

Deadjectival verb derivation across Romance: a specific case study

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ONOMÁZEIN 69 (September 2025): 63-87

DOI: 10.7764/onomazein.69.04

ISSN: 0718-5758



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Received: May, 2021

Accepted: December, 2021

Abstract

We explore semantic and syntactic properties of a set of Romance deadjectival verbs sharing comparable (Latin-inherited) derivational morphology. We find that a continuum from minimally to maximally different semantic and syntactic (argument structure) configurations emerges across distinct Romance languages. Contrasts touch on both the semantic relevance of the verbalizer, the constructional properties delivered, and the relative role of lexically-coded scalar structures in the aspectual profile obtained. In Italian the choice of verbalizer yields a nontrivial derivational alternation, whereby verb meaning and behavior are transparently read off its morphosyntactic (derivational) makeup. This alternative is either collapsed under identical derivational compositions (Catalan, Brazilian Portuguese) in a morphologically opaque alternation between different syntactic and aspectual properties, or else unavailable (Spanish). An Italian-Spanish contrast shows the two opposite ends of the continuum (maximally distinct argument structure and aspectual behavior), an Italian-Catalan contrast offers new evidence on the existence of distinct eventive within stative types with have direct implications on aspectual behavior and transitivity. A refined view of change of state predication and degree achievements yields a notable difference between Hispanic (Spanish, Catalan) languages (eventivity and internal-argument licensing remaining constant) vs. Italian and French.

Keywords: deadjectival verb; derivation; argument structure; change.

1. Introduction

Deadjectival verbs have been at the forefront of linguistic discussion over the last decade(s). Particular issues of debate concern, among other things, the lexical specification of roots, the grammatically-relevant information they may carry, and to what extent this may be relevant to verb aspect, including variables on scalarity and telicity. The discussion has generated a considerable body of work and (somehow conflicting) evidence. For ease of discussion, here we will focus on a specific case. The corpus is defined by two variables: regular productivity with comparable roots across main modern Romance languages and the particular properties of color roots and the impact they have on adjectival and verbal predication and ascription. This, however, has consequences. The first criterion will presently limit the discussion to Spanish, Brazilian Portuguese, Catalan, and, mainly, Italian. The absence of reliable evidence and comparable productivity leaves French and (European) Portuguese somehow aside from the detailed discussion, to only brief considerations (see below). As for the second criterion, we rely on massive evidence where semantic and neural observations converge¹. Most notably, since Berlin and Kay (1969) i.a., evidence has been collected indicating that all languages strikingly share a universal system of basic color categorization. According to empirical (experimental and analytical) data, this involves universal basic color categories and basic color-term inventories of most languages expand through time by lexicalizing these categories in a highly constrained, universal order. In addition, it has been extensively argued that these universals are inherent in the human perception of color (since McDaniel, 1972, 1974). Based on these and further evidence marking the correlation between semantic/lexical expression and physiological (neural) responses, color roots and denotation emerge as a paradigmatic example, not of the relativity of semantic structures, but of the existence and correlation of biologically based lexical-semantic universals and the impact of their special properties—i.e., non-discrete scales with a preset grammatically-relevant boundary concentrating at the middle of the scale (Hansen and Chemla, 2017) or, more specifically, at polar focus points where scalar limits are defined by concurrence with the focal locus for another semantic and neural prime. This, and natural productivity alone, make the case treated here an important matter of empirical comparison and a good criterion of exploration for the relevant properties treated here.

1 Color-denoting roots show to be in many languages, and also in Romance, associated with a particular sort of scalar structure where the standard and the scalar bound are concentrated in the middle of the scale (see McNally, 2011, for a toy English example; Hansen and Chemla, 2017, for experimental data). A middle-of-the-scale bound would, for instance, accommodate a degree requirement which is crucial to truthful application, quantification, and related parameters, and yet preserve the contrast with scales bounded at either end of the scale. Additional experimental evidence, not discussed here, involves studies showing, namely, that color adjectives are, in comparison to other adjectives, especially difficult to acquire (cf. Sandhofer and Smith, 2001, for a detailed discussion).

Provided these considerations, we will now proceed to a basic cross-Romance comparison taking a unified specific case (root type) consistent with the provisos just defined.

2. Starting point: Spanish

As in other Romance languages, the Spanish form *-ear* [EAR] and its Romance analogs (*ejar*, *-oyer*) [henceforth, EAR] became an important component in denominal and deadjectival verb formation, offering a highly productive option within the subset of verbalizers available. In Spanish, EAR verbs generally behave as scalar change-of-state [henceforth, COS] verbs, paralleling, in this respect, their zero, also color-root-based, English counterparts (1).

- (1). *Blanquear*, *grisear*, *azulear*, *platear* (Spanish)
 $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR}}$ $\sqrt{\text{GREY-EAR}}$ $\sqrt{\text{BLUE-EAR}}$ $\sqrt{\text{SILVER-EAR}}$
 'to whiten, grey, blue (up), silver'.

The verbs obtained from this derivation show syntactic properties expected from deadjectival verbs building on roots encoding gradable scales (degree achievement verbs, Dowty, 1979; Abusch, 1986; Hay and others, 1999; Winter, 2006; Kennedy and Levin, 2008, i.a.). Good examples of this are their participation in both the causative-inchoative (2)a-b and middle alternations (2)c, along with the licensing of instrument subjects (2)d (cf. (2)a) and external causation. This coincides with the general description of degree achievements as verbs describing events in which an individual undergoes a (caused) change over time (e.g. Dowty, 1979; Declerck, 1979; Hay and others, 1999; Rappaport, 2008; Kennedy and Levin, 2008; Menon and Pancheva, 2019).

- (2).a. *Mamá blanqueó la camisa (con cloro).* TRANSITIVE
 mother $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.3S.PST}}$ the shirt with chlorine
 'Mom whitened the shirt (with chlorine)'
- b. *La camisa se blanqueó.* INCHOATIVE
 the shirt INCH $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.3S.PST}}$
 'The shirt whitened'
- c. *Las camisas se blanquean fácil(mente)/como un sueño.* MIDDLE
 the.PL shirt.PL PAS/INCH $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.3P.PST}}$ easy like a dream
 'Shirts whiten easily/like a dream'
- d. *El cloro blanqueó la camisa.* EXT. CAUSE
 the chlorine $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.3S.PST}}$ the shirt
 'Chlorine whitened the shirt' (=chlorine made the shirt go white).

Importantly also, Spanish verbs of this type show the variable (a)telicity (Kearns, 2007, i.a.) crosslinguistically expected in scalar change-of-state degree achievement verbs. We refer to

a kind of verb (a)telicity, which is crucially sensitive to the type of scalar structure associated with the root. As a result of the widely-proposed correlation between verb (a)telicity and root-coded scalar (un)boundedness, bounded-scale roots² generally give default telic predications (Hay and others, 1999, i.a.), whereas unbounded-scale roots yield atelic verbs instead³.

It has been widely noted in the literature (see Clapp, 2012; McNally, 2011, for experimental and analytic data in English; Mangialavori, 2018, for Romance) that color roots are generally associated with bounded property scales, yielding default telic predications in consequence. They, hence accommodate indicators of scalar telicity, like endpoint, maximality, completion adverbials (3)a or adjuncts. The felicity of adjectival passives (3)b also points in this direction.

- (3).a. *Blanquear* *completamente/totalmente/absolutamente* (algo).
 √WHITE-EAR completely totally absolutely something
 ‘To whiten (something) completely/totally/absolutely’
- b. *Camisas* *blanqueadas*.
 shirtS √WHITE-EAR.PPT.3P
 ‘Whitened shirts’.

Examples like (4) concentrate further properties correlating with the behavior typically expected from change-of-state (degree achievement) verbs and are strictly consequent with the aspectual profile suggested—i.e., eventive, inherently telic causative change-of-state denotation. For example, the incompatibility with underspecified or null objects is expected in change-of-state verbs entering the causative alternation (Levin and Rappaport, 2010, i.a.; see Mangialavori, 2018, for apparent challenging cases in Spanish). Note the felicity of imperative and modal constructions, illustrated in (4), as well as the compatibility with external and instrumental causation, illustrated in (2) above.

- (4).a. *Necesitas* *blanquear* *(*esa* *camisa*).
 need.2s √WHITE-EAR.INF that shirt
 ‘You need to whiten (that shirt)’

2 In mainstream analyzes on deadjectival verbs (Hay and others, 1999; Kennedy and Levin, 2008), quantized degree of change (de-adjectival) verbs are linked to the scalar properties and the existence of a well-defined terminal point defined by the adjectival base (involving, or not, a closed scale). While gradable adjectives such as *closed*, *empty*, and *dry* have maximal values (closed-scale adjectives), and hence give telic predicates. Conversely, adjectives like *long*, *wide*, etc. (open-scale adjectives) have no maximal values; thus, unlike verbs obtained on a gradable closed-scale bases; they are inherently atelic.

3 ‘Inherent’ here is used in reference to the fact that this atelicity can be, as in many other atelic types, shifted into a telic predication, either by grace of composition or, namely, by contextual factors (cf. Kearns, 2007).

- b. (Tú), *blanquea* *esa* *camisa* (*de una vez*).
 you √WHITE-EAR.IMP.2S that shirt of one time
 ‘You, whiten that shirt for once’.

According to mainstream literature and foundational studies on the topic, this behavior appears to be characteristic of verbs of change of state in general (Levin, 1993: 245), and, in particular, of deadjectival verbs building on color roots. Importantly, however, similar properties arise in verbs derived through other verbalizers⁴. Comparable examples are offered in Spanish by zero derivations (regardless of *-en/em-* or *-a* prefixation; e.g. *agrisar* ‘turn grey’), or by derivations recruiting another phonologically-realized verbalizer, like *-ecer* (*enrojecer* ‘redden’, *ennegrecer* ‘blacken’). This will be particularly important in relation to the distinct scenario posed by Italian (below).

3. Portuguese

In Portuguese (Brazilian), many *-e(j)ar* verbs also give causative change-of-state degree achievement predications. The general picture, however, may not be as straightforward. Derivational grammars (Rio-Torto and others, 2016) analyze verbs like *amarelejar*, *negrejar*, *verdejar* as causative, transitive resultative verbs somehow paralleling Spanish *-ear* verbs discussed above. A common example is *branque(j)ar* (√WHITE-EAR.INF), which, according to corpus data, appears in countless transitive causative resultative predications naturally accommodating eventive frames, as the compatibility with perfective tenses in 0—a property not expected in stative verbs—shows. They also allow causative-inchoative alternation (6) with regular productivity.

- (5). *O sofrimento branqueou-lhe* *os* *cabelos*.
 the suffering √WHITE-EAR.PST.3S-DAT the.PL hair.PL
 ‘Suffering whitened her hair’ (made her hair turn white)

- (6).a. *A celulose branqueia* *com cloro*.
 the cellulose √WHITE.EAR.3S with bleach
 ‘Cellulose whitens (becomes white) with bleach’

4 To consider, namely, *-ear/-ejar/-eggiare* as a verb head spellout does not mean that we assume unanimous association to a single v head. In studies supporting the existence of different v heads imposing distinct semantic and syntactic conditions on the verb produced (e.g. Harley, 2005; Folli and Harley, 2005; Rothmayr, 2009, i.a.), both intra- and cross-language variations suggest that *-ear/-ejar/-eggiare* realize different v₀s. The contrasts analyzed here point in this direction, given the major asymmetry between semantic/syntactic structures noted and the involvement of features key to v₀ type identification (cause).

- b. *Com o tempo, a parede rosa branqueou.*
 with the time the wall pink √WHITE-EAR.PST.3S
 'With time, the pink wall whitened'.

Data like (7) suggest otherwise. In fact, verbs like *amarele(j)ar* are generally defined as both 'turn yellow' and 'turn yellowish'. The option, along with the examples found in dictionaries, is not trivial, as the intransitive (unaccusative) frame yields a stative-like predication loosely resembling Catalan instances discussed next and clearly contrasting with Spanish forms. Crucially, dictionaries and native (Brazilian) Portuguese speakers surveyed unanimously support this meaning for, namely, *verdejar*, which is clearly described in stative terms (be green or show this color), in line with (8).

- (7). *Maduro, o trigo amareleja.* (Houaiss, 2009, i.a.)
 ripe the wheat √YELLOW-E(J)AR.3S
 'The wheat turns yellow (once) ripe'

- (8).A *roupa branqueia, muito limpa.*
 the clothes √WHITE-EAR.3S very clean
 'The clothes whiten, very clean' (they are/look white).

The potential absence of causativity and eventivity points to an answer to the absence of the clitic in (6)a (cf. (20) below). The possibility will be further discussed next, regarding Catalan analogous data.

- (9).a. *Os prados verdejam ao sol.*
 the fields √GREEN-E(J)AR.3P at-the sun
 'The fields look/turn green in the sun'
- b. *As árvores que verdejam no verão ficam amarelas no outono.*
 the trees that √GREEN-E(J)AR.3P in-the summer remain yellow in-the autumn
 'The trees that turn/are green in the summer become yellow in the autumn'
- (10).A *grama do vizinho não verdeja mais do que a sua.*
 the lawn of garden not √GREEN-EAR.3S more of that the his
 'The grass in the garden isn't greener than his' (the grass is always greener on the other side).

4. Catalan

Catalan *-ejar* verbs seem to yield, according to specific studies, monoargumental occurrences with stative-like properties. Their basic properties contrast with the transitive degree achieve-

ment usually found in, namely, Spanish and, to a certain extent, Brazilian Portuguese. Specifically, (11)b reflects data analyzed in Catalan (Oltra and Castroviejo, 2013 [henceforth, OC]).

- (11). a. *La carn ja rosseja: aviat serà cuinat.*
 the meat already $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.3S}}$ soon be.FUT cooked
 'The meat is already (\approx starting to get) red(dish), it will be done soon'
- b. *Mentre, la colza ha perdut la flor i el blat grogueja.*
 while the rapeseed has lost the flower and the wheat $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-EAR.3S}}$
 'In the interim, the canola has lost its flower(s) and the wheat grows yellow(ish)'.

OC observe a systematic, consistent behavior appearing in *-ejar* instances with similar (e.g. color-denoting) roots⁵ with common, apparently unexpected properties. They analyze these instances in terms of non-causativizable stative attributions of properties. Essentially, they describe these occurrences as unaccusative, non-alternating—i.e., resisting causative alternation—, stative verbs.

- (12). *El blat grogueja/verdeja/rosseja* (Catalan)
 the wheat $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-EAR.3S}}/\sqrt{\text{GREEN-EAR.3S}}/\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.3S}}$
 'The wheat is (going) yellow/green(ish)/red(dish)'.

Summing up, Catalan forms attested by OC express an internally-caused property, cannot be causative (external cause(r)), are consistently atelic, do not involve a root-described final state, and are constrained to imperfective tenses. The contrast with Spanish concerns both argument structure and meaning, especially aspectual behavior, insofar as *-ear* forms allow external causation, show variable (a)telicity, show no major tense constrains, and involve an identifiable (root-described) result state.

Yet, if we take a closer look at corpus and experimental data, along with examples found in grammars and dictionaries and quick corpus searches, like (14) above, the situation seems

5 In Spanish, *amarillear*, in the sense of 'grow close to yellow', is possible. Importantly, however, this does not systematize to further roots, and seems restricted to a few (e.g. Iberian) variants. A non-*ear* variant *amarrilecer(se)* ($\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-ECER}}$), a form unanimously sanctioned by natives, general reference texts and descriptive grammars, yields a 'standard' (transitive COS) makeup. Further cases like *rojear* ($\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR}}$), *purpurear* ($\sqrt{\text{PURPLE-EAR}}$), *verdear* ($\sqrt{\text{GREEN-EAR}}$) appear in dictionaries, but their use is not natural according to native speakers. Sparse corpus search occurrences are instead consistent with 'standard' DA denotation (e.g. *El rubor purpureó las mejillas de Elisa*. 'Blush purpled Elisa's cheeks'; Zamacois, Eduardo (1905). *Vida Galante*. Barcelona: Sopena). As a reviewer kindly observes, comments on inchoativity in *amarillear* and its kin in Spanish go back to early traditional grammars (Pena, 1980; Rifón, 1997). Interesting comments on Catalan equivalents have been presented, namely, by Oltra and Castroviejo, 2013, and, more recently, by Mangialavori Rasia (2021).

more complex. Although we notice the behavior advanced by OC in most instances, we nonetheless also observe a nontrivial ambiguity in some *-ejar* verbs. According to native speakers surveyed, a telic, transitive change-of-state predication, as in ((13)a), often alternates with the atelic (stative, non-resultative) monadic variant in ((13)b). Grammars and dictionaries give similar examples, namely, for *blanquejar* and *rossejar*. The existence of such an alternative in monoargumental (unaccusative) frames—between the stative, non-alternating unaccusative stative and a standard, causative-alternating inchoative variant—is empirically brought out, namely, by middle alternation, illustrated in (13)c, and clitic *es* (parallel to Spanish *se*) distribution. This clitic is important, as it is crucially known to mark inchoative variants, but also middles and passives—that is, transitivity-dependent structures. Such constructions should be, if OC's analysis is on track, crucially disallowed for the stative unergative *-ejar* uses.

(13).a.	<i>Ha</i>	<i>blanquejat</i>	<i>la camisa.</i>	TRANSITIVE
	have.2P	√WHITE-EAR.3S.PST	the shirt	
	'[he/she/it] whitened the shirt'			
b.	<i>La camisa</i>	<i>blanqueja.</i>		UNACCUSATIVE
	the shirt	√WHITE-EAR-3S		
	'The shirt is white(ish)'			ATELIC STATIVE
	'The shirt whitens (becomes white)'			INCHOATIVE UNACCUSATIVE
c.	<i>Es</i>	<i>blanqueja</i>	<i>amb diòxid de clor.</i>	CLITIC-MARKED INCHOATIVE
	INCH/PAS	√WHITE-EAR.3S	with dioxide of chlorine	
	'It whitens(INCH)/is whitened(PAS)with chlorine dioxide.'			

Such occurrences clearly indicate that Catalan \approx EAR'S equivalents (i.e., deadjectival verbs building on *-ejar* affixation), even if primarily associated to a noncausativizable stative predications, can just as well yield 'standard' deadjectivals—causative-alternating degree achievements. This holds, in particular, for *blanquejar* 'whiten' and *rossejar* 'redden'⁶. Thus, when subject to specific tests, these verbs show the expected alternation between transitive/unaccusative—i.e., causative-inchoative—frames and naturally allow for external causation. They moreover show the variable telicity expected in such cases, as in (15)⁷, along with the equally telling option for passivization. Causative uses also naturally extend

6 This follows, most likely, from conceptual reasons not to be discussed here. The same applies to the rare use of *amarillejar* in Spanish for few items that can grow yellowish—essentially, white items. Yet, productivity is severely restricted (rare).

7 Stative variants reported by OC are atelic and hence incompatible with completion as a consequence of their core denotation (never-ending property increase) and not to lexically coded scalar structure, in contrast to zero derivations.

to derived meanings, like (16)b (cf. (16)a), carrying the same semantic and syntactic implications in Spanish and Portuguese. Moreover, imperative forms, as (15)c, are further allowed, paralleling Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese also in this respect.

- (14).a. El sol li rosseja els cabells.
 the sun DAT $\sqrt{\text{CRIMSON-EAR.3S}}$ the hairS
 'The sun makes her hair crimson' (Lit. 'The sun crimsones her hair')
- b. *Rossejar les gambes*⁸.
 $\sqrt{\text{CRIMSON-EAR}}$ the prawns
 'Roast some prawns' (Lit. 'Crimson some prawns')
- (15). *Amb el paisatge totalment blanquejat per la nevada.*
 with the alley totally $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.PST.3S}}$ by the snowfall
 'With the alley completely whitened by the snowfall'
- (16).a. *Amb una sessió blanquejarem les seves dents amb un procediment avançat.*
 with a session $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.FUT.1S}}$ the your teeth with a procedure advanced
 'With one session, we will whiten your teeth with an advanced technique'
- b. *Han comprat el pis per blanquejar uns ingressos sospitosos.*
 have.3PL bought the apartment for $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.INF}}$ some incomes suspicious.
 '(They) have bought the flat to whiten (=launder) some suspicious incomes'
- c. *Per començar, blanquejarem els ous amb el sucre amb les varetes elèctriques.*
 for start $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.FUT.1S}}$ the eggs with the sugar with the bars electric
 'To start with, we will whiten the eggs and the sugar with the electric blender'.

Insofar as our suggestions are correct, such an alternative in event and argument structure realization would provide a natural answer for otherwise puzzling behavior like compatibility with perfective tenses—in, e.g., (13)b' (see also (34) and fn.¹⁷ below)—along with distribution of inchoative morphology, external causation, and *ne/se*-cliticization (18)-(19) (attested also by OC), which therefore turn predictable. Examples like

8 Extr. from *Enciclopèdia Catalana* (diccionari.cat) (<http://www.diccionari.cat/lexicx.jsp?GECART=0156463>).

(17)⁹ are found in simple corpus search, as anticipated by the glosses in (14) above, in strict consonance with major dictionaries entries (fn. 8).

- (17). *Un esclat del fitoplàncton que fa verdejar l'aigua.*
 a blast of phytoplankton that makes √GREEN-EAR the-water
 'An explosion of the phytoplankton that makes the water (go) green(ish)'
- (18). *La camisa (s)'ha blanquejat.*
 the shirt inch-have.3s √white-ear.3s.pst
 'The shirt whitened' INCHOATIVE
 *'The shirt has been (going) white(ish)' STATIVE
- (19). **En** *blanquegen unes quantes, de camises (amb clor).*
 PRT √WHITE-EAR.3P some many of shirts with chlorine
 'Within shirts, some are (going) white-ish (with chlorine)'.

Patterns of this sort crucially suggest that, unlike often assumed, most varieties of Catalan¹⁰ allow for a **nontrivial alternation** in event type and basic denotation between a monoargumental (with no external causativization/transitivization) atelic stative guise and a resultative, causative, change-of-state variant with telicity correlating with the bounded nature of the lexicalized scale. Such an option is apparently unavailable in other Romance languages like Spanish, and visibly distinct in Italian. Nonetheless, even if possible, the alternative in Catalan is morphologically opaque ((13)a-b). In this respect, the distribution of *se*-cliticization is key. Its occurrence would bring up, for cases like (20), an essential proof of the otherwise concealed option for transitivity and causativity. Consider also (21), in which either preverbal or postverbal DPs are not only constrained to an eventive transitive reading by virtue of *se*, but where the clitic receives inchoative and passive interpretations. Without the clitic, the DP could be instead interpreted as the subject of a stative unaccusative predication, thus constrained to a preverbal position. In turn, non-optionality of the clitic in Spanish arguably correlates with the lack of a stative variant and a comparable alternation.

- (20).a. *La camisa (es) blanqueja.* (Catalan)
 'The shirt is going white(ish)' ATELIC STATIVE
 'The shirt whitens (becomes white)' CLITICIZED=TELIC DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT

9 See <https://ctlc.iec.cat/Cerca/ContextosLema/verdejar/57846?Criteri=L&Operador=EQ> for examples retrieved from CTC (Corpus Textual Informatitzat de la Llengua Catalana).

10 In fact, basic surveys show that the productivity of the stative variant is not unanimously accepted by all native Catalan speakers consulted, but only by speakers of central and northern Catalan dialects.

b. <i>La camisa</i>	<i>*(se)</i>	<i>blanquea.</i>	(Spanish)
the shirt	INCH	√WHITE-EAR-3S	
*‘The shirt is going white(ish)’			ATELIC STATIVE
‘The shirt whitens (becomes white)’			TELIC DEGREE ACHIEVEMENT

- (21). (*La dent*) *es blanqueja* (*la dent*).
 the tooth SE √WHITEN.EAR-3S the tooth
 ‘The tooth whitens/is whitened’ (Catalan).

Summing up, even if there are empirically visible differences in aspectual behavior (proper events vs. Davidsonian eventivity), the verbs seen thus far all somehow describe events in which an individual undergoes a change over time (cf. Deo and others, 2013, for the possibility of a unified analysis in terms of *degree achievement*). If correct, a general analysis of the meaning of these verbs could thus very well build in terms of value difference, since Spanish, Portuguese and Catalan verbs above can be uniformly analyzed as verbs that take functional arguments and encode a difference in the value of this argument over a contextually given ordered domain. This analysis accounts naturally for their interaction with a range of modifiers and contexts these verbs do (or do not) accommodate. In this regard, Italian brings up a completely different, worth-considering situation.

5. Italian

Italian reveals a distinct picture with key implications for the morph-syn-sem interfaces. Although transitive/unaccusative uses paralleling Spanish (2), Brazilian Portuguese (0) and Catalan (13) are ultimately possible, rendering eventive, change-of-state denotations with variable telicity (see Mangialavori, 2018); in Italian *-eggiare* is generally dedicated to the production of intransitive verbs. Crucially, however, Italian forms seem to lack the (putatively) expected properties for a color-based deadjectival verb crosslinguistically. Specifically, they fail to license internal arguments and lack change-of-state (COS) denotation. As will be discussed below, they also show pure state behavior, hence contrasting with both the fully eventive Spanish forms and the mixed eventive-stative behavior seen in Catalan monadic variants analyzed by OC. From here, two empirically visible consequences, illustrated in (23)–(29), follow. On the one hand, in Italian, the morphological ‘equivalents’ to Spanish *-ear* and Catalan *-ejar* (i.e., *-eggiare*) fail to convey COS or scalar change, even if building on gradable-property-denoting roots. Neither do they show variable telicity, which may seem striking for a gradable-scale-based deadjectival verb. They are also excluded from the causative alternation, as a predictable consequence of both their difficulty to license internal arguments and of their aspectual profile (eventless predication). More importantly, we find that the change-of-state, eventive (degree achievement), causative-alternating verb—i.e., the semantic and syntactic type corresponding to Br. Portuguese *-e(j)ar* (6), Catalan (16), and Spanish *-ear* in (2)—is generally realized via different morphology (namely, zero, *-ifcar* and

-esc derivations). As a consequence, Italian hence offers a nontrivial alternation producing a considerable range of minimal pairs in which a derivational option building on the choice of verbalizer parsimoniously correlates with a maximal contrast in semantic and syntactic structure, as the glosses indicate.

- (22). a *biancheggare*, *verdeggare*, *nereggare*, *rosseggiare*, *gialleggiare*
 $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.INF}}$ $\sqrt{\text{GREEN-EAR.INF}}$ $\sqrt{\text{BLACK-EGG.INF}}$ $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.INF}}$ $\sqrt{\text{yellow-EAR.INF}}$
 ‘be white(ish)’ ‘be green(ish)’ ‘be black(ish)’ ‘be red(dish)’ ‘be yellow(ish)’¹¹
- b. *sbiancare*, *inverdire*, *annerire*, *arrossare*, *ingiallire*
 en- $\sqrt{\text{WHITE.INF}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{GREEN.INF}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{BLACK.INF}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{RED.INF}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.INF}}$
 ‘whiten’ ‘[turn] green’ ‘blacken’ ‘redden’ ‘[turn] yellow’.

Well-known tests for argument structure available in Italian, like split intransitivity and partitive/inchoative clitic distribution, reveal maximally divergent distributional patterns. According to these tests, the intransitivity of *-eggiare* (\approx EAR) variants correlates to unergative behavior. A good example is, namely, auxiliary (*avere*) distribution in complex tenses (23). Argument structure alternations essentially relying on internal-argument-licensing, as (24) shows, are accordingly disallowed. This is correlative with (absence of) *se-marking*. Also in Italian, this clitic is associated with inchoativity (causative alternation), but also with passive, middle, and reflexive structures. Such possibilities are instead shown by Spanish (cf. (25)), where the cliticized form can naturally receive passive, impersonal, and middle readings, unlike Italian occurrences.

- (23). a. {**ha**/***è**} *rosseggiato* / *verdegiato* / *bianchegiato* / *gialleggiato*.
 has/is $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.PPT}}$ $\sqrt{\text{GREEN-EAR.PPT}}$ $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.PPT}}$ $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-EAR.PPT}}$
- b. {***ha**/**è**} *arrossito* / *inverdito* / *sbiancato* / *ingiallito*.
 has/is en- $\sqrt{\text{RED.PPT}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{GREEN.PPT}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{WHITE.PPT}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.PPT}}$
- (24). a. *Questo* **(*si)** *sbianca*, *arrossa* *inverdisce*, *ingiallisce*
 this INCH/PAS/RFL en- $\sqrt{\text{WHITE.3s}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{RED.3s}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{GREEN.3S}}$ en- $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.3S}}$
 ‘This whitens, reddens, greens up (becomes green), becomes yellow’
- b. *Questo* **(*si)** *biancheggia*, *rosseggia*, *verdeggia*, *gialleggia*
 this INCH/PAS/RFL $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.3S}}$ $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.3S}}$ $\sqrt{\text{GREEN.EAR.3S}}$ $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.EAR.3S}}$
 ‘This looks white/red/green/yellow(ish)’.

11 A proviso is in order, as to the various English equivalents and glosses used for Italian *-eggiare* (\approx EAR) verbs in each case. Minor variations respond to the need to reflect the semantic and syntactic properties of these verbs as closely as possible.

The idea of a significant divergence as a result of language-specific, grammatical processes (starting from the role played by each verbalizer in the subsystem of verbal derivation and the derivational choices available in each language) therefore becomes particularly important. It is specifically relevant to the analysis of deadjectival verbs and scalarity in general insofar as the nature of the lexical base (i.e., the root)—which is often associated with a single argument and aspect structure (degree achievement)—renders trivial to telicity calculation here, remaining invariable regardless of the root and the properties carried by it¹².

The argumental and aspectual divergence between minimal pairs rendered by derivational morphology gains further theoretical and empirical relevance as the availability of such distinct alternatives as a direct consequence of the choice of verbalizer points to important structural (derivational, VP-internal configuration) differences within Latin itself and across languages sharing a ‘same’ Latin-inherited derivational morphology (Cockburn, 2012, i.a.)¹³. In fact, these sorts of contrasts are curiously addressed often in general literature on Romance deadjectival verbs. The trivial vs. crucial status of the zero-derivational alternative in Spanish and Italian (vs. e.g., *-eggiare*), respectively, shown also in (25), thus raises an empirical question.

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- 12 Since the verbs given by the equivalent of Spanish *≈EAR* actually instantiate one of two highly productive derivational variants, thus giving a significant set of nontrivial minimal pairs, an alternation missing in other Romance languages.
- 13 Authors like Mangialavori Rasia (2018) make some remarks on the problem in Latin and its relative (in)stability in verb semantics and aspect. Latin *-idiare* (Latin-*eggiare*'s analogue) has been noted to produce distinct denominal verb types (cf. Cockburn, 2012, and further references therein). Namely, the range goes from stative (betizo [$\sqrt{\text{beet}}$ -IDIARE] ‘be/look like a beet’) and behavior verbs are attested, to instrumental or ‘manner-incorporation’ verbs (LATspongizo ‘clean with a sponge’) and inherently telic location and locatum verbs—cf. the contrasts with both other outcomes in Latin and the more systematic Italian result: cf. (10)b. Importantly, note that the contrast between inchoative/causative COS and stative similatives (amethystizo ‘be of the color of the amethyst’, Cockburn, 2012: 168) is derivationally trivial in Latin. Consider the examples below:
- (i) a. *albeo, rubeo, vireo, flaveo, liveo* ‘be {white/red/green/yellow/blue}’= atelic NONSIMILATIVE STATE
 b. *albescio, rubesco, viresco, flavescio, livesco* ‘grow (white/red/green/yellow/blue)er’= atelic SIMILATIVE COS
- (ii) a. **aureo/aresco, *nigreo/nigresco, obscuro/*obscoresco*
 b. *acuo* ‘sharpen’ cf. **acuesco/exacuo* ‘sharpen up’
 c. *candeo, albeo* ‘be light/white’ cf. *candescio/excandescio, albescio/exalbescio* ‘grow light(er)/whit(er)’
- (iii) a. *aromatizo* ($\sqrt{\text{smell}}$ -*idiare*) ‘to smell of spices’
 cf. *sinapizo* ($\sqrt{\text{mustard}}$ -IDIARE) ‘cover with mustard’
 b. ^{LAT}*llatinizo* ($\sqrt{\text{Latin}}$ -*idiare*) ‘turn/translate into Latin’
 cf. ^{ITA}*latineggiare*, ‘resemble a Latin’ ‘talk using Latin’.

Importantly, homogenous patterns for morphologically different (distinct verbalizers) verbs in (25)b, contrasting with the divergent patterns in (25)a, reveal a distinct situation where unaccusative vs. unergative behavior correlates with verbalizer choice (23) and clitic distribution.

- (25).a. ***(si)** *arrossa* / ***(si)** *sbianca* / ***(si)** *biancheggia* (Italian)
 b. ***(se)** *enrojece* / ***(se)** *enblanquece* / ***(se)** *blanquea* (Spanish)¹⁴
 INCH en-√RED.3S INCH en-√WHITE.3S INCH √WHITE-EAR.3S.

Additional patterns consistently support this unexpected (unergative) configuration in Italian ≈EAR equivalents. As anticipated, *-eggiare* verbs generally resist middle alternation (26), fail passivization (27), and, in contrast to Catalan (i.e., in the constructions reported by OC, see (18) above), they disallow ne-cliticization (28). Verbs formed by the same roots combining with different (*zero/-esc*) verbalizers—i.e., those yielding the expected change-of-state, transitive, eventive type—are conversely fine in these contexts. In this respect, Italian is also special in that it contributes empirically-clearer results, as it allows for well-known tests for split intransitivity, which are completely or partially unavailable in other major Romance languages¹⁵.

- (26).a. *La pelle (si) {arrossisce / *rosseggia} facilmente.*
 the skin INCH en.√RED(-esc).3S √RED.EAR.3S easily
 'The skin reddens/*looks red(ish) easily'
- b. *Questa alga (si) {inverdisce / *verdeggia} rapidamente/senza problemi.*
 this seaweed INCH en-√GREEN-3S √GREEN-EAR-3S quickly without problems
 'This seaweed turns green/*looks green(ish) quickly/smoothly'.
- (27).a. *Lo zucchero di canna grezzo non è stato {sbiancato / *biancheggiato}.*
 the sugar of cane rawnot is been en.√WHITE.PPT √WHITE.EGGIARE.PPT
 'Brown cane sugar has not been whitened/*has not been looked white(ish)'.
- b. *Le coperture sono stati {inverditi / *verdeggiati} attraverso l'impiego di piante.*
 the roofing are been en.√GREEN.PPT √GREEN.EAR.PPT through the-use of plants
 'The roofing has been greened up/*looked green(ish) with the use of plants'.
- (28). **Dalle parti in plexiglass, ne {sbiancano/ *biancheggiano} quelle in gomma/plastica.**
 of-the parts in plexiglass PART en.√WHITE.3P √WHITE.EAR.3P those in rubber plastic
 'Among the parts (made of) plexiglass, those in rubber/plastic whiten/*look white(ish)'.

14 The triviality of the Spanish alternation is attested in the existing literature (González Vergara, 2004: 88 i.a.). Yet, it went curiously disregarded in works on deadjectival verbs and derivational morphology in Spanish, as a research topic *per se*.

15 In fact, as OC admit, the unaccusativity of Catalan stative-like variants is unclear, since in Catalan only ne-cliticization is available as test and the results are not systematic or inconclusive.

Nonetheless, the distribution shown by (23)-(28) has significant theoretical implications. Syntactically, the systematic production of unergative deadjectival verbs is, to our knowledge, a phenomenon rarely discussed in the literature. Notably, it presents a major empirical problem for constructional theories on verb formation (e.g. Hale and Keyser, 2002, 2005; Ramchand, 2013; Harley, 2005, to name the most influential), and a yet generally underexplored option in lexically-driven approaches (e.g. Levin and Rappaport, 2010; Kennedy and Levin, 2008), which generally do not seem to predict this possibility. Notably, for a Haleand-Keyserian model, argument structure is originally assumed to correlate with the base category¹⁶. Accordingly, transitive/unaccusative COS verbs like *redden* result from incorporating an ‘adjectival’ root at the base of the VP configuration, whereas unergative configurations are instead seen as a direct result of noun (or nominal root) incorporation. Thus, by systematically producing unergative verbs from ‘adjectival’ roots, Italian data undermine the predictive value of foundational theories—unless further refinements are introduced, of course—and raise a pressing theoretical question that needs to be answered.

A common assumption at issue is, as anticipated, the idea that in deadjectival verbs roots associated with gradable bounded scales will automatically yield inherently telic verbs (Hay and others, 1999, a.m.o). This is the pattern corresponding to deadjectival and denominal variable (a)telicity (Kearns, 2007, i.a.) reflected by Spanish variants (recall e.g. (3) above), following English equivalents. Insofar as verbal (a)telicity (and, presumably, resultativity) is expected to follow in deadjectival verbs as an automatic result of the type of scale lexicalized in the root—especially with color-denoting bases, cf. Levin, 1993, i.a.—, we should expect verbs sharing the same lexical root to show similar Aktionsart properties. Yet Italian ≈EAR variants challenge this relation by regularly giving fully stative, progressionless patterns.

Several observations support this asymmetry. Invariable atelicity, even with bounded-scale roots, explains why *-eggiare* variants are, unlike zero-forms, not felicitous with endpoint and completion adverbials, as shown by (29)¹⁷. Similarly, *for-x-time* modification is also odd. If admitted (i.e., if time span adverbials occur at all with *-eggiare*), these verbs yield the reading expected in pure stative types: i.e., a temporal frame on a state homogeneously extending for a time interval, as in (29)a. This suggests that, unlike Catalan statives and

16 Under the notion of classes defined structurally.

17 Although stativity tests like imperative formation and imperfective entailments give positive results, they require additional clarifications (see Mangialavori, 2018) as to the natural oddity of Italian EAR variants in perfective and progressive tenses, which is, crucially, another common indicator of stativity.

(i) a. *Il prato inverdì/#verdeggìò (passato remoto)*
b. *Il prato è inverdito/#ha verdeggiato (passato prossimo).*

Spanish degree achievements, Italian variants do not entail an event progressing over time nor return a difference value (e.g. in distinct instances of a same token).

- (29).a. *biancheggiare, rosseggiare* {^{??}*per due ore* / *in due ore* / *completamente*}.
 $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.INF}}$ $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.INF}}$ for two hours in two hours completely
 ‘Look white/red(ish) (^{??}for an hour/#in an hour/#completely)’
- b. *sbiancare, arrossare* ^{OK}{*completamente* / *in due ore*}.
 $\text{EN-}\sqrt{\text{WHITE.INF}}$ $\text{EN-}\sqrt{\text{RED.INF}}$ completely in two hours
 ‘Whiten/Redden in an hour’.

Accordingly, degree adverbials do not compute scalar progression (see (34)b below), but rather measure the degree of property statively attributed to the subject, as in (30). This follows naturally the proposed lack of transitional (change-of-state) denotation observed¹⁸. Finally, compatibility with verbs like *stop*, but not with culminative/resultative verbs like *finish*, contributes another well-known stative pattern (Dowty, 1979; Rothstein, 2004, i.a.).

- (30). *Il cielo rosseggia* {*#molto/#poco/#abbastanza*}.
 the sky $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.3S}}$ a lot little enough
 #‘The sky looks very/a bit/quite red(dish)’
 ! ‘The sky looks red(dish) for much/little/enough time.’
- (31). *Ha {smesso/*finito} di biancheggiare.* (cf. *Ha {smesso/finito} di sbiancare(si)*)
 has stopped finished of $\sqrt{\text{WHITE-EAR.INF}}$ has stopped finished of $\text{en-}\sqrt{\text{WHITE(INCH)}}$
 ‘[it] has stopped/*finished looking white(ish)’ ‘[it] stopped/finished whitening (up)’.

Moreover, the patterns seen in Italian could be crucial to more recent studies on aspect and stativity (e.g. Maienborn, 2008; Rothmayr, 2009), as they could offer original and clear evidence of a necessary finer-grained distinction between two distinct stative types of predication (next).

18 Further observations can be drawn from these patterns, as even atelic deadjectivals on non-bounded scales (e.g. *schiarire* ‘lighten’) can generate the entailment that a particular endstate is reached under certain conditions. In variable telicity verbs (verbs actually describing a COS along a nonbounded lexicalized scale associated) an endstate entailment obtains which is defined by comparison to the prior state of the theme argument (the ‘become A-er’ sense discussed since Declerck (1979) (Kearns, 2007, i.a.). The Italian variant does not license this entailment. What is crucial is that, even if both variants are atelic, the behavior displayed by Italian \approx EAR deadjectivals is rather consistent with eventless (change-less), nonscalar stativity, as opposed to the resultative, atelic (nonbounded) scalar increase and resultativity in Italian COS (zero-derived) verbs, but also unlike Catalan ‘stative’—i.e., Davidsonian—variants with parallel morphological composition (i.e., *-ejar* alternates).

5. Italian, Catalan and stative types

Recent work on lexical syntax and semantics of verbs has established that what has been largely considered a homogeneous class—i.e., stative verbs—, actually comprise two sufficiently distinct aspectual classes with divergent behavior. An essential opposition lies in eventivity. While certain stative verbs and predicates show a complete lack of eventivity (i.e., *pure states* or *Kimian States*), other stative predicates (*Davidsonian states*) show mixed eventive properties as well. In what follows, we focus on Italian and Catalan verbs produced by this common verbalizer. Distinct structural possibilities allowed in each language lead to a contrast reflecting this opposition. As an anticipation of the results of the analysis below, we find that the contrast in eventivity correlates with a contrast in argument structure realization and, consequently, on the aspectual role of the root.

Catalan stative variants readily accommodate (a)locative/temporal, (b)manner, and (c)progression adverbials (32). This is important, as it suggests not only a certain eventive (Davidsonian) status but also a sense of incremental scalarity crucially missing from Italian equivalents, as will be shown below. The difference value in yellowness returned by the inceptive adverbial in (34)a empirically supports this possibility.

Basically, Italian variants are odd in progressive tenses (*#La camicia stava gialleggiando* ($\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-EAR.GER}}$) ‘The shirt was looking white(ish)’) and crucially disallow location in space, manner, or progression adverbials (33) (also (30)b above). This conforms to the behavior expected from *pure states* (Rothmayr, 2009: 29, i.a.) as opposed to *statives* with mixed eventive-stative properties. Davidsonian Statives are, in fact, predicted to allow such combinations (Maienborn, 2008; Rothmayr, 2009), as (32) shows. In this respect, data sets like (32) are not only consonant with OC’s description of Catalan variants as Davidsonian (mixed event-like) statives but also readily account for the asymmetric distribution expected from such an aspectual crosscut (vs. (33)). (32), along with the causative-stative alternation suggested above, hence render helpful in explaining that, unlike Italian, the occurrence of Catalan forms in perfective tenses may not be as restricted as generally claimed. Examples like (34) suggest so.

- (32).a. *Aquest vi agreja / aspreja en el paladar.* (OC, 2013: (43)) (Catalan)
 ‘This wine goes bitter / sharp in my palate’
- b. *El cel fosqueja (naturalmente/usualment/com sempre)*
 the sky $\sqrt{\text{DARK-EAR-3S}}$ naturally usually as always
 ‘The sky darkens (naturally/in the usual way/as always)’
- c. *Els faigs gradualment groguegen i s'oxiden.*
 the beeches gradually $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-EAR.3P}}$ and SE-oxidate
 ‘The beech trees gradually grow yellow(ish) and oxidate’

- (33).a. *I pomodorini datterini rosseggiano (#sul balcone).* (Italian)
 the tomatoes date √RED-EAR.3P over-the balcony
 'The date tomatoes look red(ish) #in the balcony'
- b. *Il bosco verdeggia (#omogeneamente/#naturalmente/#gradualmente).*
 the forest √GREEN-EAR.3S homogeneously naturally gradually
 'The forest looks green(ish) #homogeneously/#naturally/#gradually'
- (34).a. *La camisa ha groguejat una mica #(des de la primera rentada).* (Catalan)
 the shirt has √YELLOW-EAR.PRF.3S a little since of the first wash
 'The t-shirt has gone yellow #(since the first wash)' (OC, 2013: 139(19))
- b. *La camicia ?ha gialleggiato un po' (#dal primo lavato).* (Italian)
 the shirt has √YELLOW-EAR.PRF.3S a little since-the first wash
 'The t-shirt has looked yellow(ish) (#since the first wash).'

The choice of a gloss building on a verb like *go* or *grow* in Catalan stative variants (as in (13), (32), (34) above) is not as trivial as it might look in light of these observations. Conversely, it is intended to reflect the particular sense of incremental scalarity advanced here¹⁹, in turn empirically supported by the distributional asymmetries in specific aspectual tests on eventivity and stat(iv)es offered above²⁰. The description of the stative verb's basic denotation in terms of "a formal *approaching* relation" (OC, 2013: 150) is equally consistent with this idea, and thus not applicable to Italian alternates, which in principle do not seem to be associated with ingressive or incremental scalar values.

Italian ≈EAR variants also contrast with Catalan as they systematically fail tests for scalarity of gradable attributes (Levin, 2009), like comparative, superlative, and degree modifiers. (35) illustrates this contrast, whereas (36) suggests that anaphoric reference is not related to an event (Maienborn, 2008: 114), also in contrast to Catalan (cf. *El cereal grogueja [...això continuarà durant un mes]* 'The cereal is going yellow [this will go on for a month]'). Insofar as Italian verbs yield an eventuality (state) that may extend over a limited time span (recall (29) above) but not one that evolves or progresses over time, and, at the same time, disallow scalar relevance of the Root, two important differences—not only from Catalan but from further Romance varieties—arise. The kind of atelicity and nonresultativity produced is different in each case (cf. Mangialavori, 2018, for discussion).

19 A Davidsonian-state-like sort of scalarity, apparently. In this sense, Catalan data (offered here and in OC) suggest that incrementality and scalarity in Davidsonian statives is possible and worth bringing into the discussion in the future.

20 The few amenable derivatives in Spanish (e.g. *amarillear*) bear a similar aspectual (scalar, incremental) flavor.

- (35).a. *La camisa cada dia grogueja més (que la samarreta).* (Catalan)
 the shirt each day $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.EAR.3S}}$ more than the jacket
 ‘The t-shirt {goes yellower each day/ is turning yellower than the jacket}’
- b. *La camicia (??ogni giorno) gialleggia / ingiallisce ([di] #più).* (Italian)
 the shirt each day $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.EAR.3S}}$ $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.3S}}$ more
 ‘The t-shirt looks yellow(ish) (#more) each day’
- (36). *Adesso i pomodori rosseggiano. Questo non continua a lungo.*
 Now the tomatoes $\sqrt{\text{RED-EAR.3PL}}$ This not continues to long
 ‘Now the tomatoes look red(ish). This will not hold (for) long’.

As a subsidiary consequence of the syntactic and semantic properties discussed above, Italian verbs could challenge the generalization that verbs building on these lexical bases involve either external causation (Levin, 1993; Levin and Rappaport, 1995: 95) or causative readings (Harley, 2009: 329) or else the expected clear-cut result verbs (Levin and Rappaport, 2014: 337). Crucially, Catalan (see OC, 2013: 136) and Italian stative -EAR variants are similar in that they generally resist causativization—with the proviso, for the latter, that this holds only for stative variants, especially given (14) and (17) above and the alternative illustrated in (13) above.

- (37). *Les taques {*groguegen / ^{ok}engroguixen} el paper.* (Catalan)
*Le macchie {*gialleggiano / ^{ok}ingialliscono} la carta.* (Italian)
 the stains $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW-EAR.3P}}$ $\sqrt{\text{YELLOW.3P}}$ the paper
 ‘The stains were {{*going_{(cat)}/*looking_{(it)}}} yellow(ish) / ^{ok}turning the paper yellow.’}

Now, recall that Italian verbs follow unergative patterns, while Catalan counterparts class instead as unaccusatives. If correct, this means that while Italian yields a maximal contrast in event and argument structure reflected in the choice of derivational morphology, with change-of-state and eventive-like behavior correlating with split transitivity and clitic (*se-ne*) distribution, Catalan retains an(other) important crosscut in which scalarity and transitional (change) denotation go hand in hand with internal-argument licensing (38). A relevant difference here is external-argument licensing correlating with full eventivity (proper events vs. Davidsonian states). Note that fully eventive patterns like progressive and perfective tenses in Catalan centrally depend on transitivity (dyadicity)²¹. By contrast, Italian forms give pure state (changeless, scalarless, eventless) patterns consistently correlated with unergative frames.

21 If correct, the impossibility to derive dyadic (transitive) causative variants would be merely semantic (lack of external causation) according to the direct mapping established in mainstream literature on causative alternations (e.g. Hale and Keyser, 2002: 175; Levin and Rappaport, 2005: 52, among many others). Conversely, in Italian it simply follows from a VP configuration, whereby transitional (change-of-state) denotation depends on internal-argument-licensing.

(38). <i>Estava</i>	<i>blanquejant</i>	<i>*(diners negre)</i> .	(Catalan)
be.3S.IMP	√WHITE-EAR-GER	money black	
'(He) was laundering money'		(Lit.) '(He) was whitening black money'	

In Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese, in turn, *-ear/-ejar* forms do not systematically diverge from other morphological (derivational) options (e.g. zero, *-ecer*). This can be taken to indicate that: first, an important alternative in argument and event structure like the one seen in Italian (and, to some extent, in Catalan) is unavailable, and, second, that the idea that transitivity, change-of-state denotation, and eventivity, as constant properties of deadjectival verbs, would run into fewer problems for these varieties. As potential asymmetries in event and argument structure are not reflected by morphological composition, these languages fail to reflect the derivational alternation which is derivationally transparent and nontrivial in Italian (cf. (11) vs. (2)) and available, but morphologically opaque in Catalan. This would thus allow for a more coherent picture of verb internal syntax and semantics in line with what e.g. Levin (1993) argued for well-studied languages like English, which, like Spanish, do not feature an option like Italian. A generalization would hence fail to predict important asymmetries if sweepingly extended to languages with different, dedicated morphological devices, as is the case in, namely, Italian.

Finally, it may be worth noting that French and European Portuguese could allow the stative atelic alternative with unergative (but much less clear) patterns in line with Italian²². The alternation in French, however, is visibly restricted in productivity, in contrast to the considerable quantitative and qualitative regular productivity noted in Italian²³. Sorace (2000) addresses this question, focusing her analysis on the particular case of *rougeoyer*. This observation, along with the apparent unergativity suggested, is however not easily backed by French native speakers on closer examination. For these reasons, we refrain from a detailed proposal including a French parallel with other major Romance languages offering more conclusive evidence and quantitatively and qualitatively significant evidence, like Italian.

6. Conclusion

We note an asymmetry between languages in which the choice of verbalizer does or does not render a significant (semantic or syntactic) variable. In Italian, the specific properties yielded by the verbalizer in question here define a maximal structural contrast with the

22 Finer-grained studies on split (in)transitivity suggest French verbs are not core unaccusatives (see Sorace, 2000). A specific exploration is yet needed to corroborate whether parallels with Italian or Catalan apply.

23 Namely, *nereggiare*, *gialleggiare*, *azzurreggiare*, *porporeggiare* are not available in French: **noiroyer*, **jaunoyer*, **bleuoyer*, **violoyer*, nor, apparently, in Catalan.

verb given by the ‘equivalent’ form in languages like Spanish. As a consequence, Italian offers a nontrivial derivational alternation and a morphotactically-transparent contrast correlated with event and argument structure. In turn, Italian and Catalan are similar in that they allow stative, monoargumental uses. Yet, lack of eventivity and scalarity (and, ultimately, COS denotation) in Italian contrasts with the mixed event-like behavior in Catalan, offering new evidence on the necessary, finer-grained distinction between stat(iv)e types.

We contend that the derivational alternative seen in Italian defines a consistent crosscut in event and argument structure, with (non)eventivity correlating with (a)transitivity. Finally, by systematically producing **unergative**, **COS-less** verbs from ‘adjectival’ roots (specifically, roots naming properties like colors), Italian poses a problem for both mainstream theories of lexical syntax and verb formation deriving argument structure from categorial root type and lexically-driven approaches which often do not predict (or, at least, discuss) this possibility. If correct, the data here suggests the need to revisit important syntactic and semantic generalizations on deadjectival verbs and verb formation that have been around in the literature for the last decades, as to the role of the root-coded scale in deajectivals.

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