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Bare plurals (BPs) have been the subject of extensive research since Carlson's 1977 seminal work on English BPs. Studies have claimed BPs in Spanish are licit as long as they are modified, coordinated, and/or focalized (Suñer 1982, Torrego 1984 a.o.). While this seems to be the consensus for BP subjects, many issues involving BP objects (BPOs) in Spanish remain open. First, the extent to which modification, coordination, and focalization affect the distribution of BPOs has not been settled. Second, the occurrence of differential object marking (DOM), which some have alleged to be incompatible with unmodified BPOs (Brugè & Brugger 1996), complicates the empirical picture. Third, the interpretation of BPOs is still under debate. Although research has shown BPs in Spanish, and Romance more generally, lack the kind interpretation that English BPs allow (Dobrovie-Sorin (DS) & Laca 2003 a.o.), satisfactory analyses need to grapple with a distributional landscape that is not yet fully understood. Against this backdrop, I focus here on truly bare BPOs in Spanish (i.e. devoid of DOM and any kind of modification) to contribute to the third point in two ways: On the one hand, I provide novel corpus data that refines the distribution of Spanish BPOs. On the other, I propose a semantic analysis for Spanish BPOs that accounts for the facts and aims to shed light on the more general question of whether BPs denote kinds or properties and whether that denotation is uniform or not.

The novel data presented, all obtained from the *Corpus del Español* (CDE), depict unmodified and uncoordinated BPOs co-occurring with a varied array of verbal predicates, including *matar* 'kill', *convocar* 'invite', *contratar* 'hire', *entrevistar* 'interview', *recibir* 'receive' (1), and *secuestrar* 'kidnap'. These data constitute evidence that the distribution of Spanish BPOs is much wider than previously reported. Interestingly, this generalization holds across geographic varieties of Spanish, as the CDE data hail from peninsular, central, and south-American varieties.

(1) Esta mujer <u>recibía</u> **hombres** en su vivienda y este asesino era una de esas personas.
    'This woman <u>received</u> **men** in her residence and this murderer was one of those people.'

Evidence obtained suggests the empirical landscape of Spanish BPOs is also more nuanced: Whether a BPO is interpreted existentially or, instead, receives an 'existential within generic' reading hinges on the aspectual properties of the main verbal predicate. I claim that whereas a pure existential interpretation of the BPO arises from a perfective predicate (2)-(3), an 'existential within generic' reading is facilitated by an imperfective predicate (4).

(2) A finales de 2007, la Sra Peña <u>contrató</u> **abogados** para que intentaran salvar su casa del inminente remate… (Colombia – past perf.)
    'At the end of 2007, Mrs. Peña <u>hired</u> **lawyers** so that they try to save her house from the imminent auction…'

(3) En el tiempo de Tapia Rivera esta separación <u>afectó</u> **individuos** en varias maneras. (Puerto Rico – past perf.)
    'In Tapia Rivera's time, this separation <u>affected</u> **individuals** in various ways.'

(4) Muchos [kulaks] eran pequeños agricultores y campesinos soviéticos que conservaron pequeñas parcelas y <u>contrataban</u> **trabajadores**. (Cuba – past imperf.)
    'Many kulaks were small Soviet farmers and peasants who kept small parcels and <u>hired</u> **workers**.'

I argue that Spanish BPs denote properties uniformly (van Geenhoven 2000, McNally 2004). Further, following DS & Laca 2003, I posit that the verbal predicate plays a key role in enabling the occurrence of a BPO and that the relevant distinction among verbal predicates is between entity- and property-denoting: While entity-denoting predicates require an individual variable over which to λ-abstract, property-denoting predicates are able to λ-abstract over predicate variables by introducing an existential quantifier. This explains why property predicates can compose with BPOs, which denote properties, but entity predicates cannot.

I maintain that the contrast between entity- and property-denoting predicates subsumes a division among psych predicates in Spanish. This claim builds off of Glasbey 2006, who argues that in English psych verbs with experiencer subjects ("psych-ES" verbs) do not allow BPOs with existential readings, while non-psych-ES stative predicates and all events, including psychological verbs with experiencer objects ("psych-EO" verbs) do. In my analysis, psych-ES predicates are entity-denoting and hence contrast with psych-EO predicates, which are property-denoting. If so, we expect that psych-ES verbs such as *amar* 'love', *odiar* 'hate', *detestar* 'despise', *adorar* 'adore', *respetar* 'respect' be incompatible with BPOs, and psych-EO verbs such as *afectar* 'affect' and *atraer* 'attract' be possible with BPOs. This prediction seems to be borne out based on the CDE data, in which instances of a BP as object of a psych-ES predicate are extremely scarce and contrast with the much more frequent co-occurrence of a BPO with a psych-EO predicate (e.g. 3).

I trace the source of the two possible interpretations for Spanish BPOs to property-denoting predicates, which make the existential or the 'existential within generic' reading available: The existential reading for BPOs stems from the existential quantification introduced by property predicates, which allows them to compose with a BPO inside their nuclear scope (Fig. 1). The 'existential within generic' reading arises similarly, but the presence of a generic operator *Gen* contributes the generic flavor (Fig. 2). According to my analysis, it is the aspect and tense of the verbal predicate that trigger the presence of *Gen*. A property-denoting imperfective predicate suggests the involvement of the *Gen* operator. Contrastingly, a perfective predicate does not.
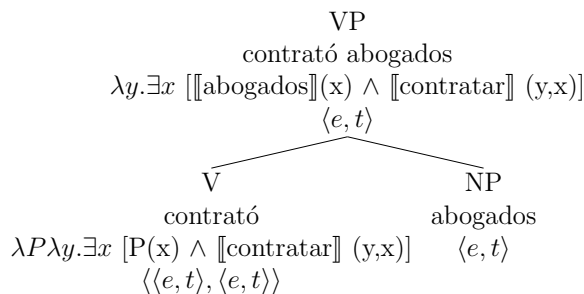
VP
contrató abogados
$\lambda y.\exists x\ [[[abogados]](x) \land [[contratar]]\ (y,x)]$
$\langle e,t \rangle$

V
contrató
$\lambda P \lambda y.\exists x\ [P(x) \land [[contratar]]\ (y,x)]$
$\langle \langle e,t \rangle, \langle e,t \rangle \rangle$

NP
abogados
$\langle e,t \rangle$

Figure 1: Existential reading of BP in (2)

TP

Gen

...
VP
contrataba trabajadores
$\lambda y.\exists x\ [[[trabajadores]](x) \land [[contratar]]\ (y,x)]$
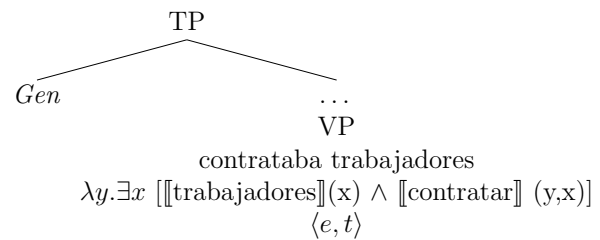$\langle e,t \rangle$

Figure 2: 'Existential within generic' reading of BP in (4)

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