On Certain Light Verbs in Spanish: The Case of Temporal Tener and Llevar

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Abstract. In this paper we analyze the behavior of some temporal constructions in two varieties of Spanish: those with the verb llevar ‘to carry’, used in the standard variety, and those with tener ‘to have’, which are characteristic of some American dialects. Our purpose is twofold: on the one hand, we try to account for the argument structure of these constructions, and on the other, we seek to give an analysis of the aspectual restrictions they show. These restrictions will be related to the fact that both verbs are light verbs incorporating an abstract preposition, allative in the case of llevar and of central coincidence in the case of tener. The paper constitutes a further application of Hale and Keyser’s framework to a new set of data. Some related constructions involving movement verbs will be described and discussed as well.

1. Introduction

In this paper we offer an empirical characterization and analysis of two Spanish temporal/aspectual constructions that give raise to dialectal variation. These constructions involve the verbs llevar ‘to carry’ and tener ‘to have’. In approaching the characterization of the syntactic and interpretive properties of these verbs, we adopt Hale and Keyser’s (1993, 2002) lexical syntax framework. Their diverging temporal/aspectual restrictions will be derived from an analysis according to which both predicates are light verbs but incorporate different abstract prepositions (allative and central coincidence, respectively).

In Spanish, temporal constructions are usually impersonal sentences containing a light verb like ser ‘to be’, hacer ‘to do/make’, or ir para ‘to go for’ plus a temporal phrase. We provide some examples in (1).

(1) a. Es la una/ tarde.
   is the one late
   ‘It’s one o’clock/late.’

b. Hace cinco años que vivo aquí.
   makes five years that live here
   ‘I’ve been living here for five years.’

c. Va para cinco años que vivo aquí.
   goes for five years that live here
   ‘It is almost five years that I’m living here.’

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Together with those in (1) there are other temporal constructions,\(^1\) semantically similar to (1b), but with a first-, second-, or third-person agreeing subject. These constructions display some dialectal variation in the sense that the verb *llevar* ‘carry/bring’ is used quite generally in most dialects of Spanish, whereas in many Latin American varieties, it is the possessive verb *tener* ‘have’ that creates temporal constructions. We provide some examples in (2) and (3).

(2) a. Llevo cinco años viviendo aquí.
   carry five years living here
   ‘I’ve been living here for five years.’

   b. Tu hermana lleva durmiendo mucho tiempo.
   your sister carries sleeping much time
   ‘Your sister has been sleeping for a long time.’

(3) a. Tengo cinco años de vivir aquí.
   have five years of live here
   ‘I’ve been living here for five years.’

   b. Ni un año tiene de haberse casado.
   not-even a year has of have got-married
   ‘It’s not even a year that he got married.’

Our purpose in this work is twofold: on the one hand, we seek to analyze the syntactic restrictions characterizing these temporal constructions, and on the other, to account for their argument structure. In so doing, we will first determine the status of the two verbs under study in temporal non-impersonal constructions.

2. The Status of *Llevar* and *Tener*

2.1 The Nonperiphrastic Nature of Temporal *Llevar*/*Tener*

In this section we argue that, contrary to what has been usually assumed (Yllera 1999, Marin Gálvez 2000, Sedano 2000, Camus 2004, and most traditional grammarians), the finite verbs *llevar* and *tener* do not give rise to a complex, periphrastic form such as *tener que* + infinitive (*tener que estudiar* ‘have to study’), *haber de* + infinitive (*haber de estudiar* ‘have to study’) or *estar* + gerund (*estar estudiando* ‘be studying’). There are many reasons for this claim.

First, *tener* and *llevar* and the nonfinite verbs (infinitive/gerund) do not have to be adjacent, as shown in (3) and (4). In this respect they contrast with

\(^1\) We use “temporal” because it is the term traditionally used by grammarians when referring to these constructions. Nevertheless, the term “aspectual constructions” may be more accurate. Nothing crucial for the present analysis hinges on this issue.
periphrastic forms, which in general do not accept any element between the conjugated and the nonfinite verb (see (5)).

(4) a. Llevo cinco años viviendo aquí.
   carry five years living here
   ‘I’ve been living here for five years.’
   
   b. Tu hermana lleva mucho tiempo durmiendo.
   your sister carries much time sleeping
   ‘Your sister has been sleeping for a long time.’
   
(5) a. Juan todavía tiene que trabajar. /*Juan tiene todavía que trabajar.
   ‘John still has to work.’
   
   b. A las cinco tú estabas trabajando./*Tú estabas a las cinco trabajando.
   ‘You were working at five o’clock.’
   
In addition to infinitives or gerunds, an adverbial phrase, an adjective or participial phrase, or a PP can appear in these constructions.

(6) Lleva cinco años aquí/ de médico/ sin trabajar.
   carries five years here/ of doctor/ without working
   ‘He has spent five years here/as a doctor/not working.’
   
(7) a. Tengo aquí más de dos horas.
   have here more of two hours
   ‘I have been here for more than two hours.’
   
   b. Este monasterio tiene un siglo de fundado.
   this monastery has a century of founded
   ‘This monastery was founded a century ago.’

2 As is the case for perfective forms in the verbal paradigm, “short” particles and adverbs can intervene between the finite and the nonfinite form of periphrastic verbs. For this reason, as an anonymous reviewer points out, sentences like (i) are possible:

   (i) Tendrás aún que esperar bastante. (cf. Tendrás evidentemente que esperar bastante.)
   ‘You will have yet to wait for a while.’ (‘You will have obviously to wait for a while.’)

3 In fact, in these constructions the alternation gerund/sin ‘without’ + infinitive is obtained (see Bosque 1980), whereas true periphrastic forms with sin + infinitive are impossible, as shown in (ib,c).

   (i) a. Llevo cinco días estudiando/ sin estudiar.
   carry five days studying/ without studying
   ‘I have been studying/I haven’t studied for five days.’
   
   b. Estoy estudiando/ *sin estudiar.
   am studying/ without studying
   ‘I am studying/not studying.’
   
   c. Esto viene costando/ *sin costar 3 euros.
   this comes costing/ without costing 3 euros
   ‘This costs about 3 euros.’
It has to be noted also that in other Romance languages we find the equivalent of Spanish *llevar* in similar syntactic contexts. These constructions have not been analyzed as periphrastic:

(8) a. *Leva tres días durmindo/* sen durmir/* en* carries three days sleeping/ without sleep/ in Oviedo. (Galician)

Oviedo

‘He spent three days sleeping/ notsleeping/in Oviedo.’

b. *Porto un mes en aquesta casa/* casat/* sense* carry a month in this house/ married/ without sleeping. (Catalan)

‘It’s a month that I am in this house/ married/ without sleeping.’

The nonfinite clauses constitute (weak) islands, in the sense that extraction (of an adjunct) is impossible, in clear contrast with periphrastic constructions.

(9) a. *¿Dónde estabas leyendo?* where were reading

‘Where were you reading?’

b. *¿Dónde tienes que leer el libro?* where have that read the book

‘Where do you have to read the book?’

(10) a. *¿Dónde llevabas tres meses leyéndolo?* carry three months reading-cl

b. *¿Dónde tienes tres meses de haber leído el libro?* where have three months of having read the book

Clitics can “climb” from the nonfinite to the finite verb in the case of periphrastic constructions and so-called restructuring verbs (Rizzi 1982) (11). This is not the case for temporal *llevar* and *tener*, as seen in (12).

(11) a. *Tengo que leer* → *Lo tengo que leer.* have that read-cl

b. *Estoy leyéndolo* → *Lo estoy leyendo.* am reading-cl

(12) a. *Llevan peleándose toda su vida.* carry arguing-cl all their lives

‘They have spent all their lives arguing with each other.’
b. ??Se llevan peleando toda su vida.\textsuperscript{4}
   \textit{carry arguing all their lives}

c. Ya tienes de haber\textit{los} terminado tiempecito, tus estudios.
   \textit{already have of have-CL finished some-time your studies.}
   \textit{‘It is some time that you have finished your studies.’}

d. *Ya \textit{los} tienes de haber terminado tiempecito, tus estudios.

Finally, ellipsis of the nonfinite form is possible in some contexts (13). This again is not the case for periphrastic forms (see (14)).

(13) a. Empezó a trabajar aquí sin seguridad, y ya lleva ocho años.
   \textit{He started working with no safety and has been here for 8 years.}

b. —Pero ya tienen ahí diez años, ¿verdad?
   \textit{but already have there ten years true}
   \textit{‘But it’s ten years that you are there, right?’}

   —Pues tenemos un montón.
   \textit{well have a lot.}
   \textit{‘Well, it’s a long time.’}

(14) a. *Tengo que trabajar tres horas y tú tienes (que) cinco.
   \textit{have that work three hours and you have that five}

b. *Estuvo trabajando tres horas y tú no estuviste.
   \textit{was working three hours and you not were}

c. *El enfermo de la 204 va mejorando día a día
   \textit{and the-one in room 200 goes every-moment}
   \textit{the patient in room 204 goes getting-better every-day}

We will see in what follows that, in fact, the nonfinite verbal form, as well as the nonverbal ones in (6), are complement of a(n abstract) preposition and that llevar and tener do not behave as real predicates. More precisely, we would like to propose that temporal sentences with lleva and tener give rise to two complex structures whose global meaning is basically equivalent but which display different properties. The difference between them is to be attributed in our analysis to the different lexical nature of both light verbs and to the close

\textsuperscript{4} In Spanish these data are not so clear, as an anonymous reviewer points out, but the contrast obtains. Anyway, the Catalan equivalent to (12b), for example, is completely impossible.
relation they establish with the just-mentioned abstract prepositions that, we will maintain, have different locative values. These different values are responsible, in our view, for some aspectual contrasts analyzed in the next section.

2.2 Tense/Aspect Restrictions

An important fact that we would like to note is that the constructions with *llevar* and *tener* under study present different temporal/aspectual restrictions that, to our knowledge, have not received a conclusive account in the literature. As will become clear, these restrictions affect those projections immediately above and below the structures under analysis from a syntactic point of view. In other words, there are (i) “upward” restrictions, involving the functional projections immediately above (TP, AspP); and (ii) “downward” restrictions, involving the lexical projections.

With respect to the upward restrictions, the crucial property in which these constructions seem to differ has to do with the fact that *llevar* imposes strict aspectual restrictions on the sentence, whereas *tener* does not seem to have this requirement. More specifically, sentences such as (15) (in contrast with (16), with nonperfective verbal forms) with *llevar* are impossible, but those in (17), with *tener*, are grammatical.

(15) a. *Llevó tres años de profesor en su juventud. carried_perf three years of professor in his youth
b. *Ha llevado tres horas esperando. has carried three hours waiting
c. *Juan llevó tres años en Inglaterra. Juan carried_perf three years in England

(16) a. Lleva tres años de profesor. carries three years of professor
   ‘He has been a teacher for three years.’
b. Llevábamos tres horas esperando. carried_imp three hours waiting
   ‘We had been waiting for three hours.’

(17) a. Tuviste varios días de estar enfermo. (Mexico) had_perf some days of be sick
   ‘You have been sick for some days.’
b. Había tenido un año de dar clases. (Mexico) had had a year of give classes
   ‘He had been teaching for a year.’

The Spanish imperfect past tense is compatible with *llevar*, because it has an unbounded value.
c. El 22 de abril, Miguel tuvo un año de haber vivido en Boston. (Dominican Rep.)
    ‘On April 22, Miguel had been living in Boston for a year.’

d. Ya ha tenido un año de malpasarla, tratemos de ayudarlo. (Dominican Rep.)
    ‘He has already had a hard year; let’s try to help him.’

Downward aspectual restrictions have to do with the fact that, although the sentences in (18), are synonymous, tener, but not llevar, can coappear with a participle such as nacido ‘born’.

(18) a. El cadáver tenía varios años de enterrado.
    the corpse had some years of buried
    ‘The corpse had been buried for some years.’

   b. El cadáver llevaba varios años enterrado.
    the corpse carried some years buried
    ‘The corpse had been buried for some years.’

(19) a. Apenas tenía un día de nacido.
    hardly had a day of born
    ‘It was hardly a day since he was born.’

   b. *Apenas llevaba un día nacido.
    hardly carried a day born

To account for these contrasts we propose that temporal sentences with llevar and tener correspond to two complex structures that differ with respect to the lexical nature of both verbs. We develop our concrete proposal in the next section.

3. Argument Structure

We will now deal with argument structure of the predicates in this temporal constructions. In so doing, we adopt Hale and Keyser’s (1993, 2002) work. Our hypothesis is that in the constructions under study llevar and tener behave as light verbs: they are not real predicates but mere hosts for an abstract preposition as well as carriers of tense and agreement features. Thus temporal llevar and tener host an abstract prepositional predicate of temporal location. The head of this predicate (the preposition) must incorporate onto the light verb to be licensed. Because the preposition lacks phonological content, Full Interpretation must be satisfied in some way. We also claim that temporal
llevar and tener are in some sense raising verbs (Chomsky 2001a,b), given that their grammatical subject is generated inside a selected small clause.

3.1 The Verb Llevar

In its usual sense, when llevar ‘to take/carry’ behaves as a lexical verb, it expresses that something or someone causes movement of something to some point far from the speaker. For this case, the structure we propose is the one schematically depicted in (20).

(20) María [v[lleva [PPlos libros a la escuela]]]

Maria takes the books to the school

The verb llevar takes as its complement a PP whose head is a dynamic preposition with a destination (i.e., allative) value, a ‘to’ (Hale 1986). In (20) the specifier of such a preposition is the DP los libros ‘the books’, and its complement is the DP la escuela ‘the school’. This verb, being selected by a causative small v, is also related to an external argument (María).

In contrast with (20), in the temporal constructions under study, we claim that llevar admits incorporation of the dynamic preposition, in this case with no phonological content. With this idea in mind, let us go back to the intriguing property of this use of llevar, which is not displayed by the one analyzed in (20): its impossibility to appear in sentences with past tense and perfect aspect, as we just saw. To account for this peculiarity we will benefit from recent theories on tense and aspect such as the ones developed by Zagona (1995), Stowell (1996), and Demirdache and Uribe-Extebarria (1997, 2000), among others. The basic idea of these authors is that Tense and also Aspect can be analyzed as predicates, be it dynamic predicates—destination or source—or static predicates expressing coincidence. In particular, Demirdache and Uribe-Extebarria (2000) claim that perfect tenses are dynamic predicates, which do not express static coincidence but source. In other words, past tense and perfect (retrospective) aspect have a meaning similar to the preposition from.6 If we accept this proposal we can account for the temporal-aspectual restrictions displayed by Spanish temporal llevar sketched in (15) and (16). Let us see how.

The relevant fact is that temporal llevar is incompatible with past tenses expressing perfect (retrospective) aspect such as ha llevado and llevó.7 We

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6 This also accounts for the fact that movement verbs are frequently used across languages as temporal/aspectual auxiliaries (Hale 1986): Spanish: venir a ‘to come to’, ir a ‘to go to’, echar a ‘to throw to’, llegar a ‘to arrive to’ + infinitive, andar ‘to walk’, venir ‘to come’, seguir ‘to go on’ + gerund; Catalan: arribar a ‘to arrive to’, anar ‘to go’ + infinitive; Portuguese: ir ‘to go’ + infinitive, etc.

7 Similar contrasts in other languages have been accounted for in other theoretical approaches such as the ones in Iatridou 2003 and Iatridou Anagnostopoulou, and Izvorsky 2001. The reader can consult Marín Gálvez 2000:203 and Camus 2004 for more Spanish data.
hypthesize that this source value of past tense and perfect aspect clashes with
the destination preposition incorporated onto temporal llevar. The meaning of
the verb llevar inherently involves displacement. Additionally, in our
constructions it incorporates an abstract predicate of destination equivalent
to the preposition to. Thus, the value of the real predicate of the
construction—the abstract allative preposition—is added to the movement
value of llevar. This destination value of the allative predication does not
match the temporal-aspectual predicate’s source value characteristic of past
tense and perfect aspect.

As expected, other uses of llevar do not display the just-mentioned
restrictions, as shown in (21).

(21) a. Juan llevó los libros a la escuela.
Juan carried the books to the school
‘Juan took the books to school.’

b. Llevó el coche con ella toda la tarde.
carried the baby-carriage with her all the evening
‘She carried the baby carriage with her all evening.’

The reason for this fact is, we claim, that llevar in these cases does not
incorporate a destination preposition, although it can select for an explicit
one as its complement (see (20) or (21a)). In cases like (21b), where
there is no (abstract or overt) destination preposition, the meaning of
the verb without the preposition is ‘movement along a path’. Incidentally,
one further property of these constructions is that they display a higher
causative v, where the external argument is generated. This is shown
by the fact that these uses of llevar admit the agentive proform with
hacerlo ‘do it’, which is impossible with temporal llevar. This can be seen
in (22).

(22) a. Juan llevó los libros a la escuela ya que
Juan carried the books to the school since that
tú no lo hiciste.
you not it done
‘Juan took the books to school given that you had not done it.’

b. María llevó el coche con ella pero yo
María carried the baby-carriage with her but I
no pienso hacerlo.
not think do-it
‘María took the baby carriage with her but I will not do it.’

c. *Yo llevo aquí tres horas y tú no lo haces.
I carry here three hours and you not it do
So far we have dealt with the nature of the temporal light verb *llevar*. In what follows we analyze the (lexical-)syntactic structure we propose for this verb. In particular, we try to show that in a sentence like (23a) the grammatical subject (*María*) is the semantic subject of a PP whose head is an abstract destination preposition. Observe that if the real head of the predication is the allative P, our verb *llevar* will no longer be an action verb that relates to an external argument. It occurs in the sentence to support tense and aspect. The preposition’s specifier is filled by the N (*María*) that will raise to the sentential subject position. In (23b) we provide a schematic argument structure corresponding to (23a).

(23) a. *María lleva tres años en esta empresa.*
    ‘María has been working here for three years.’

    b. $\begin{array}{c} V \\
        V \ P \\
        N \ P_{\text{allative}} \\
        \text{María} \\
        \text{(tres) años en (esta) empresa} \end{array}$

Let us now turn to the structure of the embedded temporal measure N in (23b). We strictly follow Hale and Keyser (1993, 2002) in supposing that, being a N, the relation between *años* ‘years’ and the PP *en esta empresa* ‘in this company’ cannot be one of head-complement. *Tres años* cannot be either a degree phrase in Spec,PP because the whole construction is a temporal one selected by the abstract preposition (*María ya lleva tres años*, lit. ‘María already has carried...

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8 Our analysis could also be compatible with Cinque’s (1999) proposal of a universal hierarchy of functional categories, some of which have an aspectual nature. Auxiliary movement verbs would generate in these aspectual projections (see also Cardinaletti & Giusti 1998). For other approaches to motion verbs, aspect and spatiotemporal relations, see Bybee, Perkins, and Paglinca. 1994 and Horrocks and Stavrou 2007. Temporal *llevar* could be generated in a functional pro-
spective or proximative category incompatible with perfective aspect expressed by some past
tenses. The (incorporating) preposition would originate inside the embedded predicational phrase.

9 Following Hale and Keyser (2002:221), we take the structure for a PP with an allative
preposition to be complex, because these prepositions not only involve destination but also central
coincidence (although this is not always visible to syntax). This means that the complement of a
destination P establishes a semantic relation with another coincidence, static preposition. Thus a
preposition like English *into* can be analyzed as *to + in*, with incorporation.

(i) Getting [the baby into bed] is hard. (Hale & Keyser 2002:222)
three years’ vs. *María ya lleva en esta empresa, lit. ‘María already has carried in this company’).\textsuperscript{10}

The requirement of the locative PP in (23) is not of a syntactic-lexical but a semantic-conceptual nature. In particular, to achieve relevance, the temporal phrase (tres) años ‘three years’ conceptually requires the specification of a static situation coincident with the time interval expressed by the constriction. In other words, for the relation between the subject and the temporal interval to be completely understood at the C-I interface, it needs a spatial predication. Thus the construction María lleva tres años is well formed from a (lexical-) syntactic point of view and from the perspective of the computational system, but the interface requirement has to be satisfied. In (23) it is fulfilled by the occurrence of a prepositional phrase in apposition introducing another predication relation defining the value of this time interval.\textsuperscript{11} This appositive phrase, not required from the syntactic point of view, is thus to be considered as an adjunct to N and analyzed on a par with other adjuncts in lexical syntax. It satisfies the interface requirement that the time span be interpreted with respect to a situation.

This conceptual requirement is not particular to our constructions: in other contexts, such as those with verbs like tener ‘to have’ and quedar ‘to be/ have left’, when constructed with a measure phrase, expressions such as de vacaciones ‘of vacation’ or para hacerlo ‘to do it’ are needed to properly interpret the sentence:

\textsuperscript{10} We make a distinction between these expressions such as [tres años en esta empresa] and locative constructions with degree phrases such as (i).

(i) Tres metros bajo tierra.
   three meters under ground
   ‘Three meters under the ground.’

   In these cases the degree phrase is not obligatory, as can be seen in (ii).

(ii) a. Lo enterraron tres metros bajo tierra.
    it buried three meters under ground
    ‘They buried it three meters under the ground.’

   b. Lo enterraron bajo tierra.
    it buried under ground
    ‘They buried it under the ground.’

   c. *Lo enterraron tres metros.
    it buried three meters

For these constructions with degree phrases and others such as Lo enterraron a tres metros (de la superficie) ‘They buried it three meters from the surface’ in Spanish, see Bosque 1989. See also den Dikken 2006; Svenonius in press, among others.

\textsuperscript{11} The time interval might also be expressed by an elative PP indicating the point in time from which the time elapse starts:

(i) Yo llevo trabajando desde las 10:30 de la mañana.
    I carry working since the 10:30 in the morning
    ‘I’ve been working since 10:30 in the morning.’

   This might indicate that what we have in complement position of P is a more complex structure in which desde ‘since’ in (i) relates the utterance time with the time expression:

   (ii) [NOW since 10:30 in the morning]
(24) a. Tienes quince días de vacaciones.
    ‘You have fifteen days of vacation.’
    b. Me quedan cinco minutos para hacerlo.
    ‘I have five minutes left to do it.’

The allative preposition incorporated onto our temporal *llevar* is only compatible with a nonterminative phrase in the measure complement. So in a sentence like (23a) together with the predication headed by the allative preposition, another relation of predication is established that ensures that the measure value (*tres años*) coincides with the permanence of the subject in the location (*en esta empresa*). In addition to examples like (23), where the central coincidence appositive P is explicit, there are cases where it is invisible because an N incorporates onto it, as in (25a). We claim, as do many other authors, that the gerund is a prepositional form. This prepositional nature can be extended to adjectives and, of course, to adverbs, in lexical syntax, as in (25b,c).

(25) a. trabajando ‘working’ = [P_{coincidence} + trabaj-]  
    (Mateu & Amadas 1999)  
    b. enojado ‘angry’ = [P_{coincidence} + enojo]  
    (Mateu 2002)  
    c. aquí ‘here’ = [P_{coincidence} + aquí]  
    (Mateu 2002)

Another instance of this construction would be (26), where the preposition *de* has an “attributive” value (similar to *como* ‘as a’), which also obtains in structures with nouns meaning profession, role, and the like, such as *Trabaja de camionera* ‘She works as a truck driver’.

(26) Lleva tres años de directora.
    ‘She’s been a director for three years.’

To negate the appositional phrase, Spanish uses the negative preposition *sin* ‘without’, as shown in (27) (Bosque 1980).

(27) María lleva tres años sin dormir (= no durmiendo).
    María carries three years without sleep
    ‘Mary has not slept for three years.’

One piece of evidence supporting our analysis of temporal *llevar* is provided by the fact that there are other temporal constructions, such as *ir para* ‘go for’, where the destination preposition appears explicitly (see (28)). This
constructions, as one would expect, also show incompatibility with past tense
and perfect aspect. Again, other (nontemporal) uses of *ir* do not have to
respect the restrictions above, as in (29).

(28) a. Va para tres meses que no llueve.
    It will soon be three months that it has not rained.
    ‘It will soon be three months that it has not rained.’

b. *Ha ido/ fue para tres meses que
    has gone/ went for three months that
    no llovía/llovió.
    not rained

(29) Hemos ido/ fuimos para la playa.
    We have gone/went toward the beach
    ‘We have gone/went toward the beach.’

The directional nature of the abstract preposition incorporated on temporal
lagevar also accounts for data such as those in (30). Such data show that our
temporal constructions with *llevar* only admit stage adjectives and participles
whose lexical aspectual properties are, in some sense, “durative” (such
as buried, sick, drunk, but not born, executed, watered, spitted, criticized,
etc.). A “durative” phrase is the only one compatible with the main
preposition. That is, the time phrase that appears with *llevar* is only
semantically compatible with stages admitting a possible continuation. For the
same reason, *llevar* is also incompatible with predicates in apposition
expressing an achievement, as in (30b).

(30) a. *Apenas llevaba un día nacido. (= (19a))
    hardly carried a day born

b. *Lleva tres horas llegando/ sin llegar a la
    carries three hours arriving/ without arriving at the
    oficina.
    office

3.2 The Verb Tener

We will now analyze temporal constructions with *tener* from American
Spanish. In section 1 we gave some examples of temporal *tener*, which are
similar to the ones in (31).

(31) a. Tuviste varios días de estar enfermo. (Mexico)
    You were sick for some days.
    had some days of be sick
    ‘You were sick for some days.’
b. Tiene varios años de andar de puto. (Mexico) has several years of go of whore ‘It’s several years that he has been having a hard time.’
c. Tenía un año de haber llegado de had one year of have arrived from Puerto Plata. (Dominican Republic) Puerto Plata. ‘It was one year since he had arrived from Puerto Plata.’

Our proposal is quite standard: the stative verb tener is also a light verb that selects for a PP headed by an abstract preposition (Benveniste 1960, Kayne 1993, among others). In this case, the preposition is one of central coincidence (static) and will also incorporate onto the verb to be licensed. Given the nonallative nature of the incorporated preposition, and the atelic meaning it is associated with, one would expect constructions with temporal tener not to show aspectual/temporal restrictions (see previous section). This prediction is borne out, in view of constructions in (17). The structure we propose for a sentence like (32) with temporal tener is the one depicted in (33).

(32) María tiene tres años de trabajar aquí. Maria has three years of working here ‘María has been working here for three years.’

(33)  
```
      V
     /\  
    V  P
   /  \ 
  N   P
 / \  / 
María Pcoincidence N
       
(tres) años de trabajar aquí
```

As was the case for llevar (23b), in (33) the preposition selects a specifier (María) and a temporal measure phrase as a complement (años ‘years’) quantified by tres ‘three’. Both the quantifier and the measure noun can be implicit (tiempecito ‘some time’, años ‘years’, mucho ‘much’, un montón ‘a lot’, etc).
Again in parallel with *llevar*, the structure of the complement N is complex: a predication relation is established between the temporal measure phrase *(tres) años* and a PP that appears in apposition. The PP in (33) is headed by the preposition *de* ‘of’ with an attributive value. The complement of such a preposition is an infinitive clause that can contain a copulative verb or a form of the perfect with *haber* ‘have’. Adverbs and PPs expressing stative relations are also possible. *Tener* can also appear, although much less frequently, with gerunds and their negative counterpart *sin* ‘without’ + infinitive:

(34) a. Tenía un año de (estar) Fundado. (Costa Rica)
   ‘It was founded a year ago.’
   
   b. Tengo (de estar) aquí más de dos horas. (Ecuador)
   ‘I have been here for more than two hours.’
   
   c. Yo tengo mucho de no ver a Flora. (Costa Rica)
   ‘It is a long time since I last saw Flora.’
   
   d. Tuvo 14 años en la institución. (Venezuela)
   ‘He spent 14 years at the institution.’
   
   e. Los pueblos indios ya tenemos mucho tiempo oyendo esto. (Mexico)
   ‘We Indians have been hearing this for a long time.’
   
   f. Tengo tres noches sin dormir.
   ‘I haven’t slept for three nights.’

12 As it is the case for *llevar*, the time interval can be calculated from the meaning of a prepositional phrase similar to *desde*… (hasta ahora) ‘from… (until now)’.

   (i) —¿Cuántos años lleva aquí?
   ‘How long is it that you have been here?’
   
   — Tengo… de 1974, que ingresé, a la fecha que es 87: son trece años de servicio.
   ‘It is…since 1974, when I enrolled, till now, 87: it is thirteen years of duty.’

13 One could alternatively propose that what we have is an attributive construction with a complementizer, represented by a source preposition. See Kayne 1994, Rooryck 2001, and references therein.

14 When the predication in apposition to the measure phrase is covert and not recoverable from the context, it is interpreted by default as “existence/age” as in:

   (i) El edificio/ el niño tiene cinco años.
   ‘The building/ the child is five years old.’
The constituent in apposition to N can be a finite clause, as in (35). In these cases, some phrase in the finite clause has to establish a semantic relation with the derived subject of tener. Thus in (36) the presence of the ethical dative me ‘on me’ that refers to the sentential subject allows for a finite clause.\footnote{The verb llevar can also take finite clauses (with similar coreference requirements). Nevertheless, llevar seems to impose some restrictions with respect to the aspectual class of the finite verb, as suggested by the following contrasts.}

\begin{enumerate}
  \item a. Ya tengo tres meses que no me viene la regla. \quad \text{already have three months that not me come the period} \quad \text{(Costa Rica)}
    
    ‘It is three months that I don’t have my period.’
  
  b. Ya tengo tres años que no me hablo con ella. \quad \text{already have three years that not me talk with her} \quad \text{(Peru)}
    
    ‘It is five years that we don’t talk to each other.’
  
  c. Tuvimos un tiempo que vivimos en Barquisimeto. \quad \text{had a time that lived in Barquisimeto} \quad \text{(Sedano 2000)}
    
    ‘We lived in Barquisimeto for some time.’
\end{enumerate}

(36) Tengo dos semanas que se *(me) casó el príncipe. \quad \text{have two weeks that on me got-married the prince} \quad \text{‘It is two weeks that the prince got married (on me).’}

The fact that the measure phrase and the attributive PP headed by de form a constituent is not surprising. In Spanish (and other Romance languages), we find similar structures also introduced by an explicit static preposition (con ‘with’, a ‘at’) or even by the complementizer que if the apposition is a finite clause (see (37)).

\begin{enumerate}
  \item a. Con tres años de trabajar aquí me bastó. \quad \text{with three years of working here me enough} \quad \text{‘Three years working here was enough for me.’}
  
  b. Con tres años de (estar) licenciado, encontrará trabajo. \quad \text{with three years of being graduated will-find work} \quad \text{‘After three years of having graduated (s)he will find a job.’}
\end{enumerate}

\footnote{The verb llevar can also take finite clauses (with similar coreference requirements). Nevertheless, llevar seems to impose some restrictions with respect to the aspectual class of the finite verb, as suggested by the following contrasts.}

\begin{enumerate}
  \item a. Llevo unos días que no duermo/ no como/ no puedo trabajar. \quad \text{carry some days that not sleep/ not eat/ not can work} \quad \text{‘I have some days that I don’t sleep/don’t eat/can’t work.’}
  
  b. *Llevo unos meses que trabajo aquí/ compro en esta tienda/ leo el periódico. \quad \text{carry some months that work here/ buy in this shop/ read the newspaper}
\end{enumerate}
c. A los tres meses de nacido/ haberse conocido
   to the three months of born/ having met
   se separaron.
   they separated
   ‘They got separated three months after he was born/they met.’

d. ¡Veinte años ya que nos conocemos!
   Twenty years already that we know each other

The verb *cumplir* ‘to turn (years old)’ can also appear with these complex measure phrases:

(38) Enrique cumple diecisiete años de muerto. (Mexico)
   Enrique turns seventeen years of death
   ‘It is seventeen years that Enrique died.’

Nevertheless when the apposition is a finite clause, the preferred construction in Spanish is the impersonal constriction with the verb *hacer* ‘to do/make’:

(39) Hace dos semanas que se casó el príncipe.
    makes two weeks that got married the prince
    ‘It is two weeks since the prince got married.’

This is what happens when there is no semantic relation between the arguments in the apposition and the subject of the main predicate. It is not uncommon, however, to find in the dialects under study examples with *tener* used as impersonal, such as the following (see also Kany 1951):

(40) Lo siento, no tiene ni media hora que ella dejó el departamento que estaba rentando. (Venezuela)
   sorry not have even half hour that she left the apartment that was renting
   ‘Sorry, it is not even half an hour ago that she left the apartment she was renting.’

So far we have analyzed the lexical properties and syntactic behavior of temporal non-impersonal constructions in two varieties of Spanish: those with *llevar* ‘to carry’, which are used in most dialects, and those with *tener* ‘to have’, which are characteristic of some Latin American varieties. We have taken the most widely accepted analysis for *tener*, according to which it incorporates a preposition, and we have adapted it to constructions with *llevar*. It has been shown that aspectual restrictions do not depend on the verb itself but on the nature of the preposition it incorporates, which is allative for *llevar*, as

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16 On temporal impersonal constructions in Romance, see Rigau 2001, and for Spanish, see Sáez 1990 and Porto Dapena 1983.
opposed to the central coincidence one incorporated onto tener. In both cases we have a light verb. In the next section we present some other uses of llevar and tener and try to analyze them within the present account.

4. Other Constructions with Light Llevar and Tener

There are other uses of llevar as a light verb in which it does not necessarily take a time measure complement. In one of them, llevar appears with a quantified phrase. These constructions also show temporal-aspectual restrictions:

(41) a. Marı́a llevaba seis cartas escritas.  
María carried six letters written  
‘Maria already had six letters written.’

b. Ya lleva tomadas seis copas.  
already carries drunk six drinks  
‘(S)he has already had six drinks.’

c. *Marı́a llevó seis copas tomadas.  
María carriedperf six drinks drunk

For (41) we propose that the head of the predication is also a destination preposition taking a QP as a complement. This QP, as in the cases above, needs to be “conceptually completed” for C-I interface purposes. This is fulfilled by the past participle of a transitive verb. The structure could be schematized as in (42).

(42) [V [Marı́a [P allative [QP seis copas [PRO tomadas]]]]]

In this case the alternation llevar/tener holds for most varieties of Spanish (i.e., it does not depend on the dialect). Again, the two verbs contrast in the sense that tener does not seem to show tense/aspect restrictions:

(43) Cuando tuve diez cartas escritas, me tomé un descanso.  
one had ten letters written me took a break  
‘Once I had ten letters written, I took a break.’

The two verbs also contrast with respect to the type of predicates they accept. AsMarín Gálvez (2000) points out, tener does not admit intergresive predicates or bound states as its complement, as shown in (44). Camus (2004), on the other hand, notes that llevar does not take activities easily, but tener does, as in (45).

(44) a. *Piazzola tiene interpretados tres tangos.  
Piazzola has interpreted three tangos

b. *Juan tiene cruzadas tres fronteras.  
Juan has crossed three borders

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(45) a. Tengo/ *llevo pensado irme de vacaciones a Egipto.
   have/ carry thought to-go on vacation to Egypt
   ‘I have thought of going to Egypt for a holiday.’

   b. Te tengo/ *llevo muy visto.
      you have/ carry very seen
      ‘I have already seen a lot of you.’

   c. Tengo/ *llevo pedido ese libro a la librería.
      have/ carry ordered this book at the bookstore
      ‘I have requested that book from the bookstore.’

Camus (2004) also observes that *llevar restricts the event expressed by the predicate it selects in the sense that it has to involve more than one instance (be iterative). This is the reason why it obligatorily takes quantified complements that describe resulting states related to different instances of that event.

      carry ordered this book at the bookstore

   b. Llevo pedidos tres libros.
      carry ordered three books
      ‘I have ordered three books.’

With tener, on the contrary, according to Camus, the resulting state is taken to be unique and the event that generates it is understood as concluded. In our analysis this would mean that *llevar is understood as dynamic. So sentences equivalent to (46) would be perfect with tener.17 In our analysis all these contrasts would follow from the different nature of the incorporated preposition (allative vs. central coincidence).

*Llevar and tener also alternate (in all dialects) in other types of constructions, like (47). In these cases both verbs are followed by a small clause formed by a NP and a past participle:

(47) a. Llevas/ tienes los labios pintados.
      carry/ have the lips painted
      ‘You have lipstick on.’

   b. Tenía/ llevaba el bolso abierto.
      had/ carried the handbag open
      ‘Her bag was open.’

17 Actually *llevar and tener also contrast with respect to the pseudo passive construction that can paraphrase each of them: ir (dynamic) in one case; estar (static) in the other:

   (i) a. Van escritas cinco cartas. (= *llevar)
      go written five letters
      ‘Five letters have already been written.’

   b. Están escritas cinco cartas. (= tener)
      are written five letters
      ‘Five letters are written.’
Llevar and tener in these constructions do not have full lexical meaning, and they behave as light verbs, just like in the temporal constructions analyzed in the previous sections. The peculiarity of these constructions with respect to the ones analyzed so far is that they do not display sentential tense/aspect restrictions (although some authors note that llevar is much less acceptable with the perfect):

(48) {Llevé/ he llevado/ tuve/ he tenido} la puerta
carried/ have carried/ had/ have had the door
abierta todo el viaje.
open whole the trip
‘My door has been open during the whole trip.’

Nevertheless, the two verbs under consideration do contrast with respect to the aspect of the predicate they take. It seems to be the case that llevar, as opposed to tener, is restricted to stage level resultative predicates:

(49) a. Lleva/ tiene los labios pintados/ estirados.
carries/ has the lips painted/ stretched
‘She has lipstick on/She has her lips done.’
b. Tiene/ *lleva los labios finos/ suaves.
has/ carries the lips fine/ soft
‘She has fine/soft lips.’
c. Tiene/ *lleva {la frente ancha/ los tobillos finos}.
has/ carries the forehead wide/ the ankles fine
‘She has a wide forehead/thin ankles.’
d. Tiene/ lleva {la frente tapada/ los tobillos tatuados}.
has/ carries the forehead covered/ the ankles tattooed
‘She has her forehead covered/her ankles tattooed.’

What we would like to propose in view of these properties is that llevar can incorporate a dynamic preposition but this preposition can be one of source. This would explain its compatibility with past tense and perfect aspect. One piece of evidence to support this claim might come from the fact that, together with llevar, the destination verb traer ‘to bring’ is also possible in most of these contexts:

(50) a. Llevas/ tienes/ traes los labios pintados.
carry/ have/ bring the lips painted
‘You have lipstick on.’
b. Llevaba/ tenía/ traía la puerta abierta.
carried/ had/ brought the door open
‘His (car’s) door was open.’

One could ask if the possibility exists of having llevar incorporating a source preposition in a temporal construction. The answer to this question seems to
be that such a construction does exist. The impersonal use of *llevar* meaning ‘take away from’ also appears in temporal constructions and accepts perfect past tense, as predicted by our account:

(51) a. Me llevó mucho tiempo hacer esto.
   me carried a-lot time to-do this
   ‘It took me a long time to do this.’

   b. Le ha llevado diez años escribir la tesis.
   him had carried ten years to-write the thesis
   ‘It took him ten years to write his thesis.’

These constructions display all the properties of Romance “impersonal” constructions with dative subjects (see Rigau 1999, Fernández-Soriano 1999), which trigger an arbitrary interpretation if the dative argument is not explicit.

From the cases discussed we can conclude that the verb *tener*, as defended in standard analyses, incorporates a central coincidence preposition. With *llevar*, on the other hand, we have several possibilities. It can behave as a lexical (motion) verb selecting a destination PP, as in (20), or just expressing “movement along a path”, as in (21b). We have shown that *llevar* can also be a light verb incorporating an abstract allative preposition. This is the case of temporal *llevar* (our object of study, which is incompatible with perfect tenses) and the verb *llevar* appearing with a past participle, as in (41). In this last section it has been shown that *llevar* can incorporate a “source” preposition. This case is instantiated by the verb *llevar* appearing in examples (47) and (51).

5. Conclusions

In this paper we analyzed the temporal constructions with *tener* and *llevar* in two varieties of Spanish as well as some other constructions with these verbs. Our point of departure has been Hale and Keyser’s (1993, 2002) approach of decomposing light verbs in the syntax. Our claim is that the properties of an incorporated preposition, which behaves as a predicate, determine the tense/aspectual differences between the mentioned verbs. In particular, the allative preposition incorporated in *llevar* causes its incompatibility with perfect tense, whereas the central coincidence preposition incorporated into *tener* does not impose such a restriction.

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