A note on repetition in Spanish: volver a + VInf, re-prefixation, and adverbs of repetition.

Brenda Laca

HAL Id: hal-01372989

https://hal.science/hal-01372989

Brenda Laca
UMR 7023- SFL Université Paris 8

A note on repetition in Spanish: *volver a* + V~Inf~, *re*-prefixation, and adverbs of repetition.

In the monograph she devoted to directional verb prefixation in Catalan, Grossmann (1994, 20-21) makes reference to the contrast between *re*-prefixation and the periphrasis *tornar a* + V~Inf~, which she glosses as 'V~Inf~ again'. She observes that *re*-verbs denote the new occurrence of an event which restitutes a previously obtaining state. By contrast, mere event repetition -particularly with atelic predicates- is generally expressed by means of the periphrasis, which is moreover preferred in the spoken language.

In the meantime, the contrast between restitution of a state and repetition of an event alluded to in Grossmann's characterization has received a lot of attention from semanticists, who have concentrated on the ambiguities exhibited by sentences containing adverbs of repetition such as engl. *again* and germ. *wieder.* These ambiguities pose crucial questions as to the identity conditions on event-types (what counts as "the same type of event"?) and as to the ways lexical semantics and syntax contribute to these identity conditions. Furthermore, since all these expressions of repetition are presupposition triggers (they do not simply entail, but rather presuppose, the previous existence of a state or an event of the same type), they pose no less crucial questions as to the ways presuppositions are computed from a semantic configuration in order to be satisfied in context or accommodated.

In this contribution, I will provide a semantic description of span. *volver a* + V~Inf~, which quite closely corresponds to cat. *tornar a* + V~Inf~, and I will then briefly contrast it with *re*-verbs and with the adverbs *de nuevo/otra vez* 'again'.

1. *Volver a* + V~Inf~ as an eventuality-modification periphrasis

In previous work on Romance 'aspectual' periphrases (Laca 2004), I have developed an analysis according to which these expressions distribute over at least two levels of structure, a more internal level at which eventuality modification operators are expressed, and a more external level expressing time-relational aspect . The former are aspectual shifters that change or specify the temporal structure of the eventuality description they apply to. Their output is a predicate of eventualities (type $<\varepsilon,t>$). The latter, much less numerous, relate a distinguished interval (the reference or topic time) to the temporal trace of the eventuality. Their output is a predicate of times (type $<i,t>$). Example (1) illustrates the combination of *acabar de* + *V~Inf~* with the time-relational meaning of a "recent past" and an eventuality modification periphrasis, *terminar de* + *V~Inf~* . The minimal structure I assume for this combination is sketched in (2). [1]

1.   *Juan acaba   de terminar de escribir   su tesis.*
         Juan finish.PRS.3SG   of finish.INF of write.INF his thesis
         'Juan has just finished writing his thesis'.

---

[1] Abbreviations are as in the Leipziger Glossing Rules, but for SP = simple past, and IMPF = imperfect.

2. [Tense *PRS* [Asp _{TR} acaba [Asp _{EM} de terminar [v/VP (Juan) de escribir su tesis]

eventuality description

|----------*derived eventuality description*----------------|

|----------*property of times*--|

 The two layers can be distinguished on the basis of a correlation between four properties, namely linear position, possibilities of co-occurrence, the existence of selectional restrictions or their absence, and tense restrictions. Eventuality modification periphrases never precede time-relational periphrases, they can combine with each other, they exhibit selectional restrictions as to the temporal structure of the eventualities they combine with, and they lack any tense restrictions.

As for *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* (lit. 'return, go back to V'), it qualifies as an eventuality modification periphrasis on the grounds of linear position wrt. time-relational periphrases and lack of tense restrictions. As shown in (3a-b), it can follow, but not precede the time-relational periphrasis *ir a + V$_{Inf}$* (roughly 'be going to V', an expression of prospective aspect/future tense). As shown in (4a-b), it can combine with the simple perfective past, a combination that is not possible for time-relational periphrases.[2]

3.   a. *Juan va   a volver   a escribir   un libro.*
           Juan go.PRS.3SG to return.INF to write.INF a book.
         'Juan is going to write a book again'.
    b. #*Juan vuelve   a ir   a escribir   un libro.*
           Juan return.PRS.3SG to go.INF to write.INF a book.
         #'Juan goes to write a book again'

4.   a. *Volvió   a llover.*
           return.SP.3SG to rain.INF
         'It rained again'
    b. #*Fue   a llover.*
           go.SP.3SG to rain.INF
         #'It went to rain'

However, by contrast with other eventuality modification periphrases, *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* can combine with any type of temporal structure. (3a) and (4a) illustrate its compatibility with accomplishments and activities, (5a) and (5b) its compatibility with states and achievements, respectively:

5.   a. *No volvió   a   poder   escribir.*
           not return.SP.3SG to be_able_to write.
         'S/he wasn't able to write again'
    b. *Había   vuelto   a cerrar   la puerta.*
           have.IMPF.3SG return.PP to close.INF the door
         'S/he had closed the door again'

---

[2] This behavior is predicted by the hypothesis that the output of eventuality modification periphrases is a type <ε,t> and that time relational aspect is of type <<ε,t> , <i,t>>.

The main property of eventuality modification periphrases is that they have a specific temporal structure as output. In the case of *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* , the resulting temporal structure is clearly non-stative. Firstly, in the antecedent of conditionals, states give rise to simultaneous interpretations, and to so called epistemic conditionals, [3] whereas events (particularly if they are telic) give rise to forward-shifting interpretations. *Volver a + V$_{Inf}$* patterns in this respect with events:

6. a. *Si María está   enferma, perderá   su trabajo.*
       if Maria   be.PRS.3SG   ill   lose.FUT.3SG her job
       'If Maria is ill, she will lose her job'   [SIMUL >SETTLED>EPISTEMIC]
    b. *Si María cae   enferma*
       if Maria   fall.PRS.3SG   ill
       'If Maria falls ill…'   [FWD-SHIFTED> NOT-YET-SETTLED]
    c. *Si María vuelve   a estar enferma*
       if Maria   return.PRS.3SG to be   ill
       'If Maria falls ill again…'   [FWD-SHIFTED> NOT-YET-SETTLED]

Secondly, *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* is awkward in contexts requiring stative predicates, such as the infinitival complements of belief verbs in the present tense:

7. a. *María cree   estar enferma.*
       Maria believe.PRS.3SG be.INF ill
       'Maria believes to be ill'
    b. **María cree   caer   enferma.*
       Maria believe.PRS.3SG fall.INF ill
       * 'Maria believes to fall ill'
    c. **María cree   volver   a estar enferma.*
       Maria believe.PRS.3SG return.INF   to be   ill
       *'Maria believes to fall ill again'

Finally, *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* is acceptable in contexts that normally exclude states, as for instance the incremental periphrasis *ir + V$_{Ger}$* :

8. a. **La respiración va   siendo normal.*
       the breathing go.PRS.3SG   be.GER normal
       *'His/her breathing is gradually being normal'
    b. *La respiración va   volviendo   a ser normal*.
       the breathing go.PRS.3SG return.GER   to be normal
       'His/her breathing is gradually going back to normal'

Although the combination with states (including habituals) shows that *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* patterns with eventive predicates, its combination with eventive predicates fails to alter their temporal structure in any obvious way. Thus, *volver a llover* 'to rain again' behaves, like *llover,* as an activity, whereas *volver a escribir un libro* 'to write a book again' behaves, like *escribir un libro*, as an accomplishment. This transparency of *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* wrt. the temporal structure of

---

[3] A quick test for identifying epistemic conditionals is that their antecedent can be easily paraphrased as 'If it is (now) true that…', which shows that the truth or falsity of the antecedent is seen as decided (settled) at the time of evaluation.

the eventuality descriptions it modifies could account for a curious linearisation phenomenon: in combinations with the incremental periphrasis *ir + V$_{Ger}$* the relative ordering of both periphrases does not seem to give rise to any semantic differences (unless the basic eventuality description is a state, as in (8a) above). Although the first linearisation (9a) is much more frequent, the second linearisation is also attested (9b):

9. a. *Concordia, muy castigada por la inundación de diciembre*
     Concordia very punish.PP by the flood   of December
     poco a poco va   volviendo a recuperar   su fisonomía.
     little to little go.PRS.3SG return.GER to recover.INF its aspect
     'Concordia, very much affected by December's flood, is recovering little by little its original aspect again.'
   b. *A mediados   del   siglo   XVII y   muy lentamente,*
       to middle.MASC.PL of _the century XVII and very slowly
       el gato vuelve   a ir   recuperando su lugar de privilegio.
       the cat return.PRS.3SG to go.INF recover.GER its place of privilege
       'By the middle of the 17th Century, and very slowly, the cat starts regaining its privileged position again.'

This is to be expected if *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* simply inherits the temporal structure of the eventive predicate it combines with, whereas *ir + V$_{Ger}$* specifies a particular (incremental) temporal structure. In fact, the main semantic contribution of *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* lies elsewhere, namely in the temporal presupposition it triggers.

2. The presupposition(s) of *volver a + V$_{Inf}$*

2.1. A first approximation

As evidenced by the translations of the previous examples, *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* contributes a temporal presupposition to the effect that another instance of the eventuality has obtained before. This presupposition is responsible for the only selectional restriction it exhibits: the periphrasis cannot combine with predicates denoting types of situations that cannot occur more than once under identity of their arguments, namely once-only events as in (10a) and individual-level states as in (10b):

10. a. #*Blancanieves volvió a comer la manzana.*
      Snowwhite return.SP.3SG to eat.INF the apple
      #'Snowwhite ate the apple again'.

    b. #*Pedro volvió   a ser   alto.*
      Pedro return.SP.3SG to be.INF tall
      #'Pedro became tall again'

Volver a + V$_{Inf}$ describes an eventuality of the type described by its complement VP , and it presupposes the existence of an eventuality of the same type at a previous time. Furthermore, as evidenced by its contrast with *seguir + V$_{Ger}$*, it presupposes that the entailed and the presupposed eventuality are not proper parts of a 'larger' eventuality of the same type. Thus,

(11a) requires the existence of at least two reading events, whereas (11b) only talks about one reading event:

> 11   a. *Juan volvió   a leer   el artículo.*
>   Juan return.SP.3SG to read.INF the paper
>   'Juan read the paper again'
>   b. *Juan siguió   leyendo   el artículo.*
>   Juan follow.SP.3SG read.GER the paper
>   'Juan went on reading the paper'

In a first approximation, *volver a + V_{Inf}* can be given the semantics in (12), which is inspired by the one proposed by von Stechow (2007) for Germ. *wieder* 'again'[4]:

12. $[[volver_{a + VInf}]] = \lambda P\epsilon t \lambda e : \underline{\exists e'[\tau(e') < \tau(e) \wedge P(e')} \wedge P(e)]$
    where $P\epsilon t$ is a predicate of eventualities, $\tau(e)$ is the temporal trace of an eventuality (the unique time interval at which the eventuality occurs), and the underlined formula is a presupposition.

    In words: *volver a + V_{Inf}* applies to a predicate of eventualities P and returns a predicate of eventualities which is true of an event e iff e is a P-event, under the presupposition that there is another previously occurring event e' which is also a P-event.

    One of the virtues of definition (12) is that it makes very perspicuous the crucial problem in the analysis of markers with such a semantics, namely that of determining $P\epsilon t$, the property that must be shared by the described and the presupposed eventuality. In compositional treatments, such as those developed by von Stechow (2001, 2007) and Bale (2006), it is required that the scope of the marker be determined by its sister constituent, which should thus deliver the content of the presupposition.
    We assume that the sister constituent of *volver a + V_{Inf}* is the VP, since eventuality modification periphrases are VP-operators, as suggested by the schematic representation in (2) above. However, the presupposition of a sentence containing *volver a + V_{Inf}* may be - and often is- contextually satisfied by sentences entailing the existence of eventualities which are only *partially* of the same type as the eventuality described in the host sentence. Thus, for instance, (13) describes a meeting event whose Agent is Juan, whose Theme is María and which takes place at the University, but its presupposition can be satisfied by context C, which entails the existence of at least a meeting event with the same Agent and the same Theme, but a different location:

---

[4] Von Stechow's original formulation relies on interval, not on event semantics, and thus formulates entailment and presupposition in terms of properties of times. Interval semantics won't do for *volver a + V_{Inf}* in our framework, because its output is an eventuality description (type $<\epsilon,t>$). For the sake of simplicity, we have not tried to capture the condition on distinct, disjunct eventualities in the definition above. This can be rather simply done by stipulating that e' and e, the presupposed and the entailed eventuality, are not subevents of a single super-event

13. *Cuando Juan volvió   a encontrar a María en la Universidad,*
    when   Juan return.SP.3SG to meet.INF to Maria in the University,
    no la   reconoció.
    not her recognize.SP.3SG
    'When Juan met Maria again at University, he didn't recognize her'

C: *Juan y María se habían conocido de niños en la escuela.*
   'Juan and Maria had met when they were schoolchildren'

This can be taken as an indication that the periphrasis need not have adjuncts in its scope, so that Pεt is the property of eventualities defined by the verb and its arguments. However, as is the case for its adverbial counterparts, sentences containing *volver a + V_{Inf}* exhibit a wide range of scope-like ambiguities which make the task of determining Pεt quite formidable.

The most widely discussed ambiguity is the one between repetition of an event and restitution of a state alluded to in the introduction, but there exist further ambiguities concerning peripheral arguments and non-referential arguments. In what follows, we will briefly discuss them in turn.

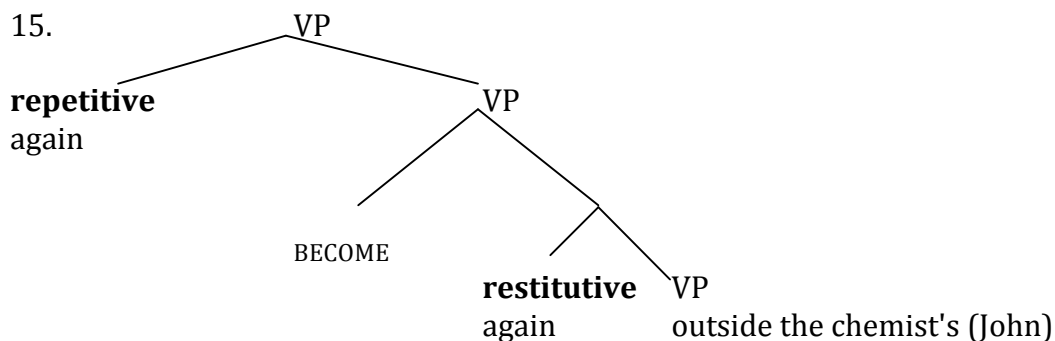## 2.2. The ambiguities of sentences containing *volver a + V_{Inf}*

The *repetitive – restitutive* ambiguity arises with verbs denoting a change of state (achievements, accomplishments). In the repetitive reading, Pεt is the change of state itself, whereas in the restitutive reading, it is the result state. Thus, the presupposition of (14) can be satisfied both by a context like (14-C1) or by a context like (14-C2):

14.   *A las 5 volvió   a salir   de la farmacia.*
       at the 5 return.SP.3SG. to go_out.INF of the chemist's
       'At 5 o'clock he went out of the chemist's again'

    C1. *Juan salió a las 3 de la farmacia.*
        'Juan went out of the chemist's at 3 o'clock'
    C2. *Juan entró a las 3 en la farmacia.*
        'Juan went into the chemist's at 3 o'clock'

As is well known, the existence of the restitutive reading is one of the main original motivations for lexical decomposition approaches which attribute to change of state verbs a structure in which a nuclear state predicate is the argument of the BECOME-operator, an operator entailing that the state holds at an interval *t* and that it did not hold at the immediately preceding interval (cf. Dowty 1979). Under lexical decomposition analyses, the repetitive-restitutive ambiguity arises because the presupposition trigger may attach either above the level of the BECOME-operator or at the lower level of the state predicate. (15) schematically represents the analysis of this ambiguity proposed by von Stechow (2001, 2007):

15.

VP
├─ **repetitive**
│   again
└─ VP
    ├─ BECOME
    └─ VP
        ├─ **restitutive**
        │   again
        └─ VP
              outside the chemist's (John)

In the restitutive reading, Pεt is the state predicate, whereas in the repetitive reading, Pεt is the composite predicate BECOME [STATE]. Notice that both the restitutive and the repetitive reading entail the occurrence of a counterdirectional change of state (such as expressed by lexical reversives of the type *go in/go out, tie/untie*) between the entailed change of state and the presupposed state or change of state.

A second type of ambiguity arises with sentences whose arguments are not rigid designators. Indefinites and quantifiers, but also 'functional' definites (cf. Kamp 2001) may have the same or different discourse referents in the entailed and in the presupposed eventuality description. Thus, (16a), with an indefinite object, has the two possible readings given in translations (i) and (ii). As for (16b), with a quantified object, and (16c), with a 'functional' definite object, the fact that the verbs in those sentences describe once-only events forces the reading in which different discourse referents are involved in the entailment and in the presupposition:

16.   a. *A Juan le   volvieron   a editar   una novela.*
          to Juan CL.DAT   return.SP.3PL to publish.INF a novel
          (i)   'One of Juan's novels was republished'.
          (ii)   'Juan got another novel of his published'.
      b. *Volvieron   a romper   todos los platos.*
          return.SP.3PL   to break.INF   all   the dishes
          'They broke all the dishes again'
      c. *Juan volvió   a destrozar   su coche en un accidente.*
          Juan return.SP.3SG. to wreck.INF his car   in an accident
          'Again, Juan wrecked his car in an accident '

This ambiguity is also widely assumed to be a scope ambiguity. If the NP-arguments escape the scope of the presupposition trigger, one should get the same participants in the entailed and in the presupposed event. If they scope below the presupposition trigger, no identity of participants is required. The scopal account is standard for indefinites, in which wide-scope indefinites pick out a specific discourse referent, whereas narrow-scope indefinites can associate with different discourse referents. The case of universally quantified arguments and of 'functional' definites, however, is not exactly parallel. If the domain of quantification remains constant, there is but a single set that may verify a universally quantified sentence, namely the set of all individuals in the domain which satisfy the nominal description, and there is a single individual picked out by a definite description. This means that in readings such as the ones which are more prominent for (16b) and (16c), different participants go hand in hand with a difference in the domain of quantification for the entailment and for the

presupposition. In such cases, the presupposition trigger does not scopally interact with a quantifier, but with the domain restriction associated with it.

There is moreover a third type of ambiguity which has been noticed only recently (see Bale 2006 on the "subject-less presuppositions" of *again*), and whose existence is sometimes obcured by the effects of the *repetitive-restitutive* ambiguity. As stated above, the periphrasis need not have adjuncts in its scope, so that Pεt is, at first sight, minimally defined by the verb and its arguments. This adjunct-argument divide is further illustrated by the contrast between (17a) and (17b). The expression *en el desván* 'in the attic' is a locative adjunct in (17a), and it is a GOAL argument in (17b).

17.　　a. *Volvió　　　a esconder la caja   en el desván*.
　　　　　return.SP.3SG. to hide.INF the box in the attic
　　　　　'S/he hid the box again in the attic'
　　　　b. *Volvió　　　a poner   la caja en el desván.*
　　　　　return.SP.3SG. to put.INF the box in the attic
　　　　　'S/he put the box back in the attic'

C1**.** *La caja había estado escondida en el desván durante años. Juan la sacó y días después*
　　　'The box had been hidden in the attic for years. Juan took it out and a couple of
　　　days later...'
C2. *La caja había estado escondida en el garaje durante años. Juan la sacó y días después*
　　　'The box had been hidden in the garage for years. Juan took it out and a couple of
　　　days later...'

Now, context (17.C1) satisfies both the presupposition of (17a) and that of (17b). But, crucially, context (17.C2)**,** with a different location, does not satisfy the presupposition of (17b). This is an indication that a GOAL argument necessarily enters into the composition of Pεt, whereas a locative adjunct does not.

The interesting fact is that some arguments, mainly Agents and Datives, pattern like adjuncts in this respect. Thus, the first sentence in (18) satisfies the presupposition of the second sentence, which hosts the presupposition trigger, but the Agent of the first sentence is not identical to that of the second sentence.

18.　　　*Su padre le　　　había pedido el anillo, .*
　　　　　his father CL.DAT   had asked   the ring,
　　　　　y   ahora volvía　　a pedírselo　　su madre
　　　　　and now return.IMPF to ask.INF_him_it his mother
　　　　　'His father had asked him for the ring, and now his mother was asking him
　　　　　for it again'

In the same vein, context (19.C) satisfies the presupposition of (19), with a different Dative argument, indicating that Dative arguments do not necessarily enter into the composition of Pεt:

19.　　*El   examinador le　　　volvió　　　a preguntar a Juan la fecha de Waterloo*
　　　　the examiner　 CL.DAT return.SP.3SG. to ask.INF   to Juan the date of Waterloo
　　　　 'The examiner asked Juan the date of the Battle of Waterloo again '
　　　　　C. *El examinador le había preguntado a María la fecha de Waterloo.*
　　　　　　'The examiner had asked Maria the date of the Battle of Waterloo'

Notice that the verbs in (18) and (19) are not change of state verbs, so that the exclusion of the Agent or the Dative from the presupposition cannot be attributed to a possible restitutive reading. Even with change of state verbs, the independence of agent-less presuppositions and restitutive readings is confirmed by the behavior of the expression *por segunda vez* 'for the second time'. This expression blocks restitutive interpretations, as shown by the fact that (20) necessarily presupposes a previous event of going out of the chemist's, a presupposition that cannot be satisfied by the mere state of having previously been outside the chemist's:

20.   *A las 5 volvió   a salir   de la farmacia   por segunda vez.*
          at the 5 return.SP.3SG. to go-out.INF of the chemist's for second time
          'At 5 o'clock he went out of the chemist's for the second time'

Now, sentences containing *por segunda vez* do not require agent-identity in the entailed and in the presupposed eventuality, thus showing that restitutive and agent-less presuppositions remain distinct event in the case of change of state verbs:

21.   *Los jesuitas habían sido expulsados de   Francia por Enrique IV.*
          the Jesuits had   been expelled   from France by   Henri IV
          En 1762, el gobierno   de Choiseul los   volvió   a expulsar por segunda vez.
          in 1762 the government of Choiseul them return.SP.3SG to expell.INF for second time
          'The Jesuits had been expelled from France by Henri IV. In 1762, Choiseul's government expelled them once more again'

        The three types of ambiguities we have discussed show that the task of determining Pεt, the property that must be shared by the described and the presupposed eventuality, is not at all trivial. The fact that the conditions required for each type to arise are different suggests that they are in principle independent from one another. So, for instance, the ambiguities arising with indefinites, quantifiers and functional definites are by and large independent from the argument structure and temporal structure of the predicate. By contrast, the repetitive-restitutive ambiguity requires predicates with a result state, i.e. a particular temporal structure and an argument that is the Theme of a change of state. As for agent-less and dative-less presuppositions, they target specific arguments, but do not require predicates with a result state (in fact, they can only be clearly distinguished from restitutive readings in the absence of a result state). In the next section, we will concentrate on the latter two cases, because both relate to argument structure and to the question of what counts as a minimal or core eventuality description for a given predicate.

2.3. The minimal presupposition of *volver a + V*$_{Inf}$ and the sublexical structure of eventuality descriptions

        The strategy we will follow is that of concentrating on the minimal presupposition of presupposition triggers of the type exemplified by *volver a + V*$_{Inf}$, i.e. on the semantic material that must necessarily be a part of Pεt. This strategy is justified by the observation that the readings participating in the ambiguities discussed in the previous section are not logically independent from one another, a fact that often goes unnoticed. Thus, in the case of the repetitive-restitutive ambiguity, the repetitive reading asymmetrically entails the restitutive reading, because (22a) entails (22b):

22. a. John had gone out of the chemist's.
     b. John was outside the chemist's.

Analogously, the agent-less presupposition is asymmetrically entailed by the presupposition involving identity of the agent in the presupposed and in the entailed event, because (23a) entails (23b):

23. a. John's mother had asked for the ring.
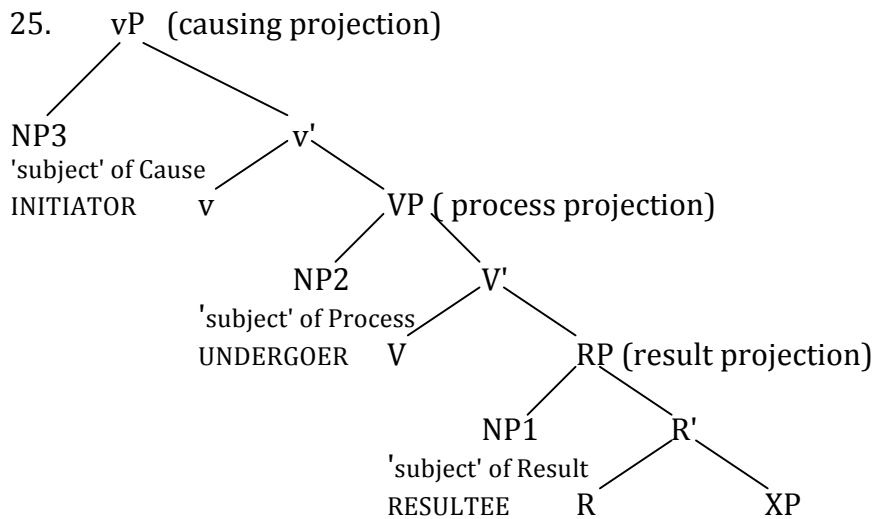   b. Somebody had asked for the ring.

The consequence of this state of affairs is that only minimal presuppositions, i.e. the semantically weakest presuppositions, can be effectively tested, and that the only revealing case is that in which a sentence (a propositional content) fails to satisfy the presupposition of a sentence hosting *volver a* + V_{Inf}. The reason is that a stronger propositional content satisfying the presupposition may well do so because it entails the weaker propositional content, so that there is no way to decide between the stronger and the weaker formulation for Pεt. Only presupposition failure can tell us something as to what components go into the formulation of Pεt, and it tells us something about minimal presuppositions.

We know already that adjuncts do not go into the formulation of Pεt. Restitutive readings show that in the case of change of state verbs, the change of state itself, as opposed to its result state, need not be a component of Pεt either. We know furthermore that non-internal, peripheral arguments, such as Agents and Datives, in some cases do not belong to Pεt. This complex distribution, however, cannot be captured by simple contrasts between stative and eventive predicates and transitive and intransitive predicates as proposed by Bale (2006) for the computation of the presupposition of *again.* Thus, for instance, both (24a) and (24b) are transitive eventive constructions, but only (24a) admits an agent-less presupposition. By contrast, the first sentence in (24b) does not satisfy the presupposition in the second sentence:

24. a. *El comisario   había interrogado al testigo por la mañana,*
         the commissioner had   questioned   the witness for the morning
         y   de tarde   el   juez   lo   volvió   a interrogar.
         and of afternoon the judge him return.SP.3SG to question.INF
         'The commissioner had questioned the witness in the morning, and in the
         afternoon the judge questioned him again'
     b. *Misha corrió el maratón   de Boston en 2010,*
         Misha ran   the marathon of Boston in 2010
         y   en 2013 lo volvió   a correr   Rudi.
         and in 2013 it return.SP.3SG to run.INF Rudi
         'Misha ran the Boston marathon in 2010, and Rudi ran it again in 2013'

In fact, only decompositional approaches which articulate the VP domain into several different projections corresponding to subevental predications, such as Ramchand's First-Phase Syntax (2008), are fine-grained enough to capture the minimal presupposition of sentences hosting *volver a* + V_{Inf}. This approach allows us to detect minimal *sublexical* eventuality descriptions and distinguishes neatly those DPs or NPs which are genuine arguments in such eventuality descriptions from those which constitute material modifying the relevant subevent ("rhematic" material in Ramchand's terms). The main tenet of this

approach is that simple verbs may lexicalize complex event-argument structures which have a sublexical syntactic phrase structure. Such complex event-argument structures can be represented as templates. The maximal template for a dynamic verb is illustrated in (25):

25. vP   (causing projection)

```
        vP   (causing projection)
       /  \
     NP3    v'
'subject' of Cause  / \
  INITIATOR   v    VP ( process projection)
                   / \
                 NP2   V'
        'subject' of Process  / \
          UNDERGOER   V    RP (result projection)
                           / \
                         NP1   R'
                'subject' of Result  / \
                   RESULTEE   R    XP
```

Each one of the three projections in (25) introduces a distinct subeventuality which licenses its own argument. The vP introduces the causation event and licenses different types of external argument ('subject' of cause). The VP, which constitutes the nuclear component in dynamic verb templates, specifies the nature of the change or process and licenses the entity undergoing change or process ('subject' of process). Finally, the RP gives the 'telos' or 'result state' of the event and licenses the entity that comes to hold the result state ('subject' of result). Templates further specify the necessary identity relations between the arguments of each projection. For instance, process intransitives such as *run* have a causing and a process projection whose respective arguments are identical, whereas non-resultative transitives such as *question* also have the same two projections, but with different arguments for each one of them.

The generalization as to the presuppositions of sentences hosting *volver a + V*$_{\text{Inf}}$ that emerges from the previous discussion is given in (26):

26. The minimal presupposition of *volver a + V*$_{\text{Inf}}$ encompasses the minimal eventuality description determined by the template to which the lexical verb is associated.

Event-structure templates of the sort proposed by Ramchand (2008) are quite good predictors of the possibility of restitutive readings and agent-less presuppositions. Thus, for instance, the verb *vaciar* 'to empty' lexicalizes the full template, and requires that the UNDERGOER be identical to the RESULTEE. Correspondingly, (27) has as a minimal presupposition the eventuality described in the result projection, and can also have an agent-less and a repetitive presupposition corresponding to the full template. These are shown by the supporting contexts (27 C1-C3):

27. *Juan volvió   a vaciar   la botella*.
     Juan return.SP.3SG to empty.INF the bottle
     'Juan emptied the bottle again'

C1. *La botella había estado vacía.*
    'The bottle had been empty'
C2. *Alguien había vaciado la botella*.
    'Somebody had emptied the bottle'
C3. *Juan había vaciado la botella*.
    'John had emptied the bottle'

Interrogar 'question' lacks a result projection, but does not require identity between INITIATOR and UNDERGOER. The minimal presupposition *volver a +* V_{Inf} triggers in this case is the agent-less presupposition, as shown in (24a) above. *Correr* 'run', on its part, requires identity between INITIATOR and UNDERGOER. The NP occupying the object position in *correr el maratón de Boston* 'run the Boston marathon' is not an argument of the event template, but constitutes what Ramchand calls a RHEME. As a consequence, as shown in (24b) above, the argument corresponding to the INITIATOR = UNDERGOER has to be a part of the minimal eventuality description, so that no agent-less presupposition is possible.

Generalization (26) concerns the minimal presupposition of sentences hosting *volver a + V_{Inf}.* The question that arises at this point concerns the existence of an upper limit for the presupposition, i.e. whether there is material in the host sentence that is necessarily excluded from Pϵt. For adverbial repetition markers, such as *again* or *wieder*, it has been shown that their site of adjunction quite clearly delimits a maximal presupposition. Assuming, for instance that *again* attaches to the right of its complement, under neutral intonational conditions only the information contained to its left goes into the composition of Pϵt (cf. Bale 2006).

By contrast with adverbial repetition markers, *volver a + V_{Inf}.* has a single adjunction site: it takes a VP as complement. A number of observations point to the possibility that the background-focus articulation of the sentence plays a role in determining its potential presuppositions. So, for instance, a topicalized argument seems to be necessarily included in Pϵt. As shown in example (18) above, repeated here for convenience as (28a), the dative argument need not be a part of the presupposition. But in the case of (28b), where the dative argument has been topicalized, it is no longer excluded from the minimal presupposition: context (28-C) satisfies the presupposition of (28a), but not that of (28b).

28.   a. *El   examinador le   volvió   a preguntar a Juan la fecha de Waterloo*
          the examiner   CL.DAT return.SP.3SG. to ask.INF   to Juan the date of Waterloo
       'The examiner asked Juan again the date of the Battle of Waterloo'
     b. *A Juan el   examinador le   volvió   a preguntar la fecha de Waterloo*
       to Juan the examiner   CL.DAT return.SP.3SG to ask.INF   the date of Waterloo
       'As for Juan, the examiner asked him again the date of the Battle of Waterloo'

     C. *El examinador le había preguntado a María la fecha de Waterloo.*
     'The examiner had asked Maria the date of the Battle of Waterloo'

The generalization that could account for the influence of background-focus articulation, however, is not a generalization about maximal presuppositions. It should also be formulated in terms of minimal presuppositions: backgrounded or topicalized arguments are necessarily included in Pϵt.

3. *Volver a +* V_{Inf,} *re*-prefixation and adverbs.

At first sight, adverbs of repetition like *de nuevo, otra vez* 'again' and the prefix, *re-*, share a common semantics with the periphrasis. In this last section, I will briefly mention the main differences between the three types of expression.

3.1. Adverbs of repetition

De nuevo (lit. 'of new') is the adverb whose semantics best matches that of *volver a +* V_{Inf}, because it presupposes the previous occurrence of an event of the same type. Although the presupposition of *otra vez* (lit. 'another time') is more often than not satisfied by a previously occurring event, it may also be satisfied by a later event, in other words, *otra vez* does not constrain the temporal order between the described and the presupposed eventuality. This is illustrated by the contrast in (29a-b):

29.   a. *Al   entrar   en la habitación,*
          to–the enter.INF in the room,
          le   pareció   que ya   había estado allí   otra   vez.
          CL.DAT seem.SP.3SG that already had   been   there another time
          'When s/he entered the room, s/he had the feeling s/he had been there before'
      b. # *Al   entrar   en la habitación,*
            to–the enter.INF in the room,
            le   pareció   que ya   había estado allí   de nuevo.
            CL.DAT seem.SP.3SG that already had   been   there of new
            #'When s/he entered the room, s/he had the feeling s/he had been there again'

De nuevo exhibits the same ambiguities as *volver a +* V_{Inf}. (30) exemplifies the repetitive-restitutive ambiguity, (31) the possibility of an agent-less presupposition, and (32) variation in the identity of a quantified argument:

30.   *El animal   desapareció   de nuevo entre los árboles.*
      the animal disappear.SP.3SG of new   among the trees
      'The animal disappeared again among the trees'

31.   *El comisario   había interrogado al testigo   por la mañana.*
      the commissioner had   questioned the witness for the morning
      De tarde,   el juez   lo   interrogó   de nuevo.
      of afternoon the judge him question.SP.3SG of new
      'The commissioner had questioned the witness in the morning. In hte afternoon, the judge questioned him again'

32.   *Rompieron   de nuevo todos los platos.*
      break.SP.3PL of new   all   the dishes
      'They broke all the dishes again'

The main difference between adverbs of repetition and *volver a +* V_{Inf} is that the latter, but not the former, creates a new eventuality description with a particular temporal structure. As discussed in Section 1 above, the output of *volver a +* V_{Inf} is clearly eventive. As a result, when the basic eventuality description is a state, *volver a +* V_{Inf} does not give rise to

simultaneous interpretations in the antecedents of conditionals, it is not possible in infinitival complements of belief-verbs, and it is a possible complement of periphrasis requiring an eventive predicate. As shown by the contrasts in (33a-b), (34a-b) and (35a-b), none of these properties are shared by adverbs of repetition:

33.   a. *Si María vuelve   a estar enferma...*
           if Maria return.PRS.3SG to be   ill
           'If Maria falls ill again…   [FWD-SHIFTED> NOT-YET-SETTLED]
        b. *Si María está   enferma de nuevo, perderá   su trabajo.*
           if Maria   be.PRS.3.SG   ill   of new , lose.FUT.3SG her job
           'If Maria is ill again, she will lose her job' [SIMUL >SETTLED >EPIST]

34.   a. **Maria cree   volver   a estar enferma.*
            Maria believe.PRS.3SG return.INF to be   ill
             *'Maria believes to fall ill again'
        b. *María cree   estar enferma de nuevo.*
            Maria believe.PRS.3SG   be.INF ill   of new
           'Maria believes to be ill again'

35.   a. *La respiración va   volviendo   a ser normal.*
            the breathing go.PRS.3SG return.GER   to be normal
            'His/her breathing is gradually going back to normal'
        b. **La respiración va   siendo de nuevo normal.*
             the breathing go.PRS.3SG be.GER of new   normal
            *'His/her breathing is gradually being normal again'

Unlike the periphrasis, the adverbs do not have any influence on the temporal structure of the eventuality description they modify. Further contrasts between the periphrasis and the adverbs confirm this observation. Let us assume, for the sake of discussion, that perfect morphology picks out the POSTSTATE of the eventuality description it applies to, a time after the eventuality has taken place. (36a) shows that the POSTSTATE of *volver a ser rica* 'to become rich again' is *ser rica* 'to be rich', which holds at the time of reference. However, the POSTSTATE of *ser rica de nuevo* 'to be rich again', if there is one, can only be the negation of the described state, which accounts for the unacceptabiity of (36b). In fact, it is the temporal configuration with the imperfect in (36c) that corresponds to (36a).

36.   a. *Dos años después del crash la región   ya   había vuelto a ser   rica.*
            two years after   of_the crash the region already had return.PP to be.INF rich
           'Two years after the crash, the region had already become rich again'
        b. #*Dos años después del   crash la región   ya   había sido rica de nuevo.*
            two years after   of_the   crash the region already had been rich of new
           #'Two years after the crash, the region had already been rich again'
        c. *Dos años después del   crash la región   ya   era   rica de nuevo.*
            two years after of_the   crash the region already be.IMPF.3SG rich of new
            'Two years after the crash, the region was already rich again'

Moreover, *volver a + V*_{Inf} always relies on the temporal order of events. By contrast, the presupposition of the adverbs can build on other, spatial or conceptual orders, as illustrated in (37a-b) and (38a-b):

37. a. *En la primera esquina hay un semáforo. En la segunda y en la tercera no.*
     En la cuarta, hay   de nuevo un semáforo.
     in the fourth have.PRS.3SG of new   a traffic light
  b. #*En la cuarta vuelve   a haber   un semáforo.*
       in the fourth return.PRS.3SG to have.INF   a traffic light
     'In the first corner there's a traffic light. There's none in the second, nor in the third
     one. In the fourth, there's again a traffic light'

38. a. *La primera palabra del verso tiene cuatro sílabas, la segunda tiene dos,*
     la tercera y   la cuarta tienen   de nuevo cuatro sílabas.
     the third and the fourth havePRS.3SG of new   four syllables
  b. #*La tercera y   la cuarta   vuelven   a tener   cuatro sílabas.*
     'The first word of this verse has four syllables, the second has two, the third ad the
     fourth have again four syllables'

It is important to notice that all the differences between the periphrasis and the adverbs point to the temporal nature of the periphrasis, which is associated to a particular temporal structure and builds exclusively on a temporal order. But such differences only emerge clearly in combination with states.

3.2. *Re*-prefixation

Prefixation with *re-* seems to be much more restricted in Spanish than in the other Romance languages. Actually, it is necessary to distinguish between two prefixes, *re1-* and *re2-* (Martín García 1998, RAE-ASALE 2009). Whereas *re2-* is an intensifier, which may attach to stems of different categories, *re1-* attaches exclusively to verbs and its semantics corresponds to Grossman's (1994) characterization of the Catalan prefix *re-: re1-* verbs denote the new occurrence of an event which restitutes a previously obtaining state. The selectional restrictions of *re1-* have been carefully described by Martín García (1998), and they confirm the importance of the restitutive component in its meaning. According to her, *re1-* selects for verbs with an internal argument which is affected by the event denoted by the verb, and which persists after the event as holder of a new state. This is to say that *re1-* necessarily targets the result state of change of state verbs and can only associate with event-argument templates having a result projection. More often than not, the entailed result state is actually a modified version of the presupposed state. This makes for particularly clear contrasts with *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* in combinations with verbs of creation. Verbs of creation are once-only events, and as such they can hardly combine with *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* when their object position is occupied by a rigid designator. Thus (39a-b) are at best strange:

39. a. ?? *Al   final de su vida, Tolstoi volvió   a escribir Ana Karenina.*
        to_the end of his life,   Tolstoi return.SP.3SG to write.INF Ana Karenina
     ??'At the end of his life, Tolstoi wrote *Ana Karenina* again'

  b. ?? *Paul Dirac volvió   a formular   la Teoría   de la Relatividad*
        Paul Dirac return.SP.3SG to formulate.INF the theory of the relativity
     de un modo más simple.
     of a   way more simple
     ??'Paul Dirac formulated again the Theory of Relativity in a simpler way'

By contrast, (40a-b), with *re1-* verbs, are perfectly acceptable: the objects are not created anew, but the organization or structure they had in the presupposed process of creation is modified in the process denoted by the *re1-* verb:

40. a. *Al   final de su vida, Tolstoi reescribió   Ana Karenina.*
to_the end of his life, Tolstoi rewrite.SP.3SG Ana Karenina
    'At the end of his life, Tolstoi rewrote *Ana Karenina*'
b. *Paul Dirac reformuló   la Teoría de la Relatividad de un modo más simple.*
Paul Dirac reformulate.SP.3SG the theory of the relativity of a way more simple
    'Paul Dirac reformulated the Theory of Relativity in a simpler way'

The restitutive status of *re1-* verbs suggested by the selectional restrictions of *re1*-prefixation is further confirmed by two characteristics concerning argument identity. Firstly, agent-less and dative-less presuppositions are much easier to obtain with *re1*-verbs, because only the result state of the object counts in this case. Thus, (41b) does not suggest that Juan had previously sold a house, nor that Pedro had been previously sold a house by someone. It suffices that the same house had been sold before. By contrast (41a) suggests that Pedro had been sold a house before, and/or that Juan had sold a house before.

41. a. *Juan le   volvió   a vender   una casa a Pedro.*
Juan CL.DAT return.SP.3SG to sell.INF a   house to Pedro
    'Juan sold Pedro a house again'
b. *Juan le   revendió   una casa a Pedro.*
Juan CL.DAT resell.SP.3SG a house to Pedro
    'Juan resold a house to Pedro'

Interestingly, the indefinite *una casa* 'a house' need not associate to the same discourse referent in the described and in the presupposed eventuality in (41a), but it must have the same discourse referent in (41b). This leads us to the second characteristic of *re1-* verbs: their internal, affected argument has to be the same in the described and in the presupposed eventuality description. The ambiguities arising with indefinites, quantified NPs and functional definites in the case of both *volver a + V$_{Inf}$* and adverbs of repetition cannot be replicated for *re1-* verbs, as shown by (42a-c):

42. a. *A Jorge le   reeditaron   una novela.*
to Jorge CL.DAT republish. SP.3PL a   novel
    'One of Jorge's novels was republished'
b. *Revendieron   todos los libros que tenían.*
resell.SP.3PL   all   the books that have. IMPF.3PL
    'They resold all the books they owned'
c. *Reeligieron   al   presidente de la comisión.*
reelect.SP.3PL to_the Chairman of the Committee
    'The Chairman of the Committee got reelected'

In (42a-c), the novel, the books, and the chairman, respectively, have to refer to the same individuals in the entailment and in the presupposition. Now, the lack of readings showing referential variation for the internal argument position is a well known characteristic of

restitutive readings in general (cf. von Stechow 2001). The most likely explanation for this phenomenon is that the presupposition trigger attaches in this case to the head of the lowest projection in template (25) above, leaving the argument of this projection, the Resultee, necessarily outside its scope.

4. Concluding remarks

In this paper, we have described the semantics of three types of expressions of repetition that constitute presupposition triggers in Spanish, a verbal periphrasis, adverbs of repetition, and prefixation. We have shown that the main difficulty in their semantic analysis is that of formulating the minimal presupposition they trigger, and we have assumed that, in the case of the periphrasis, Ramchand's first-phase syntax templates are better predictors of this minimal presupposition than analyses relying on less fine-grained structures for the VP (such as those merely distinguishing adjuncts from arguments and internal from external arguments). As for the differences between the three types of expression, the periphrasis shows a clearly temporal nature, since it both modifies temporal structure and relies exclusively on temporal orders. Adverbs of repetition do not modify temporal structure and may rely on other types of order. *Re1*-prefixation in Spanish is confined to expressing the restitution (with or without modification) of a previously holding state.

It is interesting to note that the three types of expression often co-occur in the same sentence, and that only a single presupposition is computed out of this co-occurrence, as in (43a-c):

43.   a. *En 1892, el   antiguo presidente Cleveland volvió   a ser   reelegido.*
           in 1892 the former president   Cleveland return.SP.3SG to be.INF reelect.PP
        'In 1892, former president Cleveland was reelected again'
        b. *No tengo   más fuerzas para recomenzar de nuevo.*
           not have.PRS.1SG more forces for   restart.INF of new
        'I don't have the energy to restart again'
        c. *Le   faltan   seis meses para volver   a estar   de nuevo en la calle.*
           CL.DAT lack.PRS.3PL six months for return.INF to be.INF of new in the street
        'S/he needs six more months in order to be back in the street again'

Even though sentences (43a-c) contain two presupposition triggers each, they only presuppose one previous occurrence of the described eventuality. This phenomenon, by which identical or similar semantic material is interpreted only once in the sentence is highly reminiscent of semantic concord phenomena in the expression of negation (negative concord) or in the expression of modality (modal concord). The conditions and motivation for this phenomenon are a topic for further research.

The exact influence of discourse on the presuppositions triggered by expressions of repetition is also a topic for further research. We have concentrated on the lexical and syntactic factors that partially determine presuppositional content. However, it has been argued that the presuppositions of expressions of this type (most notably *again*) are anaphoric in a non-trivial sense: they resist accommodation and look for support in the previous context (Beck 2006). In any case, determining the minimal presuppositions of such expressions remains crucial in order to understand why certain contexts clearly do not offer the contextual support which is necessary for their felicitous use.

References

Bale, Alan. 2006. Quantifiers, *again* and the complexity of verb phrases. In Georgala, E. & Stowell, J. (eds.) *Proceedings of SALT 15,* 1-18. <http://dx.doi.org/10.3765/salt>

Beaver, David. 1997. Presupposition. In van Benthem, J. & J. ter Meulen, A. (eds.) *The Handbook of Logic and Language*, 939-1008. Amsterdam: Elsevier.

Beck, Sigrid. 2006. Focus on AGAIN. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 29. 277-314.

Beck, Sigrid & Snyder, William 2001. The resultative parameter and restitutive *again*. In Féry, C. & Sternefeld, W. (eds.). 2001, 48-69.

Dowty, D. 1979. *Word meaning and Montague grammar.* Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Fabricius-Hansen, Catherine. 2001. Wi(e)der and Again(st). In Féry, C. & Sternefeld, W. (eds.). 2001, 101-130.

Féry, Caroline & Sternefeld, Wolfgeng (eds.) 2001. *Audiatur Vox Sapientiae. A festschrift for Arnim von Stechow*, Berlin: Akademie Verlag.

Grossmann, Maria. 1994. *Opposizioni direzionali e prefissazione. Analisi morfologica e semantica dei verbi egressivi prefissati con des- e es- in catalano*. Padova: Unipress.

Kamp, Hans. 2001. The importance of presupposition. In Rohrer, Christian (ed.) *Linguistic form and its computation,* 207-254. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

Kamp, Hans & Rossdeutscher, Antje. 1994. DRS construction and lexically driven inference. *Theoretical Linguistics* 20. 165-236.

Laca, Brenda. 2004. Romance 'aspectual' periphrases: eventuality modification versus 'syntactic' aspect. In Lecarme, Jacqueline & Guéron, Jacqueline (eds). *The Syntax of Time*, 425-440. Cambridge MA: MIT Press.

Martín García, Josefa . 1998. *La morfología léxico-conceptual: las palabras derivadas con RE-.* Madrid: Ediciones de la Universidad Autónoma.

RAE-ASALE. 2009. *Nueva gramática de la lengua española*. Madrid: Espasa Calpe.

Ramchand, Gillian. 2008. *Verb meaning and the lexicon*: A *First Phase Syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

von Stechow, Arnim. 2001 How are results represented and modified ? Remarks on Jäger & Blutner's anti-decomposition. Ms. University of Tubingen.

von Stechow, Arnim. 2007. Syntactic and lexical causativization : BECOME and CAUSE again. Talk given at ConSOLE XV, Brussels 2007.