

Spanish spatial deictic adverbs: Interpretation and discourse functioning with depersonalizing constructions

Els adverbis dèctics espacials de l'espanyol: interpretació i funcionament discursiu amb construccions despersonalitzadores

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Abstract: In this paper, I analyze the ways in which spatial deictic adverbs function in Spanish. More concretely, through an analysis of spatial deictic adverbs used with depersonalizing constructions, I show how, in the absence of person deictic forms, the interpretation of spatial deictic adverbs depends not only on the physical, but more crucially on contextual cues in the discursive context. Moreover, I show that spatial adverbs used with depersonalizing constructions fulfill different functions in discourse construction than when they are used in combination with person deixis or with a concrete 3rd person reference. Indeed, in the absence of person deixis, spatial deictic adverbs take up crucial functions for the cohesion of the linguistic production.

Keywords: adverb; depersonalization; impersonal; Spanish.

Resum: En el present article, analitzem les diferents funcions dels adverbis dèctics espacials de l'espanyol. Més concretament, l'anàlisi dels adverbis dèctics espacials en construccions despersonalitzadores mostra que, si es produeix una absència de formes dèctiques personals, la interpretació dels adverbis dèctics espacials no només depèn dels factors físics, sinó també dels factors contextuals del discurs. En aquest sentit, s'observa que els adverbis dèctics espacials en construccions despersonalitzadores compleixen funcions diferents que si s'utilitzen junt amb dèctics de persona o amb referències concretes de tercera persona. De fet, en absència de la dixi personal, els adverbis dèctics espacials compleixen funcions cohesives essencials per a la producció lingüística.

Paraules clau: adverbi; despersonalització; impersonal; espanyol.

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1. Introduction

The use of spatial deictics with depersonalizing constructions is the starting point for an analysis that focuses both on the way we interpret spatial deictics, and on the specific position they hold in the construction of discourse.

In this study, I analyze more concretely how spatial deictics are interpreted in the absence of person deixis, viz. when they are the sole deictic form. I argue that, in addition to the relation with and distance to the speaker, also contextual cues play a role, as well as the interaction with other spatial deictic adverbs. In the absence of person deixis, spatial deictic adverbs moreover come to fulfill a crucial role in the creation of discourse cohesion.

I first present the Spanish spatial deictic adverb paradigm (1.1). I then define the depersonalizing constructions, as well as explain why they create a particularly interesting environment for the analysis of spatial deictic adverbs (1.2). Finally, I present the data on which this study is based (1.3).

1.1. *The spatial deictic paradigm*

Spanish has two important series of spatial deictic adverbs expressing location, namely a ternary series on *-í* and a binary series on *-á*¹. The variety of spatial deictic forms in Spanish is subject to various factors. On the one hand, the ternary opposition *aquí* ('here'), *ahí* ('there'), *allí* ('over there') is considered locative, and is traditionally associated to the ternary opposition of demonstrative pronouns (*est** 'this', *es** 'that', *aquel** 'that over there') (Eguren, 1999: 958). From a typological perspective, and within the classical opposition between person-oriented and (absolute) distance-oriented systems (Fillmore, 1982: 49-50; Anderson and Keenan, 1985: 285-286; Levinson, 2003: 26-28; Levinson, 2004: 116-117), the Spanish ternary opposition has been described as distance-oriented (Diessel, 1999: 39) but is regularly also considered to be related to the distinction between proximity to the speaker, proximity

* I wish to thank Daniel Michaud Maturana for comments on an earlier version of this paper. All remaining errors are, of course, solely my responsibility.

¹ A series of older forms on *-ende*, such as *aquende*, *allende*, is rarely used these days and totally absent from the corpus discussed in this study.

to the hearer and negative proximity (Eguren, 1999: 942; NGLE, 2009: 1313). Moreover, the importance of the subjective dimension of positioning for the choice of a demonstrative has been amply demonstrated (see among others Delbecque 2013, Maldonado 2013). It is therefore not surprising that accounts combining distance and relation to the interaction situation and participants have been proposed (e.g. Hottenroth 1982: 134), among others in terms of position in a conversational dyad (Jungbluth, 2002: 7), and as a double-anchor type system (Da Milano, 2004: 84).

On the other hand, the binary opposition between *acá* ‘here’ and *allá* ‘there’ represents a proximal-distal distinction, namely in terms of speaker-proximity versus non-speaker-proximity². In contrast with the series on *-í*, the series on *-á* is often associated with the expression of movement or vague location, possibly in larger spaces, though this distinction is by no means valid throughout all contemporary varieties of Spanish (see Maldonado, 2013). Gómez Sánchez and Jungbluth (2015: 248) describe this series as “[foregrounding] the extension of spaces”, which explains its combining with motion verbs. In addition to this semantic difference, regional variation plays a role as well, both with respect to the frequency of the different adverbs and with respect to their semantics (see among other Sedano, 2000, Di Tullio, 2013, Gómez Sánchez and Jungbluth, 2015: 248). For instance, *acá* is more easily used as a locative in certain Latin-American varieties of Spanish. Even idiolectal variation may be observed (Eguren, 1999: 958; NGLE, 2009: 314). The variation between the five forms from the two series of spatial deictic adverbs is then a complex multifactorial phenomenon, yet the focus of this paper is not on this variation as such, but on how the interpretation of these spatial deictic adverbs is established.

Along with Hanks (1992: 49), I consider (spatial) deixis to be shaped in a dynamic fashion. As Rubba (1996: 228) points out, “the meaning of deictics are highly schematic. That is, they are only partially specified, and therefore may apply across a large number of actual discourse situations”. An analysis of the concrete interpretation of these schematic meanings is the object of section 2. Diessel, mentioning Levinson

² While it was originally a ternary opposition *acá*, *allá*, *acullá*, the latter form is in strong decline (it did not appear in our corpus) and the series is usually considered to be binary from a synchronic perspective (NGLE, 2009: 1313-1314).

(2004), claims that spatial deictics moreover not only indicate location but also “establish (or manipulate) the interlocutors’ shared focus of attention” (Diessel 2006: 466). This is relevant for the construction and development of the discourse, as will be shown in section 3.

1.2. Depersonalization in Spanish

Before looking into the specific functioning of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing strategies, I define depersonalization, describe the constructions involved and show the particular interest of studying spatial deictic adverbs used with depersonalizing strategies.

I adopt an onomasiological approach to depersonalization, that is, I include constructions where the agent or experiencer is defocused (either entirely absent, either expressed in a rather vague way). Concretely, this involves constructions with an expressed human subject which remains vague (such as *uno* ‘one’, generic 2nd person singular (1), non-specific 3rd person plural (2)), as well as constructions where no human subject is expressed at all (infinitives (3), gerunds, the (medio) passive *se*-construction (4) and existential *haber* and presentatives).

- (1) *Es que así haces el negocio, te... te compras*
 Is that so **make-2SG** the trade **you-DAT you-DAT buy-2SG**
allí un montón y te vuelves aquí y las vendes
 there a lot and **REFL turn-2SG** here and them **sell-2SG**
por mil pesetas más caras
 for thousand pesetas more expensive
 ‘That’s the way **you do trade, you... you buy** a lot over there and **you come back** here and **you sell** them for thousand pesetas more.’
- (2) *-Es una planta y se...*
 Is a plant and **REFL**
-¿Y la plantaban allí en los huertos?
 And it **planted-3PL** there in the orchards
 ‘It’s a plant and ... / And **they planted** it there in the orchards?’
- (3) *De oveja allí no se hacía, no. Pero de cabra sí*
 Of sheep there not **REFL did**, no. But of goat yes
hacíamos queso
 made-1PL cheese
 ‘Of sheep **it wasn’t made** over there, no. But we did make goat cheese.’

- (4) **Buscar** *por* *todos* *los sitios...*
Search-INF by all the places...
 ‘**Search** everywhere.’

I prefer the term ‘depersonalization’ to ‘impersonal’ since many of the constructions involved actually do imply the involvement of a person as agent or experiencer or even a subject that is necessarily human (e.g. indefinite pronoun *uno* ‘one’) (see De Cock, ms., for a more elaborate terminological discussion).

This paper focuses on the use of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions for two main reasons. On the one hand, the use of person deixis co-determines the choice for a specific spatial deictic adverb (Hottenroth, 1982: 144). By focusing on depersonalizing constructions which lack a person deictic form, we can analyze the way in which spatial deictic adverbs function autonomously. On the other hand, whereas the specific role of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions has received little attention in research on deixis, research on depersonalizing constructions, by contrast, has pointed at the importance of space descriptions (whether deictic or not) for the interpretation and functioning of some depersonalizing constructions.

In the first place, we know that adjuncts (space description) play a role in creating a generic reading³ in depersonalizing constructions (Hernanz, 1990; Casielles, 1994; de Miguel Aparicio, 1992, from a generativist point of view; Rasson, 2016, 2017, for a corpus-based analysis). However, the importance of spatial deictic adverbs in this respect also depends on the type of depersonalizing construction. Thus, the presence of a spatial deictic adverb is one of the factors that significantly correlates with the use of Spanish depersonalizing *se*, as opposed to *uno* ‘one’ (see Rasson, 2017, for a multivariate analysis of *uno*; De Cock, ms., for a corpus-based multivariate analysis of *se* vs. *uno*).

In the second place, there is ample discussion among linguists as to whether a complement of space with existential *haber* (*hay* ‘there is’) is obligatory or optional (see Meulleman and Roegiest, 2012, for an overview and discussion, and Gast and Haas, 2011, for a comparative study of formulaic presentationals in Germanic and Romance). While this research then highlights the importance of space description for

³ In addition to other factors, such as verb aspect.

the functioning and interpretation of depersonalizing constructions, it mainly focusses on the syntactic features of one specific type of construction and it does not distinguish between deictic and non-deictic space descriptions. As shown in this short overview, the importance of space description for depersonalizing constructions has been attested. Yet, the analysis of how spatial deictic adverbs function with respect to depersonalizing constructions remains mainly undeveloped and is the object of this study.

1.3. *The data*

The data for this research are all taken from the informal conversation section of the *CORLEC (Corpus del Español Centro-peninsular)*. Table 1 shows the frequency of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions as compared to the total amount of occurrences of spatial deictic adverbs. The use and frequency of deictics is of course highly genre-dependent (see Gelabert 2006 on spatio-temporal deixis and De Cock 2014 on person deixis). By consequence, the results of this study only hold for informal conversation and caution should be exercised when transposing them to other genres.

	Total amount of spatial deictic adverbs	Amount of spatial deictic adverbs used with depersonalizing constructions
<i>Aquí</i>	498	58 (11.64%)
<i>Ahí</i>	367	29 (7.9%)
<i>Allí</i>	337	51 (15.1%)
<i>Allá</i>	45	6 (13.3%)
<i>Acá</i>	18	4 (22.2%)

Table 1. Frequency of spatial deictic adverbs

The comparatively low frequency of *acá* and *allá* in this corpus may be related both to their semantics and to their geographic variation. Indeed, it is to be expected that the forms on -á, which are particularly frequently used in Latin-America, have a lower frequency in this Peninsular Spanish Corpus. The fact that geographic delimitation is certainly

not the only factor to explain the variation between the series on *-í* and *-á*, however, is confirmed by the presence of all forms concerned in Peninsular Spanish production. Moreover, forms on *-í* and *-á* may be used within one intervention, as in example (5). In this concrete case, *allá* is used to signal direction (in combination with the preposition *para*) and *allí* location.

- (5) *-Mira, allí hay sitio.*
 Look **there** there-is place
-Allí hay sitio. Vaya, vaya para allá.
There there-is place. Go go over **there**.
 ‘Look, **there** is a place. / **There** is place over there. Go, go over **there**.’

The corpus data confirm, then, that the series on *-í* is the preferred one in Peninsular Spanish, yet also show that both series occur in the same geographical circumscription and even within the same utterance. Moreover, the more specific semantics of the series on *-á* in Peninsular Spanish (tendency to express direction and vague location) may contribute to their low frequency.

2. How to interpret spatial deictic adverbs?

2.1. General principles for the interpretation of (spatial) deixis

As pointed out in section 1.1, deictics have a schematic meaning. The choice for a specific spatial deictic adverb is then not only determined by physical distance as such but also by the speaker’s conceptualization of the distance and his/her taking into account recipient design (Schegloff, 1972; Enfield et al., 2007: 10). Indeed, the speaker aims to establish shared recognitionals, which are valid for both speaker and hearer, since deictics are ultimately a joint construction in interaction (Hanks, 2005). However, as Heritage (2007: 261) points out: “Absolute security of reference is incompatible with progressivity.” Indeed, a very precise space description is often not available and/or necessary for the conversational progression. The balance between progressivity and felicitousness of the recognitional seems to be achieved rather adequately. Our data contain only one example (6) where the use of a spatial deictic adverb as a shared recognitional seems somehow problematic. The lack of recognizability becomes clear through the use of a follow-up ques-

tion ¿*En dónde?* ('Where?') and the subsequent non-deictic description *En Tres Cantos* ('In Tres Cantos'), which resolves the misunderstanding. In all other cases, the spatial deictic adverb seems to suffice as shared recognitional.

- (6) <H1> *Allí* no hay *iranís*.
 <H1> **There** no there-are *iranís*.
 <H2> ¿*En dónde?*
 In where?
 <H1> *En Tres Cantos*.
 In Tres Cantos (Madrid suburb).
 ' <H1> **Over there**, there are no Iranis. <H2> Where? <H1> In Tres Cantos.'

Even a vague space description, however, may be established in varied ways and often relies partially on contextual cues which help to establish the reference of the spatial deictic adverb. Indeed, Sedano (2000: 930) distinguishes for Spanish between deictic, anaphoric and anadeictic (a combination of anaphoric and deictic) functioning in her analysis based on a questionnaire.

2.2. *Person deixis vs. depersonalizing constructions*

As evidenced in the previous section, the relation to the speaker and hearer may play an important part in the interpretation of deixis in various languages. It is then not surprising that the presence of person deictic forms plays a role for the interpretation of spatial deictic adverbs. In the presence of an explicit speaker reference (7), the spatial deictic adverb is interpreted also in connection to the person deixis. Indeed, we interpret *aquí* as the position of the inclusive 1st person plural (speaker and hearer). When co-appearing with a hearer reference, as in (8), the *aquí* 'here' reference is once again interpreted as related to the shared interaction situation of the speaker and hearer, and the shared knowledge concerning the difficulty of finding a flat in a certain city. Both examples show that the co-appearance with a hearer-reference (be it expressed by means of a second person or by means of an inclusive first person) causes the deictic to be interpreted as related to the situation of both participants (and not only the speaker's deictic center).

- (7) *Podemos hablar aquí todos.*
 can-1PL speak **here** all.
 ‘We can all speak **here**.’
- (8) *Aquí normalmente... por agencia también*
Here normally... by agency also
podéis alquilar un piso, pero por agencia
 can-2PL rent a flat but by agency
os sale más caro.
 you-PL-DAT turns-out more expensive
 ‘**Here** normally you can also rent a flat through an agency, but through an agency will cost you more.’

If construed with person deictic forms, these play a crucial role then in the interpretation of the spatial deictic adverb. We will now turn to the use of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions.

2.3. Spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions

I now discuss which contextual elements contribute to the interpretation of spatial deictic adverbs with impersonal constructions in my corpus. These may of course also appear when person deixis is present, but in the absence of other deictic forms, they become the first means to establish the reference.

In the first place, spatial deictics may rely on a pointing gesture. This use is closest to the etymological origin of ‘deixis’, which is derived from the verb *deiknūnai* ‘to point’. Yet, not all deictic forms are accompanied by a pointing gesture. Our data unfortunately do not contain visual material, making a detailed analysis of pointing impossible. However, the context may allow for deducing the use of a pointing gesture or, in any case, bodily orientation. In this perspective, *aquí* ‘here’ seems to be mostly used in a strictly deictic sense or, at least, without extra contextual cues in the linguistic production, as illustrated below for other spatial deictic adverbs. This is not surprising since the speaker refers to a space typically related to him-/herself, in a situation where (part of) the origo and the speech situation coincide. The egocentricity of language (see Kecskes-Mey, 2008) urges us to interpret utterances as speaker-referring ‘by default’ and to anchor them to the speaker him-/herself. All other spatial deictic adverbs, however, do not allow easily for a purely deictic reading, yet rely on contextual cues.

In the second place, spatial deictic adverbs may be immediately followed by a more specific space description, such as directional *arriba* ‘up’ (9) or non-deictic information (10) *en el pueblo* ‘in the village’. Auer et al. (2013: 6) point out that “non-deictic spatial expressions often occur in combination with deictic elements in interaction and that deictic and non-deictic expressions are often mutually paraphrased.” Yet, the relationship between both space descriptions (whether both deictic or deictic and non-deictic) is complex. On the one hand, the additional description allows for narrowing down the interpretation of the spatial deictic adverb. On the other hand, the use of a spatial deictic adverb also represents an added value in that it creates a reference point in the interaction, which situates the locations not only in an absolute way but also with respect to the speaker and hearer, and, as such, to the interaction situation.

- (9) *-De las laderas de... de **allá arriba**, ¿no tienen vino?*
 Of the slopes of... of **there up** not have-3PL wine
-De ahí de los huertos. Sí hombre.
 Of there of the orchards. Yes man.
 ‘Of the slopes of... of **up there**, haven’t they got wine? / Of there of the orchards. Yes, man.’
- (10) ***Allí en el pueblo pasa igual.***
There in the village happens same
 ‘**There in the village** the same thing happens.’

Thirdly, the reference can be established anaphorically or cataphorically, relying on text cohesion and progression. The link between special distance and text-deictic processes has also been shown for Catalan and English (Ribera, 2007; Cuenca, 2010). In view of this property, Lyons (1977: 676) prefers to describe spatial deictic adverbs as ‘pro-locatives’, though he also points out that they are simultaneously deictic (since the selection of the adverb is co-determined by the position of the speaker) and anaphoric. Interestingly, such anaphoric or cataphoric uses hardly occur with *aquí*, which, as pointed out before, is the only form that favours a strictly deictic functioning. Exceptions exist, of course, such as the second occurrence of *aquí* in (11), which has to be interpreted as referring to previously mentioned *Segovia*.

- (11) *Que yo se lo dije a mi padre*
 That I him-DAT it said to my father
porque aquí en Segovia () no los venden.
 because here in Segovia (...) not them sell-3PL
Es que aquí no los venden.
 Is that **here** not them sell-3PL
 ‘That I told my dad because here in Segovia (...) they don’t sell them.
 It’s that they don’t sell them **here**.’

For other spatial deictic adverbs, the adverb acquires its interpretation then not only from the (physical) position with respect to the speaker or hearer, but mainly from anaphorically or cataphorically available contextual information, as in (12), where *allí* is interpreted as *en Italia*. The choice for one spatial deictic adverb over another may be linked rather to the subjective positioning of a place with respect to the conversation dyad and to other deictically expressed places (cf. supra).

- (12) *En Italia hice el doctora<(d)>o allí en jurisprudencia.*
 In Italy did-1SG the PhD **there** in jurisprudence.
Allí sí lo pasé bien.
There yes it spent-1SG well
 ‘In Italy I did a PhD **there** in jurisprudence. **There** I did have a good time.’

The anaphoric or cataphoric uses represent more than half of the uses with all other spatial deictic adverbs. These uses are regularly cases of what Sedano (2000) calls anadeictic, as in (11), where the deictic functioning of *aquí* is combined with the anaphora with *Segovia*.

The link between the spatial deictic adverb and the discursive context is then very different according to the specific adverb. Interestingly, Spanish neuter demonstratives also specialize in very different ways for the expression of links with the discursive context (cf. De Cock, 2013).

In addition to anaphorically and cataphorically established references, the data also contain various clusters of spatial deictic adverbs occurring in each other’s vicinity, that is, in the same utterance, or in an immediately preceding or following utterance. Such clusters are particularly challenging, since the context in which we interpret spatial deixis is in those cases mainly (or sometimes exclusively) made up of other spatial deictic adverbs. Clusters spreading over two turns can be

analyzed in terms of dialogic syntax (Du Bois, 2014). Indeed, by repeating the spatial deictic adverb, the next speaker establishes a shared recognitional and echoes the preceding speaker's choice, as in (13), where the interlocutor echoes not only the spatial deictic adverb but the utterance as a whole.

- (13) - *Mira,* **allí** *hay sitio.*
 Look-IMP-SG, **there** there-is place.
 - *Allí* *hay sitio.*
There there-is place
 'Look, there's a place **over there**. / **Over there** is a place.'

Clusters within an utterance typically consist of different spatial deictic adverbs contrasting with each other. The contrast may be clarified in context, e.g. Spain vs. Morocco (14). Morocco (*Marruecos*) is referred to by means of the noun and by means of the spatial deictic adverb *allí* 'there'. Because *allí* is linked to a country (Morocco), we interpret *aquí* as referring to another country, namely the country in which the interaction is taking place (Spain).

- (14) *Compras un coche allí que te*
 buy-2SG a car **there** that you-DAT
vale la mitad que aquí y te vas (...) a
 cost the half than **here** and you-REFL go-2SG to
Marruecos (...) todos los fines de se[mana]
Morocco (...) all the ends of week
 'You buy a car **there** that costs half of **here** and you go to **Morocco** every weekend.'

Frequently, various spatial deictics are combined in order to represent different spaces. They are then interpreted in relation to other spatial deictics, conceptualizing different degrees of distance (15), as is the case for the three forms *aquí*, *allí*, *allá* which establish three different spaces. While *allí* is interpreted as an anaphora for *En Estados Unidos* and *aquí* as the interaction context (viz. Spain), no concrete reference can be established for *allá*, merely that it refers to yet another place.

- (15) *Mira yo, mi experiencia en Estados Unidos ha sido...* vamos
 look I my experience in States United has been... let's go

no me permite discriminar, es decir, que allí hay
 not me-DAT allows discriminate, is say, that **there** there-is
más que aquí ni aquí menos que allá, ¿no?
 more than **here** nor here less than **there**, not?
 ‘Look, I, my experience in the United States has been... Let’s say, it
 doesn’t allow me to distinguish, say, that **there**, there is more than **over**
here, nor that there is less over here than **over there**, right?’

In conclusion, the interpretation of spatial deictic adverbs is not related to deixis only. Contextual cues play a very important role as well, as does the interaction between different spatial deictic adverbs. The importance of each of these factors is highly dependent on the adverb itself. Whereas *aquí* seems to function without further cues in the linguistic context, probably relying on the classical deictic mechanism of pointing or bodily orientation, the interpretation of other adverbs relies heavily on anaphorically and cataphorically available information. In the absence of person deictic forms, then, many uses of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions are not strictly deictic, yet rely on contextual cues.

3. Spatial deixis in the construction of discourse

As I have shown in the preceding section, the interpretation of spatial deictic adverbs often relies on elements in the preceding or following discourse. In this section, I focus on the other side of the medal, namely the importance of spatial deictic adverbs for the development of the interaction as a whole, through its establishing a focus of joint attention (Diessel, 2006: 466). I therefore analyze its position in the utterance and the implications for the informational status of the different elements of the utterance, both in contrast with utterances with a person reference (whether deictically expressed or not), and in contrast with different depersonalizing structures.

Indeed, whereas, in the presence of a person reference form, the spatial deictic adverb usually follows the VP (at least in the informal conversation corpus used for this study), the utterance-initial position of the spatial deictic adverb is more frequent with depersonalizing structures (the proportion varies depending on the concrete spatial deictic adverb but ranges from 1/3 to 1/2). Interestingly, Eguren (1999: 963) claims that, in general, the most natural position of the spatial deictic adverb

is utterance-initial. In the corpus used for this study, however, the utterance-initial position of the spatial deictic adverb is the preferred one only when used with depersonalizing constructions, not when used with a concrete person reference.

In addition to these quantitative differences, these preposed spatial deictic adverbs also fulfill different functions with respect to the context, echoing Hanks' (1992) call for a more fine-grained description of the functional components of deixis. The adverbs under discussion mainly fulfill presentative, directive and referential functions. Moreover, the presentative one is clearly associated to utterance-initial position, whereas the other functions are much more mobile.

Occurrences of preposed *aquí* are mainly interpreted as ostensive deixis with a referential function, related to a pointing gesture or at least bodily orientation. That is, they establish the link between the physical interaction situation and the utterance, and place it in a prominent position, as in (16).

- (16) *Papá ven. Que aquí hay mucha diversión.*
 Daddy come-IMP-SG That **here** there-is lot diversion
 'Daddy, come. Because there's a lot of diversion **here**.'

With the other spatial deictics adverbs, ostensive deixis is present as well, but, as we have seen, a higher amount of readings is defined anaphorically in the preceding utterances (section 2). Thus, the preposed spatial deictic adverb not only creates a setting for the following VP (and has often an even larger scope)⁴ but is also a locus of discursive cohesion. This is especially the case for the presentative uses, where the following information is, by definition, new. The spatial deictic adverb, relying on the contextual cues presented in section 2 or on its deictic functioning (in case of *aquí* 'here'), then represents given information. As such, it establishes the link with the preceding discourse and functions in a way similar to topic continuity, which is traditionally associated with NPs or NP-like forms (Givón, 1983). In utterances with a

⁴ Bestgen (2009) discusses from a psycholinguistic point of view the impact of the sentence-initial position of space adverbials on the comprehension of written texts, highlighting the wider scope and salience of sentence-initial adverbials, as well as their capacity to segment the text in as far as they create a new setting.

person deictic form or another type of specific person reference, it is typically the person that establishes topic continuity.

The postposition of the spatial deictic adverb with depersonalizing constructions, by contrast, is mainly linked to specific syntactic situations, such as the expression of direction (in combination with a preposition), as in (17), or its appearance in a subordinated construction.

- (17) *Cuando estábamos en Zarauz nosotros teníamos el*
 When were-1PL in Zarauz we HAD-1PL the...
el batallón en los altos de Orio y había
 the battalion in the heights of Orio and there-were
otros batallones por allí.
 other batallions over **there**.
 ‘When we were in Zarauz, we had the battalion on the heights of Orio
 and there were other batallions over there.’

As pointed out at the start of this section, with person reference, spatial deictic adverbs are only rarely found in preverbal position. A closer look at the rare cases where the adverb does precede the VP, shows that these utterances are of a specific nature. The series *aquí, ahí, allí* are mainly used with presentative utterances, which may consist of various strategies, such as cleft-constructions or constructions with verbs such as *tener, venir* (18).

- (18) *Mire aquí tiene el teléfono*
 Look-HON **here** have-2SG-HON the phone...
 ‘Look, **here** you have the phone number’.

The preverbal, often utterance-initial position of the spatial deictic adverb is then also motivated by information-structural reasons, namely the desire to present other elements of the utterance as new, in utterance-final position. Thus, from an informational perspective, these utterances with a preverbal spatial deictic adverb and a specific person reference, function in very similar ways as the presentative depersonalizing constructions: the spatial deictic adverb introduces a construction which presents new information, while it establishes the thematic progression. The preverbal, and even utterance-initial, position of the spatial deictic adverb with both person deictic forms and depersonalizing constructions, is then motivated by the information structure.

4. Conclusion

In this study, I have shown that the analysis of the interpretation and discourse functions of spatial deictic adverbs with depersonalizing constructions, sheds light on some important features of spatial deictic adverbs. In the absence of person deixis, the interpretation of spatial deictic adverbs is established differently. In those cases, we must not only take into account the relation to the speaker/hearer and the distance to the speaker, but also other contextual cues concerning the description of space. Whereas *aquí* mainly relies on physical presence, contextual cues play an important role with the other spatial deictic adverbs. Moreover, spatial deictic adverbs have a different discursive behavior with depersonalizing constructions than with person deixis or other specific person reference. Through their use in combination with presentatives, and in the absence of a concrete person reference or of topic continuity established through NPs, they are the locus of thematic progression and, as such, fulfill a crucial function in discourse cohesion.

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