Presentational Sentences in Catalan Dialects*

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Abstract

Based on data from surveys, this paper offers a contrastive description of presentational sentences in Catalan dialects. Drawing on functional grammar and cognitive linguistics, we attempt to show the basic characteristics of presentational as opposed to locative sentences, considering that the so-called definiteness effect is not valid for Catalan. We note that there are three verbs which may appear in presentational contexts: *haver-hi*, *ésser-hi* (or *ser-hi*) and *estar(-hi)*, and that their distribution is not always alike in all Catalan dialects. In fact, distribution depends to a great extent on the degree of definiteness of the NP. With the definiteness hierarchy as our basis for analysis, we have determined which verbs appear in the most prototypical presentational contexts, and which in more peripheral ones. In addition, we have found that distributional boundaries for the verbs examined are not always clear cut.

Key words: presentational sentences, existential, Catalan, dialectology.

Resum. *Les oracions presentacionals en els dialectes catalans*

En aquest article, es fa una descripció contrastiva de les oracions presentacionals en els dialectes catalans, partint fonamentalment de les dades recollides a través d'unes enquestes. Combinant aspectes de la gramàtica funcional i de la lingüística cognitiva, es mostren les característiques bàsiques de les oracions presentacionals enfront de les oracions locatives, i s'assumeix que el denominat efecte de definitud no és adequat per al català. S'observa que els verbs capaços d'aparèixer en els contextos presentacionals són tres, *haver-hi*, *ésser-hi* i *estar(-hi)*, i que la distribució que tenen no és sempre la mateixa en tots els dialectes. Aquesta distribució depèn, en bona mesura, de les característiques del SN, en concret, del grau de definitud. En aquest sentit, partint de la jerarquia de definitud, hem establert quins verbs apareixen en els contextos presentacionals més prototípics i quins verbs en els més perifèrics. A més, hem comprovat que els límits distribucionals no són sempre discrets.

Paraules clau: oracions presentacionals, existencial, català, dialectologia.

1. Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to study presentational sentences, also known as existentials, in Catalan dialects.

1.1. Sources

In order to describe the uses of presentational sentences in various Catalan dialects, we shall draw on the general literature on the subject, on the adaptation of an episode of the comic *Tintin* in the Catalan dialect known as Algherese (spoken in Sardinia),[1] and especially on surveys of fifteen informants representing different dialectical regions conducted during the period running from June to December, 1996.[2]

With regard to the surveys, certain methodological limitations must be taken into account. It is a well known fact that syntactic studies on dialects tend to involve a number of basic methodological difficulties. Obtaining syntactic structures through the use of an indirect method, in which an interviewer attempts to gather spontaneous data without influencing informants' responses, proves to be a very tricky business (cf. Viaplana (1996: § 4)). The difficulty involved is even greater if, as in the case of presentational sentences, the contextual possibilities are complex. In light of these problems, we opted to use a direct method based on a list of syntactic contexts, each of which showed a selected syntactic structure expressed with different verbs (*ésser-hi*, *haver-hi* and *estar(-hi)*). Informants were asked to classify these structures as normal, unusual but acceptable, strange, or unacceptable in their own colloquial register. The surveys were conducted by correspondence, and all but five of the participating informants were linguists.

We must admit that both the survey by correspondence method chosen here and the fact that linguists were used as informants may cast some doubt on the spontaneity and colloquial nature of the responses obtained. Nevertheless, the fact that we were careful to compare and contrast the similarities and differences revealed in the responses, coupled with our own prior knowledge of Catalan dialects, substantially reduced the risk of erroneous interpretations of the survey results. We therefore believe that the data obtained from our surveys constitute a highly useful basis for the description of the syntactic topic which concerns us here.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for our study draws on aspects of both functional grammar and cognitive linguistics. The latter school defends the notion that all approaches to language should be based on our direct experience of the world, and on how we perceive and conceptualize it. Language is a dynamic entity, in which the

1.   Adaptation of the episode entitled *Tintín al país de l'or negre* (Barcelona: Joventut, 1995), coordinated and revised by Andreu Bosch.
2.   We would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who, directly or indirectly, helped with the survey responses.

pragmatic context and cultural environment in which the speaker is embedded are fundamental to an understanding of the way a particular language works (cf. Ungerer and Schmid (1996)).

In this paper we shall deal with the following three theoretical notions:

— The principle of prominence, according to which visual and auditory perception are organized in terms of prominence, a fact which then affects the configuration of our language. In this sense, we shall refer to the concepts of figure, or prominent element, and ground, or frame of reference.

— The theory of prototypes and cognitive categorization, which shows that the limits between categories are not discrete, but rather fuzzy. Furthermore, some entities are perceived as more representative or prototypical within a given group, and these are the ones which tend to be the most frequent. By the same token, others are more peripheral, or to put it another way, less representative and generally less frequent (cf. Taylor (1989), Cuenca (1996), Ungerer and Schmid (1996)).

— The definiteness hierarchy, a simple representation of which is offered in (1a). This hierarchy is related to other basic hierarchies such as those of person, NP type and the animate/inanimate distinction. Proof of this is the fact that these hierarchies may often be seen to overlap (cf. Croft (1990)). Thus, in the definiteness hierarchy (1b) that we propose as a basis for explaining the functioning of presentational structures, it may be seen that definiteness has been made to prevail over the criterion of animation.

(1) a. Definite > specific indefinite > non-specific indefinite.
     b. 1, 2 > 3 > *tots* ('all') > proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner.

2. Cognitive Characterization of Presentational Sentences

2.1. The Structure of Presentational Sentences

Spatial relations may be simply expressed through the use of two basic syntactic structures: locatives (2a) and presentationals (2b).

(2) a. La teva germana és al restaurant.
        the your sister   is at-the restaurant
        'Your sister is at the restaurant.'

     b. Al restaurant hi ha una germana teva.
        at-the restaurant Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg a sister your
        'At the restaurant there is a sister of yours.'

The fact that the order of the phrases in the above two sentences is different, though important, is not the most determining factor in distinguishing their struc-

tures. The fundamental difference to be observed here is of a pragmatic and discourse-based nature. While in example (2a) the NP is the discourse theme and the PP is the rheme, in the case of (2b), exactly the opposite occurs, i.e. the PP is the theme and the NP is the rheme. In terms of cognitive prominence, then, the NP, which appears in sentence-initial position in (2a), is the prominent element or figure, and the PP is the frame of reference or ground. In contrast to this, the terms are inverted in (2b) in such a way that the ground coincides with the locative element appearing before the verb, and the figure with the NP following the verb. Thus, the prototypical scheme corresponding to locative sentences may be seen in (3), and that of presentational sentences in (4), below:

(3)

Syntactic structure:	NP — PP[3]
Semantic structure:	Theme — Locative
Information structure:	theme — rheme
Gestalt structure:	Figure — Ground

(4)

Syntactic structure:	PP — NP
Semantic structure:	Locative — Theme
Information structure:	theme — rheme
Gestalt structure:	Ground — Figure

While some languages, in contexts in which aspect is unmarked, may express the spatial relationships outlined here without the use of a verbal element (cf. Benveniste (1966:151-152)), languages such as Catalan require a verb to join the two basic parts of the sentence. This is precisely what occurs in Catalan presentational sentences, in which the function of linking the locative element and the NP is performed by more than one verb.

2.2. *The Verbs of Presentational Sentences*

There are currently three verbs which may be seen to appear in presentational contexts in Catalan: *haver-hi*, *ésser-hi* and *estar(-hi)*.

The verb *haver-hi* has its etymological origins in the Latin possessive verb HABERE, and the locative clitic *hi* appears as a lexicalized element with the verb. In fact, the grammatical relations of possession, existence and location take on very similar forms in many languages of the world (cf. Lyons (1967), Clark (1978), Kempchinsky (1995), Huumo (1996)). The verb *ésser-hi* (or *ser-hi*), derived from the existential Latin ESSE, also carries the locative clitic element *hi* as lexicalized

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3. The second element of the syntactic structure is generally an PP, though other elements, such as deictics, may also appear in this position.

in these contexts. Finally, the verb *estar(-hi),* from the Latin verb of position STARE, has also acquired a presentational function in contemporary Catalan as a result of its semantic extension to include locative meanings not carrying an aspectual sense of duration. In this latter case, the appearance of the locative clitic *hi* will generally depend on the dialect spoken.

Nevertheless, we must point out that not all Catalan dialects produce presentational sentences with all three of these verbs. What's more, the use of one verb or another largely depends on the definite or indefinite nature of the NP in these types of sentences. Due to this fact, then, we must first refer to the so-called definiteness effect.

2.3. The Definiteness Effect

The traditional position regarding presentational sentences holds that, in keeping with the rhematic nature of the NP, the languages of the world may only use indefinite NPs in such sentences. This is what is known as the definiteness effect (cf. Kuno (1971), Clark (1978), Torrego (1984), Freeze (1992)). Yet some authors such as Suñer (1982), with reference to Spanish; Dik (1989:178-179), with reference to Dutch; Hannay (1985), Lakoff (1987:ch.3), Abbott (1997) and Ward and Birner (1995,1997), with reference to English; or Rigau (1994) and Solà (1994:127-139), with regard to Catalan, have shown that in some pragmatic contexts the presence of a definite NP is also a possibility. According to Ward and Birner (1997), this occurs when the NP is an entity known to the receiver, but at the time of utterance, the speaker considers its contents to be new to him (receiver).

(5) En aquella festa, només hi   havia   la   Marta.
     at that   party only   Loc HAVER-Past-3sg the Marta
     'At that party there was no one but Marta.'

From this point of view, then, the so-called definiteness effect must be considered an inadequate principle for languages such as Catalan (see also Rigau (1994)), which also admit the presence of a definite NP in these pragmatic-discoursive contexts. Nevertheless, it is logical to conclude that the most frequent and prototypical presentational structures will be those in which an indefinite NP appears.

3. Dialectical Description of Presentational Sentences

In analyzing the data collected, we have taken six basic dialects into consideration: Central Catalan (eastern region of Catalonia), Northwestern Catalan (western region of Catalonia), Balearic (spoken in the Balearic Islands), Valencian (spoken in the autonomous region of Valencia), Roussillonese (spoken in the French region of the eastern Pyrenees) and Algherese (spoken in the city of Alghero, in northwestern Sardinia).

3.1. The Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan and Balearic Dialects

Surveys of speakers of Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan and Balearic reveal a very similar use of verbs in presentational sentences in the three dialects. It is for this reason that we shall consider the three together.

As indicated earlier in this paper, differences in the distribution of verbs in presentational constructions may depend on the definite or indefinite nature of the NP. At the same time, however, it must be kept in mind that grammatically definite and indefinite elements may be classified according to degree, as seen in the definiteness hierarchy shown in (1b). This hierarchy, which includes elements ranging from the highly definite —sender and recipient— to the most indefinite ones— undetermined abstract nouns—, proves to be of great use in understanding and describing the verbal distribution to be observed in presentational constructions in the different Catalan dialects.

Beginning with the essential characteristics of Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan and Balearic, we may note that the members of the hierarchy shown in bold type in (6) permit the use of the verb *ésser-hi*, but not that of *haver-hi*, as shown in (7). On the other hand, with the remaining elements in the hierarchy there is a tendency for just the opposite to occur; the prototypical verb in these cases is *haver-hi* (8):

(6)   **1, 2 > 3 > tots** > proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner

(7)   a.   En   aquella   assemblea, hi   érem   ella, tu   i   jo.
          at   that   meeting   Loc were-1pl she   you and I
          'At that meeting it was she, you and I who were present.'

     b.   *En aquella   assemblea, hi   havia   ella, tu   i   jo.
          at   that   meeting   Loc HAVER-Past-3sg she   you and I
          'At that meeting it was she, you and I who where present.'

     c.   En   aquella   assemblea, hi   eren   tots.[4]
          at   that   meeting   Loc were-3pl all
          'At that meeting they were all present.'

     d.   *En aquella   assemblea, hi   havia   tots.
          at   that   meeting   Loc HAVER-Past-3sg all
          'At that meeting they were all present.'

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4.   In this study we considered the viability of the use of the indefinite pronoun *tothom* ('everyone') in this type of context, a possibility which might have raised doubts concerning the validity of the hierarchic model proposed here. In this sense, we must clarify that the informants participating in the study were not at all sure of the use of *tothom* in these contexts, and preferred the pronoun *tots* ('all'), which is clearly definite and specific in nature.

(8) a.   En   aquella   assemblea, hi   havia   el   Miquel.
         at   that   meeting   Loc HAVER-Past-3sg the Miquel
         'At that meeting Miquel was present.'

    b.   En   aquella   assemblea, hi   era   el   Miquel.
         at   that   meeting   Loc was the Miquel
         'At that meeting Miquel was present.'

    c.   En   aquella   assemblea, hi   havia   una dona.
         at   that   meeting   Loc HAVER-Past-3sg a   woman
         'At that meeting there was a woman.'

    d.   *En aquella   assemblea, hi   era   una   dona.
         at   that   meeting   Loc was a   woman
         'At that meeting there was a woman.'

    e.   En   aquella   assemblea, hi   va   haver   molta tranquil.litat.
         at   that   meeting   Loc Past-3sg HAVER-Inf much peace
         'At that meeting there was a great deal of peace.'

    f.   *En aquella   assemblea, hi   va   ser   molta tranquil.litat.
         at   that   meeting   Loc Past-3sg be-Inf   much peace
         'At that meeting there was a great deal of peace.'

Although this is in fact the most prototypical distribution, Solà (1994:131-132) has observed a recent increase in the use of the verb *ésser-hi* in contexts such as that of (9), similar to that of (8b):[5]

(9)   [a friend on the telephone:] ¿que hi   és la   Carme?
                                         that Loc is the Carme
      'Is Carme there?'
      (example by Solà (1994:131))

It should be noted that this usage, as also confirmed by our surveys, affects the proper noun, or the member of our hierarchy closest to those which are used in combination with the verb *ésser-hi.*

In spite of this slight increase in the use of the verb *ésser-hi* in contexts generally requiring *haver-hi*, among young speakers, and especially in urban environments, the presence of yet another verb, *estar(-hi)*, may also be observed in presentational contexts. The following examples taken from Solà (1994:132-133) serve to demonstrate this:

(10) a.   [organizers awaiting the arrival of participants or parents before starting a race:]
          Apa,   nois, ja   estem   tots: comencem.
          INTERJ guys already ESTAR-Pres-1pl all   start-1pl
          'Come on, guys, we're all here. Let's start.'

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5.   Solà (1994:§ 7.3) appears to interpret this usage as a case of ultracorrection resulting from the increasing use of *estar* in these contexts.

b. [a salesgirl checking to see if she has the shoes a customer wants:]
¿A veure? Està   la Black Top 39, la 40... i   la 41.
to see   ESTAR-Pres-3sg the Black Top 39 the 40   and the 41
Res   més.
nothing else
'Let's see. There's Black Top 39, 40...and 41. Nothing else.'

In the definiteness hierarchy cited in (6), and reproduced below in (11), it may be observed that the verb *estar(-hi)* may appear with all the members highlighted in bold type:

(11) **1, 2 > 3 > *tots* > proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun** > common indefinite animate noun > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner.

What this means is that the verb *estar(-hi)* may be associated with all the members originally assigned to the verb *ésser-hi.* This extension in usage is not surprising if we take into account the fact that there is currently also a tendency to introduce the verb *estar* into the corresponding locative structures shown above in (2a), due to the influence of Spanish (cf. Solà (1987:13-82)). But this particular extension of usage permeates even further down into the hierarchy, including members traditionally associated with *haver-hi*, specifically those which are characterized as grammatically definite.[6] As a result, the verb *estar(-hi)*, among the younger generations, may also appear with the grammatically defined members of the hierarchy, although it is generally not found, at least for the moment, in association with the indefinite members:

(12) A la reunió, només hi estaven   un home i   una dona.
at the meeting only   Loc ESTAR-Past-3pl a   man and a   woman
'At the meeting there was only a man and a woman.'

3.2. The Roussillonese Dialect

The Roussillonese dialect shares many of the distributional characteristics outlined in association with the dialects considered in the previous section. Nevertheless, as we have been able to deduce from our research, it does include some usage differences which merit separate discussion.

In principle, the distribution of presentational verbs in the Roussillonese dialect is the same as that of Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan and Balearic (13):

6. Sanz and González (1995) have also noted this extension in the subdialect spoken in the southern region of Catalonia (known as *tortosí*), as shown in the following example:

(i) A San Carlos està   la zona   marítima, la part vella.
in San Carlos ESTAR-pres-3sg the section coastal   the part old
'In San Carlos there is a coastal section, the old part (of the city).'

the verb *ésser-hi* is associated with NPs in the first, second and third persons, as well as with *tots* ('all') (14), while the verb *haver-hi* is used with the remaining members of the hierarchy (15-16).

(13) **1, 2 > 3 > *tots*** > proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner.

(14) a. Falta algú? No, ja hi són tots.
     miss anyone no already Loc are-3pl all
     'Is anyone missing? No, they are all already here.'

   b. *Falta algú? No, ja hi ha tots.
     miss anyone no already Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg all
     'Is anyone missing? No, they are all already here.'

(15) a. Buscàvem el batlle o la Carme.Vam anar al
     looked-for-1pl the mayor or the Carme Past-1pl go-Inf to-the
     poble del costat.
     village of-the side
     I allí hi havia la Carme.
     and there Loc HAVER-Past-3sg the Carme
     'We were looking for the mayor or for Carme. We went to the next village. And there was Carme.'

   b. *Buscàvem el batlle o la Carme. Vam anar al
     looked-for-1pl the mayor or the Carme Past-1pl go-Inf to-the
     poble del costat.
     village of-the side
     I allí hi era la Carme.
     and there Loc was the Carme
     'We were looking for the mayor or for Carme. We went to the next village. And there was Carme.'

(16) a. Buscàvem la policia. Vam anar al poble del costat.
     looked-for-1pl the police Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village of-the side
     I allí hi havia un guàrdia patrullant.
     and there Loc HAVER-Past-3sg an officer patrolling
     'We were looking for the police. We went to the next village. And there there was an officer patrolling.'

   b. *Buscàvem la policia. Vam anar al poble del costat.
     looked-for-1pl the police Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village of-the side
     I allí hi era un guàrdia patrullant.
     and there Loc was an officer patrolling
     'We were looking for the police. We went to the next village. And there there was an officer patrolling.'

While examples (15b) and (16b) were labeled inacceptable by our informant, the same cannot be said when this type of NP appears in a more peripheral presentational context, such as that of a relative clause introduced by a relative pronoun with a locative function. In this particular context, our informant admitted the possibility of using the verb *ésser-hi*, while considering the verb *haver-hi* more usual, as (17) shows:

(17) a. Vaig   participar   en un programa on   hi   havia/
         Past-1sg participate-Inf in a   program where Loc HAVER-Past-3sg/
         hi   era   Robert   Redford.
         Loc   was   Robert   Redford
         'I participated in a program in which Robert Redford was present.'

  b. Què   prefereixes, anar   a la muntanya o a la mar?
      What prefer-2sg   go-Inf to the mountain   or to the beach
      Jo prefereixi anar   a jugar   on   hi   ha   /hi
      I prefer-1sg go-Inf to play-Inf where Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg/ Loc
      és   la   nina
      is   the doll
      'Which do you prefer, to go to the mountains or to the sea? I prefer to go to play where the doll is.'

  c. Vaig   anar   a una casa on   hi   havia/   hi   era
      Past-1sg go-Inf to a   house where Loc HAVER-Past-3sg/ Loc was
      un   periodista de TV.
      a   reporter   of TV
      'I went to a house where there was a TV reporter.'

Thus, in relative clauses introduced by a relative pronoun with a locative function, it is possible to use both the verbs *ésser-hi* and *haver-hi* together with the NPs in bold type in (18):

(18) 1, 2 > 3 > *tots* > **proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun** > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner.

The reason why the use of the verb *ésser-hi* is seen as acceptable in structures such as that in (17), but not in others such as (15b) and (16b) may be explained as an instance of archaic usage (cf. Ramos (1997)). The more common or prototypical structures have become more quickly stabilized, while the more peripheral structures continue to show signs of alternation between the older verb *ésser-hi* and the more innovative use of *haver-hi*.

Furthermore, it should be noted that, as opposed to what we saw in the previous section with regard to Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan and Balearic, the tendency to use *estar(-hi)* in presentational clauses may not be observed in Roussillonese.

3.3. The Algherese Dialect

The distribution of verbs in presentational sentences in Algherese differs on a number of points from that of the dialects described up to now. According to our own research and commentaries drawn from Rigau (1994) and Molina (1996), the verb *ésser-hi* is characterized by a more extensive usage in this dialect. Within the definiteness hierarchy, it is the verb used exclusively in association with the members marked in bold type below (19):

(19) **1, 2 > 3 >** *tots* **> proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun** > common indefinite animate noun > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner.

(20) a. Buscàvem   l' alcalde o la Carme. Vam   anar   al   poble
        looked-for-1pl the mayor or the Carme Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village
        del   costat. I   allí   hi   era   la   Carme.
        of-the side   and   there Loc   was   the   Carme
        'We were looking for the mayor or for Carme. We went to the next village. And there was Carme.'

     b. Buscàvem   el repartidor   de pa   i   l' ajudant.
        looked-for-1pl the delivery-man of bread and the helper
        Vam   anar   al   poble del   costat. I   allí hi   era
        Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village of-the side   and   there Loc   was
        el repartidor,   però no l' ajudant.
        the delivery-man but not the helper
        'We were looking for the bread delivery man and his helper. We went to the next village. And there was the delivery man, but not his helper.'

     c. Buscàvem fugir   dels   sorolls. Vam   anar   al   poble
        tryed-1pl escape-Inf from the noises Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village
        del   costat. I   allí   hi   era   la   tranquil.litat necessària.
        of-the side   and   there Loc   was   the   peace   necessary
        'We were trying to escape from the noise. We went to the next village. And there was the peace we needed.'

In addition to these uses, the verb *ésser-hi* is also used peripherally in association with the following members of the hierarchy: common indefinite animate noun and common indefinite inanimate noun, as shown in (21):

(21) a. Buscàvem   la policia. Vam   anar   al   poble   del
        looked-for-1pl the police Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village of-the
        costat. I   allí   hi   era   un guàrdia.
        side   and   there Loc   was   an officer
        'We were looking for the police. We went to the next village. And there there was an officer.'

b.   Sem   salvos. En aquí hi   és   una cabina telefònica.
     are-1pl saved   in here Loc is   a   booth telephone
     'We're saved. Here there is a telephone booth.'
     (Example taken from the adaptation of the *Tintin* comic, p. 2)

In fact, in this case we are dealing with recent uses due to interferences from Italian.[7] This is what our two informants indicated in judging the sample sentences in (21) as acceptable, while considering the examples in (22), with *haver-hi*, as normal.

(22) a. Buscàvem   la   policia. Vam   anar   al   poble   del
         looked-for-1pl   the   police   Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village of-the
         costat. I   allí hi   havia   un   guàrdia.
         side   and there Loc   HAVER-Past-3sg   an   officer
         'We were looking for the police. We went to the next village. And there there was an officer.'

     b. Buscàvem   allotjament.   Vam   anar   al   poble   del
         looked-for-1pl   accommodation Past-1pl go-Inf to-the village of-the
         costat. I   allí hi   havia   una habitació de dos llits.
         side   and there Loc HAVER-Past-3sg   a   room   of two beds
         'We were looking for accommodation. We went to the next village. And there there was a room with two beds.'

In this sense, Molina (1996) also warns that speakers of Algherese are aware of this innovative use of the verb *ésser-hi* in contexts such as those shown in (21). This is confirmed by grammatical facts. While there is some degree of acceptance with regard to the sentences shown in (21), the verb *ésser-hi* is considered unacceptable in more peripheral structures such as those in (23), which contain relative clauses with pronouns performing a locative function:

(23) a. *Vaig   anar   a   una casa   on   era un periodista de TV.
         Past-1sg go-Inf to a   house where   was a reporter   of T V
         'I went to a house where there was a TV reporter.'

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7.   Interference from Italian is probably also responsible for the appearance of the participle *estat* (ia) in compound tenses of the verb *haver-hi*, as opposed to *hagut,* used in other Catalan dialects (ib):

(i) a. Los   primers? N'   hi   ha   estat   altros?
         the   first-ones EN Loc has   ÉSSER-Participle   others
         'The first ones? Haven't there been others?'
         (example taken from the comic *Tintin*, p. 62)

     b. Els   primers? N'   hi   ha   hagut   altres?
         the   first-ones EN Loc has   HAVER-Participle   others
         'The first ones? Haven't there been others?'

Considering the fact that the verb *ésser-hi* has the participial form *estat*, but uses the same verb *ésser* as an auxiliary (e.g. *és estat*) while the verb *haver-hi* uses the verb *haver* as an auxiliary (e.g. *ha hagut*), it is not unthinkable that the compound form *hi ha estat* in association with *haver-hi* may be derived from a hybridization of forms favored by the influence of Italian.

b. *Vaig   anar   a una casa   on   era   molta   tranquil·litat.
Past-1sg go-Inf to a   house where was   much   peace
'I went to a house where there was a great deal of peace.'

We may therefore conclude that all cases involving indefinite NPs, including those lowest down in the hierarchy, as shown in (24), are typically expressed with the verb *haver-hi*.

(24) a. No hi   ha   hòmens.
no Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg men
'There are no men.'

b. No hi   ha   res   a   fer!
no Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg nothing to   do
'There's nothing to do.'

What all this means is that contemporary Algherese maintains a distribution associated with the most prototypical uses of medieval Catalan (cf. Ramos (1997)), uses which furthermore coincide with those of Sardinian (cf. Jones (1993:113-114).

To conclude, our surveys indicate that, just as we saw in the case of the Roussillonese, in Algherese the verb *estar(-hi)* does not appear to have developed presentational uses.

3.4. The Valencian Dialect

The characteristic verbal distribution of the Valencian dialect differs in many aspects from that of the other Catalan dialects. In the case of Valencian, the verb *ésser-hi* no longer appears in presentational sentences, having been replaced by the verbs *estar* or *haver-hi*.[8] The latter two verbs are therefore the only ones which may be used in presentational contexts in this dialect.

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8. It should be noted that the verb *estar* in Valencian never carries the locative clitic element *hi*. On the other hand, in the case of the verb *haver-hi,* the locative clitic is also generally suppressed with compound forms (ia), the infinitive (ib) or the gerund (ic):

(i) a. En   aquell bar,   ha(n)   hagut   molts   incidents.
in   that   bar   has(have) HAVER-Participle many   incidents
'In that bar there have been many incidents.'

b. L'   any   passat va(n)   haver   tres   encartants.
the   year   last   Past-3sg(pl) HAVER-Inf three   winners
'Last year there were three winners.'

c. Havent   tres   candidats, no   tindrem   problemes.
HAVER-Gerund three candidates no   shall-have-1pl troubles
'There being three candidates, we shall have no troubles.'

On the other hand, in the subdialect of the southernmost part of Valencia (*alacantí*), the form used to express the present indicative is *ha-hi* instead of *hi ha*. As with the case previously cited, this phenomenon appears to be due to Spanish interference. In this particular case, we are dealing with interference from the Spanish form *hay* (*ha + y*).

With the definiteness hierarchy as our starting point, we may say that the verbal distribution of Valencian is the following (25):

(25) **1, 2 > 3 >** *tots* **> proper noun > common definite animate noun > common definite inanimate noun** > common indefinite animate noun > common indefinite inanimate noun > common indefinite animate noun with no determiner > common indefinite inanimate noun with no determiner > abstract noun with no determiner.

All members shown in bold type in the hierarchy are associated exclusively with the verb *estar*:

(26) a.   En aquella reunió   només estàvem   ell   i   jo.
          at that   meeting only ESTAR-Past-1pl he   and I
          'At that meeting only he and I were present.'

   b.   Vam   anar   al   ball,   però no estaven   tots, eh!
        Past-1pl go-Inf to-the dance but   no ESTAR-Past-3pl all INTERJ
        'We went to the dance, but they weren't all there - hey!'

   c.   A la festa vam   veure   que estaven   Jaume i
        at the party Past-1pl see-Inf that ESTAR-Past-3pl Jaume and
        Miquel.
        Miquel
        'At the party we saw that Jaume and Miquel were present.'

   d.   Al   bar estan   el   ferrer   i   la   seua dona.
        at-the bar ESTAR-Pres-3pl the blacksmith and the his w i f e
        'At the bar are the blacksmith and his wife.'

   e.   Què busques?   Ací només estan   les meues sabatilles.
        what look-for-2sg here only ESTAR-Pres-3pl the my   slippers
        'What are you looking for? Here there's nothing but my slippers.'

On the other hand, the remaining members of the hierarchy generally appear with the verb *haver-hi*:

(27) a.   A la plaça hi   havia   un home molt ben vestit.
          in the square Loc HAVER-Past-3sg a   man very well dressed
          'In the square there was a very well dressed man.'

   b.   A l' armari hi   ha   un paquet de tabac.
        in the cupboard Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg a pack of cigarettes
        'In the cupboard there is a pack of cigarettes.'

   c.   Per sort, ara ja   hi   ha   tranquil·litat.
        by fortune now already Loc HAVER-Pres-3sg peace
        'Fortunately there is peace now.'

While this is in fact the most general characterization, it should be noted that the verb *estar* is currently descending on the hierarchy and is beginning to be heard together with indefinite animate NPs. This means that a presentational sentence

such as (27a), among the younger generations and in environments notably affec-
ted by the influence of Spanish, may appear with the verb *estar* (28):

(28)   A   la   plaça   estava   un   home molt ben vestit.
         in   the   square   ESTAR-Past-3sg   a   man very well dressed
         'In the square there was a very well dressed man.'

4. Interpretation of Data

In the preceding section, we saw that the distribution of verbs in presentational
sentences varies in accordance with the dialect under examination and the type of
NP involved. In light of this fact, our present task is to attempt to discover the rea-
sons which might justify such variations.

To begin with, it has been proved that, due to the rhematic nature of the NP, the
most prototypical presentational sentences are those in which an indefinite NP
appears. At the same time, the most peripheral examples of presentational senten-
ces are those which include definite NPs, as these constructions are only possible
when the pragmatic-discoursive conditions are such that the NP may be seen as
rhematic. What this means is that the possibilities of a certain type of NP appearing
in presentational sentences increase as we descend through the definiteness hie-
rarchy.

It is to be noted that all Catalan dialects generally coincide in their use of the
verb *haver-hi* in association with the indefinite members of the hierarchy. On
the other hand, the distribution of verbs in connection with the definite members of
the hierarchy is more varied. Speakers of Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan,
Balearic and Roussillonese generally use the verbs *ésser-hi* and *haver-hi* in these
cases, while Algherese speakers use the verb *ésser-hi*, and Valencians use the verb
estar.

A preliminary explanation for this variation in distribution is to be found in the
different functional features of the NPs associated with these verbs. While *haver-
hi* is generally used in connection with an NP acting as a direct object, the NPs
appearing with the verbs *ésser-hi* and *estar* act as grammatical subjects. If we take
into account the fact that the prototypical direct object is postverbal, rhematic, inde-
finite, inanimate and patient, while the prototypical subject is preverbal, thematic,
definite, animate and agent, it is much easier to come to an understanding of the
presentational sentences which concern us here.

Let us consider the fact that the most typical usage to be observed in presenta-
tional clauses essentially coincides with the definition of the prototypical direct
object. This being the case, it is not surprising that *haver-hi* should be the verb
appearing most frequently in these constructions, especially with indefinite NPs.
On the other hand, the subject of the verbs *ésser-hi* and *estar* in these construc-
tions is not a prototypical subject, as it is generally postverbal, rhematic and patient.
Nevertheless, it does in fact conserve some typical features such as definiteness
and animation. All this implies a more infrequent use of the verbs *ésser-hi* and
estar in presentational sentences, as well as a preference for definite NPs.

Yet while the verb *haver-hi* is generally associated with indefinite NPs and the verbs *ésser-hi* and *estar* with definite NPs, the reality of dialectical usage shows that the distributional boundaries of these verbs are not clear cut. Speakers increasingly tend to use the NP associated with *haver-hi* as a subject, a fact which has led to two basic consequences for the construction of presentational sentences. Firstly, dialects such as Central Catalan, Northwestern Catalan, Balearic and Roussillonese have experienced an increase in the possible uses of the verb *haver-hi* with some of the definite members of the definiteness hierarchy: common definite inanimate nouns, common definite animate nouns and proper nouns.[9] Secondly, dialects such as Central Catalan and Valencian show agreement between this verb and its theoretical direct object (29) (cf. Solà (1987:89-100), Rigau (1994)):

(29)   En   aquell   calaix   hi   han   dos   rellotges.
            in   that   drawer Loc   HAVER-Pres-3pl   two   watches
            'In that drawer there are two watches.'

Furthermore, there has also been a reverse movement in the distribution of the verbs *ésser-hi* and *estar(-hi)*, in the sense that they are now used in association with indefinite members of the hierarchy. In this case, as we saw earlier in this paper, we are dealing with peripheral uses in which the influence of a coterritorial language may be clearly noted. In the case of Algherese, the fact that the verb *ésser-hi* may appear with indefinite NPs is undoubtedly due to the influence of Italian, the official language of Sardinia, which is characterized by an exclusive use of the verb *essere* in presentational sentences. As for Valencian, the appearance of *estar* together with common indefinite animate nouns must be attributed to the influence of Spanish. In fact, Spanish has increasingly extended its use of the verb *estar* to the detriment of that of *ser* to express spatial relationships (cf. Suñer (1982)). The influence of Spanish also allows us to explain the fact that Valencian does not use the verb *ésser-hi* with the definite members of the hierarchy, as well as the fact that other Catalan dialects in Spain also show an increasing tendency to use *estar* with definite NPs.

5. Conclusions

The description of presentational sentences we have undertaken in this study shows that there are three verbs in Catalan which may appear in this type of structure: *haver-hi, ésser-hi* and *estar(-hi).*

We have seen that one of the most important factors conditioning the presence of any one of these particular verbs has to do with the characteristics of the NP as a basic element in presentational sentences. While the NP is prototypically postverbal, rhematic and indefinite, this fact does not exclude the possibility of the presence of definite NPs under certain pragmatic and discursive conditions. The

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9.   As we pointed out in Ramos (1997), the verb *haver-hi* in medieval Catalan was used only sporadically with definite NPs.

admission of definite NPs necessarily implies that the so-called definiteness effect must be considered inadequate for Catalan and allows for the establishment of degrees within the definiteness hierarchy. This hierarchy, which has been shown to be inversely proportional to the prototypical characteristics of the NP in presentational sentences, has allowed us to determine which verbs appear in the most prototypical contexts and which verbs are associated with more peripheral contexts. In addition, it has helped us to show that distributional limits are not always discrete.

The following table summarizes the distribution of verbs in presentational sentences in the different Catalan dialects:

	definite NPs			indefinite NPs		
	1,2,3, tots	proper noun	common definite noun (animate/ inanimate)	common indefinite animate noun	common indefinite inanimate noun	remaining indefinites
Algherese	ÉSSER-HI	ÉSSER-HI	ÉSSER-HI	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi)	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi)	HAVER-HI
Roussi-llonese	ÉSSER-HI	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi)	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi)	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi)	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI
Balearic	ÉSSER-HI (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi) (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI
Central Catalan	ÉSSER-HI (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi) (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI
NW Catalan	ÉSSER-HI (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI (ésser-hi) (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI (estar-hi)	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI
Valencian	ESTAR	ESTAR	ESTAR	HAVER-HI (estar)	HAVER-HI	HAVER-HI

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