See Hale & Keyser 1994, Kayne 1993. See also Rigau (1994) for a similar proposal for the existential verb *haver* in Catalan. These authors propose, in fact, that it is the locative clitic *hi* that appears in subject position.
c. *Juan ha sucedido un accidente.
   Juan has happened an accident

(50) a. *Juan ha hecho faltar café.
   Juan has made miss coffee
b. *Juan ha hecho nevar/ hacer calor.
   Juan has made snow/ make heat
c. *Juan ha hecho suceder un incidente.
   Juan has made happen an accident

If we assume that these predicates already have an external argument —
namely, the locative — this fact follows straightforwardly.

As for the Definiteness Effect, a further division seems to be in order. The
existential verb haber, as is well known, never accepts a definite object. Verbs like sobrar and faltar, however, seem to have the option of taking a
definite object. In this case, they are interpreted as telic — namely, the
lacking or exceeding is understood as a completed event — as can be seen by
the type of temporal adverbials that can appear in (52).

(51) a. En este país, faltó comida durante mucho tiempo.
    in this country missed food during a-long time
    ‘Food was missing for a long time.’
b. Sobraron empleados durante el verano.
    were-extra employees during the summer
    ‘During the summer there were too many employees.’

(52) a. En la fiesta faltó el café en cinco minutos.
    at the party missed the coffee in five minutes
    ‘We ran out of coffee in five minutes at the party.’

b. En esta fiesta va a faltar el café rápidamente.
    at this party is-going to miss the coffee quickly
    ‘We are going to run out of coffee quickly at this party.’
c. En cuanto se vaya Juan en esta fiesta va a sobrar la botella de whisky.
    as soon CL leaves Juan in this party is-going to be-extra
    the bottle of whisky
    ‘As soon as Juan leaves, the whisky bottle will be superfluous at
    this party.’

These examples show that the theme has the same effect on the aspectual
interpretation of the predicate as any direct object (Tenny 1987). I will not
pursue this matter here.40

40 If there is a relationship between being telic and having two aspect phrases with two
specifiers (Borer 1997), one could claim that the locative can generate in either of them. I leave
the question open at this point, but I would like to mention another alternation that takes place
with these predicates. When the theme NP is human and definite, faltar may display a structure in
which this NP appears as the subject of the construction. Some other changes take place in this

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6. Some Remarks on Agreement

Finally, let me present some data concerning the behavior of the theme in impersonal constructions with respect to agreement on the verb. There are different subgroups of examples, which I will present in the following subsections.

6.1. Conjuncts

The first fact about agreement in impersonal sentences has to do with the type of category that occupies the (theme) VP-internal position. More specifically, agreement between the verb and the postverbal phrase may not obtain if the latter is a conjunct. The obvious case is when the members of the conjunct are sentences (*Faltan que te vayas y que venga Pedro ‘MissPL that you go and that Peter comes’). This is, in fact, the norm with clause conjunction. However, although plural agreement on the verb is always possible in conjunction of DPs, agreement with the first conjunct may also obtain. In fact, in contrast with other cases, sometimes this is the preferred option, although the issue is heavily prescriptivized. In all the sentences below, third-person-singular agreement is preferred by most of the speakers (in fact, for some of them, plural agreement is completely out in a sentence like (53c)).

(53) a. Ocurrió / ?? ocurrieron un incidente menor y una catastrophe
happenedSG / happenedPL an incident minor and a catastrophe
‘An accident and a catastrophe happened.’

b. Faltó / ? faltaron (el) café y (las) galletas.
missedSG / missedPL (the) coffee and (the) cookies
‘Coffee and cookies were missing.’

c. Constó / ??constaron tu llegada y tu partida.
statedSG / statedPL your arrival and your departure
‘Your arrival and your departure were reported.’

Babyonyshev (1996) takes similar cases in Russian to indicate that agreement can take place in the covert component. She further observes that case: first, the verb is interpreted as volitional; crucially, the locative does not take the preposition en but the goal/directional preposition a, which indicates an endpoint, and third, the verb has to appear in a perfect tense.

(i) a. En la fiesta faltaba / *faltó Juan (*deliberadamente).
at the party missedIMP / missedPERF John deliberately
‘John was missing at the party.’

b. Juan *faltaba / faltó a la fiesta (deliberadamente).
John missedIMP / missedPERF to the party deliberately
‘Juan failed to go to the party (deliberately).’
there is a clear contrast between unaccusative and unergative/transitive verbs in that only the former allow agreement with the first member of the conjunct.\textsuperscript{41} In this case, T would only attract the features of the first conjunct.\textsuperscript{42} There are further restrictions on this phenomenon, one of them being that the conjoined NP has to be in a postverbal position. This is what seems to happen in the cases exemplified in (53). But, interestingly enough, in those cases even if the theme is preposed, lack of plural agreement is still possible in some dialects, as can be seen in the sentences in (54) (which again are also good with plural agreement on the verb). In this respect, these constructions differ from regular unaccusative verbs, as the ungrammaticality of the (54d,e) show.

(54) a. Pan y alegría nunca nos falte.
   bread and happiness never to-us miss\textsubscript{SG}.
   ‘Let bread and happiness never be missing.’

b. El pan y la leche en este lugar sobra
   the bread and the milk in this place is-extra
   ‘There is more than enough bread and milk here.’

c. El terremoto y la inundación ocurrió aquí.
   the earthquake and the flood happened\textsubscript{SG} here

d. * Los chicos y Marta (ayer) vino (ayer).
   the boys and Marta (yesterday) came\textsubscript{SG} (yesterday)

e. *Las flores y la hierba (aquí) no crece (aquí).
   the flowers and the grass (here) not grow\textsubscript{SG} (here)

These data show that in the constructions under study the theme is never in [Spec, TP] or any other position hosting external arguments, this position being occupied by the locative.

6.2. Existentials

Another instantiation of nonagreement constructions involves the existential verb \textit{haber}. In Standard Spanish, this verb never agrees with the theme (cf. (56a)),\textsuperscript{43} although there are dialects in which it does, in tenses other than the present (where the locative clitic \textit{y} on the verb stem blocks the attachment of any morpheme). In the most extended variety, only number agreement

\textsuperscript{41} Similar unagreement phenomena have been noted for English existential \textit{there-be} constructions. See, for example, Green 1984.

\textsuperscript{42} Babonyyshev gives conclusive evidence for the claim that these are cases of agreement with the first conjunct and not just default agreement on the verb. I refer the reader to her work.

\textsuperscript{43} In fact, if the theme argument is a pronominal, it will always appear in the form of the accusative clitic:

\begin{itemize}
  \item (i) Lo / los / la / las hay
  \textit{CL\textsubscript{ACC}=SG-MASG / -PL-MASC / -SG-FEM -PL-FEM is}
  ‘(there) is/are’
\end{itemize}
obtains — that is, sentences such as (55a) are impossible (although there is a restricted dialect that accepts them; dialect 2 in (55d)).

(55) a. En el parque hay un chico / cinco chicos.
   at the park is a boy five boys
   ‘at the park (there) is a boy/five boys.’
   (All dialects)

b. Había cinco chicos en el parque.
   was five boys at the park
   ‘There were five boys at the park.’
   (Standard Spanish)

c. Habían cinco chicos en el parque
   were five boys at the park
   ‘There were five boys at the park.’
   (Dialect 1)

d. Habíamos cinco personas
   were-1PL five people
   ‘There were five of us.’
   (Dialect 2)

These data also suggest that the theme argument in impersonal constructions does not raise to subject position at any point in the derivation and that it is possible that its features are not checked against T. Merge of the (closer) quirky argument takes place and no agreement with accessible nominative is obtained (see Chomsky 1998). The question that one has to deal with at this point is why does the theme always agree (at least in number) with the verb in the cases in which it is not sentential or a conjunct or is preceded by a preposition. A possible answer to this question may be to think that in Spanish (as opposed to English), nominative is the default case, so that agreement with the verb is necessary.\footnote{Schütze (1996) proposes, in fact, that when an argument appears in the accusative Case in languages in which accusative is the default Case, agreement with the verb does not have to take place, as in English existentials.}

That, in fact, nominative is the default case in Spanish can be seen by looking at sentences like the following:

(56) a. Soy yo.
   am I
   ‘It is me.’

b. Lo haremos entre tu y yo/*mí.
   It(CL) will-do-1PL between you and I/me
   ‘We will do it together.’

\footnote{Schütze (1996) proposes, in fact, that when an argument appears in the accusative Case in languages in which accusative is the default Case, agreement with the verb does not have to take place, as in English existentials.}
c. Estaba sentado entre tu y yo/*mí.
   was sitting between you and I/me
   ‘(He/she) was sitting between you and I/me.’

d. Tu y yo / *mí podríamos hacerlo.
   you and I/me could do-it
   ‘You and I could do it.’

e. Juan es más alto que yo / *mí.
   Juan is taller than I/me
   ‘Juan is taller than I.’

In (56a) we have a copulative structure in which the postverbal pronoun appears in the nominative and triggers agreement. In (56b) and (56c) the pronouns are preceded by a preposition. In (56d) we have a conjunction, and in (56e) a comparative structure. In all of these cases, the pronouns appear in the nominative, contrary to what is found in English or French. If we accept the idea that structural Case assignment is an instance of $u$-feature checking (which triggers agreement on the head bearing the relevant uninterpretable features), one could claim that, nominative being the default case, a DP argument will always agree with the verb even if it never raises (neither covertly nor overtly) to subject position.45 This would mean that in Spanish $T$ can check its $u$-features inside VP and it does so only if there is an element available; otherwise it takes default third-person singular.46 The hypothesis that $T$ can take default third-person agreement is supported by the fact that, as already shown, verbs like $bastar$, $sobrar$ (see (33)), and also $oler$ ‘to smell’ do not have any argument that agrees with the verb, which appears in third-person singular. More examples are given here:

(57) a. En este parque huele /*huelen a rosas.
   in this park smells/ smell to roses
   ‘In this park it smells like roses.’

b. Basta con esos tres
   is-enough with those three
   ‘It is enough with those three.’

c. Sobra con tres pesetas
   is-extra with three pesetas
   ‘It is more than enough with three pesetas.’

This also holds for the verb $dar$ ‘to give’ when it takes a complement like $vergüenza/apuro$, ‘shame’ or $pena / lástima$, ‘pity’, as the following examples show:

45 Alternatively, one could accept Sobin’s (1997) hypothesis that plural agreement with the theme may be a case of an extragrammatical hypercorrection mechanism. This would explain why in tenses other than the present (that is, whenever it is possible), the theme agrees with existential $haber$ in some dialects.

Another possibility is to think that in these cases we get long-distance agreement between T and the accessible nominative (Chomsky 1998).

Summarizing, I have proposed that some verbs in Spanish can be predicated of a nonagent noncauser element, which will appear with quirky Case. The particular Case marking this element has (i.e., the Case in which it will appear) will depend on it having a [+animate] feature. If it is [–animate], it will surface as a locative; if it is [+animate], it will surface as a dative. If this is the case, we would expect there to be other positions in which locatives and datives alternate. This is, in fact, the case, as shown in the next section.

7. Other Cases of Locative/Dative Alternation

Old Spanish provides very clear examples of locative/dative Case alternation with goals, depending on the NP being plus or minus animate because it used to have a locative clitic, similar to French y or Italian ci. In the following cases, taken from different old documents, we can see that [–animate] NPs are pronominalized by a locative clitic, whereas [+animate] NPs take the form of a dative clitic (both the relevant NP and the clitic are marked in bold letters):

(59) a. (…), et comencía a andar (…) en ello e dar y muy buen recabdo. And he started to go on it and to give LOC good custody (General Estoria)

b. (…) que Tu dennes catar este quebranto e dar y conseio that you accept to try this pain and give LOC advice

(60) a. toda esta (…) heredat do io al conventio e al monesterio (…) e do y mio cuerpo e de mi mugier…

And all this heritage give I to the convent and the monastery (…) and give itLOC my body and my wife’s

b. yo (…) fagom companera en el monesterio de Villena e offresco y mio cuerpo e mj alma

I . (…) become member of the monastery of Villena and offer LOC my body and my soul
Rigau (1978) gives some data from Catalan that show the same alternation. In this language also, verbs like give, which usually take a dative complement, appear with a locative clitic if the indirect object is not personal. The following examples are from Rigau (1978, ex. (2, 3)):

(61) a. En Pere hi dóna corda (al reloge de la sala).
the Peter CL LOC gives wire (to clock of the living-room)
‘Peter gives wire to the living room clock.’

b. El vailet hi do´na cops (a la taula).
the kid CL LOC gives hits (to the table)
‘The kid hits the table.’

c. A aixó, hi dedico molt de temps.
 to that CL LOC I-dedicate a-lot of time
‘I spend a lot of time with that.’

(62) a. El vailet li do´na cops (a en Pere).
the kid himDAT gives hits (to the Peter)
‘The kid hits Peter.’

b. A la seva filla, li dedico molt de temps.
 to his daughter herDAT I-dedicate a-lot of time
‘I spend a lot of time with his daughter.’

Also in modern Spanish there are instances of alternations of the type shown in (63), where the locative adverb aquí ‘here’ alternates with a dative clitic.

(63) a. {Trae aquí / tráeme} eso.
 bring here/ bring-me that
‘Bring that to me.’

b. Aparta de {aquí / mí} ese bicho.
 put-far from here / me that animal
‘Put that animal far from me.’

So dative and locative Case marking seem to be instances of the same phenomenon, at least in some cases. An argument taking one form or the other will depend on the features of the head noun.

References

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