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THE ACCUSATIVE CLITIC IN INTRANSITIVE VERB CONSTRUCTIONS:

*AÍ O VAI, AQUÍ AS ESTÁN*¹

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Abstract

Following a brief presentation on the treatment received in previous grammatical studies, the *Aí os veñen (eles)*-type construction is described by focusing on the characteristics and behaviour of clitics, the verb, the adverb and the subject. This study highlights current changes which explain the discrepancies in the descriptions undertaken by different scholars who have addressed it until the present. Subsequently, the dialectal distribution is examined, with a cartography of the data of the main verbs (*ir / vir* and *estar*), displaying a south-western area with a central axis in the Pontevedra estuary, provided. Hypotheses presented regarding their origin, linked to the use of the accusative clitic with other presentative adverbs and especially the vicissitudes of *ei(s)*, are then considered. Finally, conclusions are presented regarding the pragmatic function of the clitic, variations observed in its construction, diatopic distribution, possible origins and present usage.

Keywords

accusative clitic, pragmatic function, presentative adverb, subject

CLÍTICO ACUSATIVO EN CONSTRUCCIÓN CON VERBO INTRANSITIVO: *AÍ O VAI, AQUÍ AS ESTÁN*

Resumo

Tras unha breve presentación do tratamento recibido en estudos gramaticais anteriores, descríbese a construción do tipo *Aí os veñen (eles)* baseándose nas características e comportamento do

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clítico, do verbo, do adverbio e do suxeito. Na exposición móstranse os cambios en curso, que explican as discrepancias nas descrições realizadas polos diferentes autores que se ocuparon dela ata o presente. A seguir expónse a distribución dialectal, con cartografía dos datos dos verbos principais (*ir / vir e estar*), mostrando unha área suroccidental co eixe central na ría de Pontevedra. Seguen hipóteses argumentadas sobre a orixe, vinculada ao uso do clítico acusativo con outros adverbios presentativos e especialmente ás vicisitudes de *ei(s)*. No cabo, as conclusións sobre a función pragmática do clítico, a variación observada na construción, a distribución diatópica, as posibles orixes e a vixencia actual.

Palabras chave

clítico acusativo, función pragmática, adverbio presentativo, suxeito

Introduction

The construction studied has three peculiar characteristics which distance it from all others in Galician grammar and language: the accusative clitic accompanies an intransitive predicative verb, and therefore cannot be analyzed as a DO or as an attribute. The clitic is not commutable with a phrase containing a nominal nucleus (or tonic pronoun). The clitic shows signs of agreement in gender and number with the subject of the sentence. To this can be added other secondary characteristics which are also important, and in which it features with other constructions.

1. State of the question and current objective

Galician grammars did not include these constructions until Álvarez, Monteagudo & Regueira (1986: 173). The work of Freixeiro follows this: his *Morfosintaxe* (2002: 131) and *Estilística* (2013: 124), and also Álvarez & Xove (2002: 550), although it does not feature in Costa *et al.* (1988) or in a more recent work of synthesis, López *et al.* (2010). In Hermida it only appears as a casual example of the proclitic position (2004: 88).

As far as can be ascertained, it does not appear in the Galician grammatical tradition until my own doctoral thesis, in which I addressed these constructions under

the heading “Pronome acusativo con verbos intransitivos” (“Accusative Pronoun with Intransitive Verbs”). This is the description that I provided at the time (Álvarez 1980: 287):

In specific phrases an unstressed accusative pronoun can appear, agreeing in gender and number with the subject of the intransitive verb. This is not the case, evidently, of a direct object or of a subject, either; its function is to signal and seeks to highlight the agent: *Ahí o vén; Alí as veñen; Alí a está*. The phrase would lose much in emphasis and in clarity when signalling if the unstressed pronoun were omitted (*Ahí está*), and the presence of the subject pronoun is either common or conveys nuances, like that of contradistinction, from which the unstressed word is exempt (*ahí vén el* can indicate that *ela* is missing); in *ahí o vén* it is clear whom it is discussing, since this is clarified beforehand in the discourse, and we wish to make our interlocutor see that we are seeing him as he approaches, drawing his attention towards this point. It is possible that in this piece of information, that of seeing the subject, lies the explanation of the accusative, by considering it the object of our experience. I do not rule out, on the other hand, the similarity with other constructions in which it is a direct object: *ahí as tes* (‘miraas ben, aquí as están’). For *¿ulo?*, see III-2.8.

Cidrás (1992) examined this construction when attempting to establish a common framework able to provide theoretical coverage to all agreement constructions, including those that are related “anomalies” and “discordances”, like those of the clitics which are the focus of this study. On the premise that the basic original function of concordance is not the marking of the syntactic function but that of “recognizing references presented as fully specified elsewhere in the discourse or in the communicative situation”² — a “procedure that is referential in character, deictic in nature; a resource of cohesion, in short”³ (Cidrás 1992: 45), he does not attempt to consider the possible syntactic function of these clitics which copy the traces of person, gender and number from their reference. Cases such as that of *aí o vén*

² “Reidentificar referentes presentados plenamente especificados noutro lugar do discurso ou na situación comunicativa.”

³ “Procedemento de carácter referencial, de índole deíctica, un recurso de cohesión, en definitiva”.

constitute “still worthwhile evidence of how the primitive pronominal function of re-identifying references is superimposed upon the grammaticalized function of identifying syntactical functions” (Cidrás 1992: 51).⁴

Longa, Lorenzo & Rigau (1996: 68) attribute to Galician “the property of using morphologically accusative clitics as subject clitics under certain conditions”. The attribution of the syntactical function, which they do not debate, is based upon the agreement between the verb, lexical subject (optional) and this clitic. The necessary conditions alluded to can be summarized as: (a) the possibility of showing *ad oculos* the individuals referred to by the subject (which implies, according to the authors, the exclusive use of the present tense); (b) an appellative function, accompanied by an exclamatory modality; (c) the presentative character, with verbs which are stative (*estar*) or related to movement (*vir, ir, chegar*). Furthermore, other relevant characteristics stand out, in good measure through contrast with similar constructions registered in dialects from the north of Italy: (a) agreement markers corresponding with the subject; (b) the complementary distribution with negation; (c) the adverb as an “emphasizing operator”, not an argument of verbal construction placed in a strong position; (d) possible use of other emphatic elements, like the adverb *xa* or *mira como*, in the place of the customary deictic adverbs. Following an analysis of the data, they conclude that the Galician construction can be described “as a compound of the pure subject and the modal subject clitics of the Northern Italian dialects” (1996: 70). However, for the same authors, this accusative clitic, which acts as a form of expression for a certain kind of modality (“for emphatics purposes”), is always in the functional sphere of the subject. With Galician lacking specific clitics for emphasis, “[it] ‘recycles’ the accusative clitic for an emphatic nominative-like use” (1996: 72).

Moure (1999: 755-756) has examined this and other “exceptional” constructions in Galician in order to provide an explanation from a typological perspective. In his opinion, in *Aí o vai, Aquí as veñen* there are signs of an ergative structure: an identification is produced between the sole participant of the intransitive construction (which is normally identified as the “subject”) and the transitive patient (to which the

⁴ “Testemuños aínda rendibles de como a primitiva función pronominal de reidentificar referentes se sobrepón á gramaticalizada de identificar funcións sintácticas.”

accusative cliticization corresponds), and as a result it is an S + acus. She does not comment upon the possible compatibility with a nom. S (*Aí os van eles*), but she does point out another inconsistency of this “grammatically inexplicable marginal case: however much emphasis is placed, with the exception of this case, Galician clauses do not mark their subjects as if they were objects”.⁵ She assumes that it is a matter of a remnant from an older grammar, and that is why she proposes that this use be considered “an effect of residual ergativity”, a “historical whim of the language”,⁶ which maintains an anomalous construction within the entire system. According to the author therefore, it behoves the historical grammar to reconstruct the Latin uses from which it has emerged and to argue the causes as to why it has endured until the present.

I begin on this occasion from the basis of this state of the question and my previous, uninterrupted work, regarding clitics in Galician and the constructions in which they operate, which includes that which has emerged from a broad oral and textual corpus, from dialectal collections integrated in the *Arquivo do galego oral* (Oral Galician Archive) of the ILGa (Galician Language Institute), and also registry through written practise, above all from the TILG (*Tesouro Informatizado da Lingua Galega*) (Computerized Resource of the Galician Language). However, it is important to underline that during recent years my database has been increased with periodical searches in texts published on the internet with a greater or lesser degree of spontaneity (blogs, chats, articles, etc.), which bear witness to the vitality of grammatical uses which are not easy to record with traditional sources. Moreover, I can provide data gathered through three fieldwork trips on successive occasions (through a random network), and planned in order to obtain information with a dual perspective: grammatical description and dialectal distribution. In an enquiry designed in 1998, three questions were included with *ir*, *estar* and *quedar*, and posed to spontaneous and natural speakers in 32 locations. In 2008, 10 questions were included with the verbs *ir / vir*, *estar* and *quedar*, in an enquiry carried out with 115 informants

⁵ “Caso marxinal gramaticalmente inexplicable: por moita énfase que se poña, fóra deste caso, as cláusulas do galego non marcan os seus suxeitos coma se fosen obxectos.”

⁶ “Un efecto de ergatividade residual”, un “capricho histórico da lingua”.

of the same typology. Finally, in 2013, I carried out an enquiry of 19 questions with the verbs *ir*, *vir*, *estar*, *quedar*, *andar* and *seguir* directed at people with linguistic training and as a majority hailing from areas in which the existence of the construction can be demonstrated, and by seeking grammatical and diatopical information (33 enquiries). My own linguistic competence, coming from my belonging to the community which linguistic geography reveals as the territorial heartland of this construction, may be added to these factors.

2. Advances in description

With the aforementioned bases, I believe that I am in a position to progress in the study of this construction, in terms of its general behaviour within the current system as well as the processes of change in which it is implied. These also allow me to define better its dialectal area, specifying the character trait of “south-western” which I have been highlighting for many years. In any event, I will underline data or marginal information which in my opinion requires attention or a specific enquiry, in the line of (synchronic or diachronic) variation or of sociolinguistic assessments.⁷

2.1. The clitic

The clitic is always accusative and in the third person: *o*, *a*, *os*, *as*. It varies in gender (masculine or feminine) and in number (singular or plural), in agreement (which is established with the subject), whether or not expressly. In origin it also agrees in person (3P, singular and plural), although today it may not observe this form of cohesion (see §2.4, for the extension to other grammatical persons):

⁷ The examples provided are all real. When the dialectal localization is pertinent, geographical indications are included (the name of the district and provincial acronym). Those which come from written language were almost always taken from the *TILG*: in order to abbreviate, only the author reference and year are provided, with the reader being directed to the database in order to access further information. Those which come from the internet contain the figure on the document consulted, whenever this is possible.

- (1) *Aí o vén.* [=He, Xoán]
 Aí a vén. [=She, Maruxa]
 Aí os veñen. [They, he and her, Xoán and Maruxa]
 Aí as veñen. [=They (feminine), Maruxa and Carme]
 Aí os estamos. [=We, in a photo]

I have observed in my enquiries, however, that some informants accept without difficulty the singular forms (*aí o vai, aí a vai*), but reject or display bewilderment before those of the plural (**?aí os van, *?aí as van*). A single informant, with a background in linguistics, asserts that the pronoun does not agree, so that the subject of *aí o vén* can be masculine or feminine, and does not consider the plural forms as possible. All the anomalous cases detected occur in the margins of the dialectal area (see §3).

The presence of the clitic is not due to syntactical demands but to a pragmatic willingness. I agree with Cidrás (1992) in that it is an identifier of the NP (noun phrase, nominal or pronominal) which functions as a subject: it acts, therefore, as a kind of redouble which emphasises the reference to an already known subject, with the proviso that the NP does not need to be specific. The recycling suggested by Longa, Lorenzo & Rigau (1996), in order to be able to undertake this new function, is possible through the impossibility of attributing to an accusative clitic the syntactical function of direct object or attribute in the constructions of these predicative intransitive verbs. In line with the new function, a clear prosody is adopted: the pronoun always occupies the proclitic position, without any opportunity for pause or voice inflection between the adverb and the verb (see 2.3).

The clitic is compatible with the dative of solidarity and interest. Some of my informants prefer the convenience of using one of these pronouns in conjunction because, in their opinion, they soften the frequent tone of reproof (see §2.5).

- (2) *Aí cho vén.*
 Aí chos quedan.

2.2. The verb

As I have pointed out previously, there are important restrictions in the type and list of intransitive verbs which permit this construction.

a) Verbs of movement: *ir* and *vir*. In principle, this can be reduced to two verbs: all the speakers who recognise the construction as part of their grammar can use it with them, without differences in frequency or acceptability being perceived between one and another.

In the bibliography, other verbs of movement are mentioned in passing, without witnesses, and with which, for some speakers and not in a generalized manner, the construction also seems possible: they are verbs which express the arrival on the scene, as a conclusion of the directional displacement of ‘vir’ (*aparecer, chegar, entrar, sair*). My search for witnesses proceeding from oral or written texts was not fruitful; therefore I cannot provide proof of its existence.⁸ However, on the basis of my own linguistic competence and speakers who use this construction in an habitual manner, I can affirm the acceptability of *Aí os chegan* and similar examples. I therefore believe that they form part of our grammar; in the same line, it can be adduced that in Portuguese there were matching examples with *eis* (+ *aparecer, surdir, entrar*, see §4).

b) Stative verbs: *estar, andar, quedar* and *seguir*.⁹ Not all the informants who state that they use often constructions like those of (1) recognise the construction with stative verbs as their own; however, the opposite situation never occurs. For this reason, I must conclude that the speakers who employ the construction with stative verbs in their grammar form a subset that is fully integrated in the main set, and defined by its use with *ir* and *vir*. The linguistic geography provides a good account of this difference, as not only is the area of maximum diffusion of *Aí o está* more reduced, but above all, less compact (see 3).

Within the territory where the construction with stative verbs is admitted,

⁸ I would like to thank the CORGA team for the opportunity to access the automatically-tagged corpus whilst it is still in its test phase and for this reason not public (September 2015). Written registers with these verbs were not found in this corpus either. All data with verbs of movement expunged in it correspond to *ir* (aí 6, alá 5) and to *vir* (aí 8).

⁹ It should be pointed out that it is not a case of *andar* and *seguir* as verbs of movement. As statives, *andar* and *seguir* form a group with *estar* in order to indicate action in development and the three succeed in constituting aspectual periphrases (Álvarez & Xove 2002: 361-363).

gradual differences of incidence are detected. In accordance with the data collected, the speakers who use it accept always *estar*; I suppose that this explains the relative frequency of use in literary language. I do not possess more data proceeding from a systematic collection regarding the use of the remaining verb, but it is sufficient to make the following observations: it seems that the informants who use the construction with *estar* also allow it with *andar*; however, more reticence is shown with *quedar*, and in fact people who accept it without reservations in the cases cited, state that in this it seems unusual or unacceptable to them. Finally, with *seguir* the greater part of those interviewed display important objections, and in fact written registers are hardly found.¹⁰ Therefore, the incidence of the construction within its dialectal area can be measured in the following manner: *estar* > *andar* > *quedar* > *seguir*. Having seen the construction's behaviour, this is in my opinion the direction of the diffusion within the system: it starts with *estar*, and perhaps with *andar*, in order to reach the construction of the other stative verbs, gradually and progressively within the sequence provided.¹¹ We can see once again some examples taken from blogs on the Internet, a resource which indicates its current state of growth:

- (3) *Alí a estaba*, acobadada na fiestra, pendurándolle a trenza como ás princesas dos contos (09/02/2010).

'There she was, leant against the window, her braids hanging down like the princesses in fairy stories'

- (4) Igual que ocorreu con Retranca, nós sabemos dalgún ao que tamén lle profetizaron pouca vida por diante, e *por aí o anda*, como alma en pena, polo visto inmortal (03/12/2008).

'In the same way that happened with Retranca, we know of someone for whom a short life was predicted, and there he goes, like a soul in purgatory, apparently immortal'.

- (5) As cantigas foron as protagonistas. E unha das máis senlleiras foi o "Chata – Chatona" de

¹⁰ The fact that *seguir* also has transitive uses probably influences this rejection, which would lead to two formally identical structures. How must *alí os seguen* be interpreted? Informants who do not recognise the construction with *ir*, *vir* and *estar* accept immediately "aí os seguen", owing to them interpreting it as 'os perseguen, van a continuación deles'.

¹¹ The CORGA data (the automatically-tagged version, in its test phase) confirms the primacy of *estar* (*aquí* 3, *alí* 8, *aí* 10) and of *andar* (*aí* 2), as there are no registers of the construction with the other two verbs.

José Toja “Píticas”, un poema inédito de Antonio do Machado. *Aí o queda* (‘o poema’).

‘The medieval ballads were the protagonists. And one of the simplest was the “Chata – Chatona” by José Toja “Píticas”, an unpublished poem by Antonio Machado. There it is (‘the poem’).

- (6) Cando volví, *alí o seguía* no cuarto escuro (11/03/2010).

‘When I returned, he was still there in the dark room’.

The verb is always in the indicative mood, but does not concur equally in all tenses. In the greater part of the registers it is in the present (7), as it corresponds with the possibility of pointing out an entity to the listener which coincides with the speech act, whether or not this is physically in view. Its use in evocations continues in order of frequency, and therefore the verb adopts the form of the present from the past, the conditional (8); the lesser frequency of use is related, in the circular sense of cause and effect, with the fact that this option is not equally acceptable for all speakers consulted.

- (7) Por fin o contramestre sinala a estribor: *alí a está*, terra (Xavier Paz 2005).

‘At last the bosun signals starboard: there it is, land’.

Eu conto coa cabeza trece polo menos. E as máis delas *alí as están* para ver (Anxo Angueira 2012) [= as voltas do río Sar, non á vista dos participantes no acto de comunicación].

‘I can count at least thirteen heads. And the rest of them can be seen there. [= the bends of the River Sar, not within sight of the participants in the act of communication]’.

- (8) Mais Terranova prometeu que volverían e comerían de verdade. E *alí os estaban*, sentados, a pedir o menú (Manuel Rivas 2006).

‘But Terranova promised that they would return and eat properly. And there they were, sat down, asking for the menu’.

We must not rule that that in an exceptional way, and extremely infrequently, the verb may take other forms within the indicative, as occurs in (9) with the preterite; and even though no register taken from the corpus can be offered (however much specific searches are carried out), I do not rule out the grammaticality of the use of the

future and the conditional mood, at least in examples like those which are suggested in (10), with a modal meaning of probability in the present and the past respectively:

- (9) No curruncho azul, dende Carril, terra de ameixas e xente brava (ALÍ OS FORON o outro día a apagar o lume a Cortegada), cun palmarés que asusta... (*Asociación de Ciclistas Galegos*, s.d.).

‘In the blue nook, from Carril, a land of plums and fiery folk (they went there the other day to put out the fire in Cortegada), with an amazing winner’s list... (Association of Galician Cyclists, date unavailable)’.

- (10) Pois se ninguén os colleu *alí os estarán*.

‘Well, if nobody took them, there they are’.

¿Que sei eu? Por *alí os andarían*.

‘What do I know? They should be there’.

Once again we are before expansions in usage which do not accompany the progressive installation within the system, and which are still not consolidated equally within the grammar of all speakers. The process of grammaticalization follows this course: with only the present indicative > also with the conditional mood > also with other indicative tenses.

2.3. *The adverb*

In all the registers analysed, at the beginning of the phrase an adverb is situated, and selected within a closed relationship which is characterized by its deictic character. In stative verb constructions as much as those of verbs of movement, a complement with the general meaning of ‘place’ is expected, in the first as a ‘locative’ and in the second as ‘direction/destination’, ‘origin’ or ‘transit’, depending on the case. However, the adverbs implied in the construction that is under analysis here do not fulfil basic sentence functions which are required by the syntactical structure of its predicate. They influence above all the predication, localizing in the extraverbal context the action, process or situation in which the subject that is being discussed is involved. That is, in an utterance like *Aí o vén*, the FAdv does not indicate the origin (*vir de...*) or

the destination / direction (*vir a...*, *para...*), or the transit (*vir por...*), but the punctual localization of the ‘act of arriving’. For this reasons, it often appears without a preposition, although in specific conditions it does not reject it, as in (4) (‘uncertain location’).¹²

This function of the adverbial element justifies the order and prosodic features which characterize the construction. The adverb occupies the first place in a focusing structure, well identified as the focus. There is no possibility of pause between it, the clitic and the verb. The principal accent of the tonal group falls upon the verb, a secondary accent remaining upon the adverb: *aquí-o-vén*. In the case of the adverb *aí*, the loss of the principal accent bears frequently the displacement of the stressed syllable (*àí-o-vén*) and, as a result, palatalization (*èí-o-vén*).

As has been stated, the relationship between adverbs is closed and within it not all occur with identical frequency. The forms respond to three basic groups, one of them no longer employed.

a) Firstly, we find deictic adverbs of location, also called pronominal or demonstrative: *aquí*, *aí*, *alí*, etc. The most frequent are *alí* and *aí*, and to a lesser extent *alá* and *aquí*, in that order; examples with *aló* and *acó* have not been recorded, undoubtedly because they are from different dialectal areas from those which are of interest to this study (Álvarez & Xove 2008), and not even with *acá*, used with increasing infrequency and more restricted to situations which are not the most appropriate for the construction that is studied here (eg., *ponte do lado de acá*). However, various speakers highlight their use with *acólá*. Therefore, the options are reduced in practice to {*aquí*, *alí*, *alá*, *aí*, *acólá*} *o vai*. Each has its literary example, demonstrating its integration within the learned written norm:

(12) —¡Ei!, ¡vinde para acá, que *aquí o está*! (Xurxo Borrazás 1994).

“Hey! Come over here, it’s here!”

Pero esa noite o tempo abriuse e eu vin os Reis. *Alí os estaban* mentres eu, morta de medo, me fixen a durmida (Inma López Silva, 2014).

‘But that nighttime opened up and I saw the Kings. There they were, whilst I, scared to

¹² Naturally, they are compatible CC with the semantic functions required by predicate structure, as in (6): “*alí o seguía no cuarto escuro*” (“there he remained in the dark room”).

death, pretended to be asleep’.

—¡Unha raposa! ¡por alí!, ¡por alí! —dixo Paulo de vagariño— ¡Unha raposa! | —¡Alá a vai! —confirmou Miguel (Manuel Rodríguez Troncoso 1996).

“A vixen! Over there! Over there!” said Paulo, slowly. “A vixen! There she goes!” confirmed Miguel’.

E Valentín *aí o está*. Circio, reconcentrado, endurecido (Méndez Ferrín 1998).

‘And Valentín is there. Firm, focused, tough’.

Baixa pola gorxa impetuoso, potente, (...) por riba dos petóns e poios das pesqueiras. *Acolá as están* (Anxo Angueira 2002).

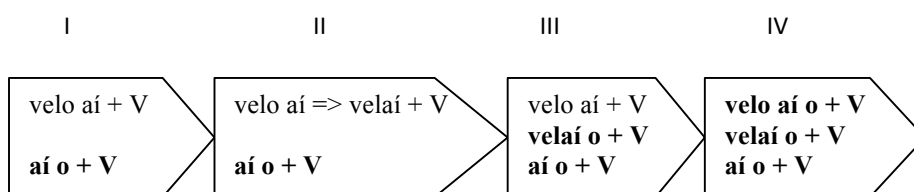
‘It goes down the gorge impetuously, powerfully (...), over the rocks and fishing poles. There they are’.

As occurs with other constituents, not all the adverbs indicated are registered with the same frequency. Some speakers display gradual preferences, generally in the sequence *aí > alí > alá*, when there are not restrictions in favour of *aí*. Many point out that in these constructions they say *ei* (~ *eí*), not *aí*, with an accentual change and on the timbre of the stressed vowel which is not habitual or constant in other contexts: it is not a case of the diatopic variant *eí* of the adverb (basically south-eastern, *ALGa*: II 311), but of a phonetic variant conditioned by the context (specific prosodic conditions, loss of principal accent to the benefit of the verb and palatalization of /a/ in the unstressed position, cf. *caixa > queixón* [ɛj]). Through different channels it was able to reach formal coincidence with possible variants of *eis* (see below, c).

b) In some areas the construction also obtains with adverbs which are typically presentational, such as *velaí* and *velaquí* (Álvarez & Xove 2002: 606). As this is not the place to examine in depth the grammatical description and variation offered by the use of these adverbs, which are worthy in themselves of a dedicated study, I will only say, in the manner of a necessary contextual presentation regarding the present analysis, the following: the adverb can be invariable (*velaí vai*, *velaí van*) or allow variation in gender and number in the pronominal form embedded in the locution

(*velo aí vai* / *velos aí van* / *vela aí vai*),¹³ as well as variation in number in the verb if the interlocutor is plural; (b) amongst invariable forms, the *DRAG* only has entries for *velaí* and *velaquí*, which are very common, but in speech and writing they are documented also as forms with *alí*, *alá* e *aló* (*velalí*, *velalá*, *velaló*); (c) with the support of linguistic geography, the progressive and territorial implantation of the invariable form (*velaí*, etc.) can be observed, first co-existing and then replacing the original locution (*velo aí*, etc.); (d) in places where the option *aí o vén* is recognised as typical, *velo aí vén* is offered as an alternative and habitual solution, with examples of its equivalence provided.

The presence of the clitic is much more frequent when *velaí*, *velaquí* etc. are invariable, and even though the fieldwork reveals that it is present in other cases, the written corpus only offers registers in these conditions; naturally, it is always optional and does not occur outside the area described in §3 for {*aí*, *aquí*, *aí...*} *o vén*. The process of change that is observed, within the delimited dialectal area, is the following:



Additionally, and as occurs in other areas of Galician, the adverbial locution with a pronoun consistent with the original (I: *velo aí + vén*, *está*, etc.) evolves towards a completely invariable adverb, with which it can agree. On the other hand, the clitic of the *Aí o vén* (I, II) construction ends up being used with adverbs of the *velaí* series (II: *velaí o vén*) and reaches the adverbial phrase, and in this way has two pronouns: the DO of *ver* and the clitic which recognizes the subject (III: *velo aí o vén*).

¹³ The referent of the pronoun coincides with that of the subject of the verb that follows: *ir*, *estar*, etc. Unlike the construction which is the focus of this study, in this case it fulfils at its source a phrasal function like the DO of *ver*.

- (13) A muller dou en berrar: | —¡*Veleí o vai*, veciños! ¡Acudide, veciños, que *eí o vai*! | O home, coa eixada na man, púxose a perseguirme (Alonso Ríos 1979).

‘The woman started to shout: | —There he goes, neighbours! Come here, neighbours, there he goes! | The man, with the hoe in his hand, started to chase me’.

Velos aí os van (Agolada-PO, Cotobade-PO, Pontevedra-PO, Cartelle-OU, Ramirás-OU...).

‘There they go’.

c) Previously, the construction occurred also with the presentational adverb *eis*, from which registers with the verbs *ir* and *vir* in the 17th and 18th centuries can be shown:¹⁴

- (14) Rapaces, mulleres, vellos, *heilos* ven nunha bandada (Gabriel Feixó de Araújo 1671).

‘Boys, women, old men, I see them coming in a mob’.

Ora *eilo bay*, meus fidalgos (Xoán Correa Mendoza e Soutomaior 1697).

‘There he goes, my lord’.

Eyla vày (Diego Cernadas de Castro c1752-55).

‘There she goes’.

Because of adaptation of *eis* or maintaining the earlier form (cf. CSM, *Ei-me acá*, *Ey-la no convento*, *ei-vos un capelan ven*), in 19th-century writing we find a presentational adverb *ei*, as is seen in (15), formally converging with a highly extensive phonetic variant of *aí*, and, it should be recalled, preferred by many speakers in this context. I believe that this circumstance must not be forgotten when presenting hypotheses regarding the origin and diffusion of the construction under consideration.

- (15) *Hey á ambición d'a muller* (Rosalía 1880).

‘There is woman’s ambition’.

¹⁴ A historical study on *ei(s)*, uncommon in Galician but not Portuguese texts, has yet to be made. I am not aware of its chronology and the dialectal range of its variants. Without attempting to provide a probative character to this information, I should point out that the three examples given with *eilo* are taken from authors who come from the area delimited for *Aí o vén*. It must be asked why Saco y Arce does not include *eis* in his grammar, where an entry is provided for the adverbial locutions *vel-eiquí*, *vel-ehi*, *vel-elí* (1868: 195): was it already out of use in the 19th century or simply did not correspond to his dialect?

¡Non tremes...! *Ei* meu anelo (Dállo). De min xa es dona e meu lar... (Galo Salinas 1891).

‘Do not tremble...! There you have my ring (He gives it to her). You are now my wife and my home...’

E tempo di ela, de esculcá-lo oráculo, eiquí o Dios, *éi- o* aquí (Florencio Vaamonde 1898).

‘It’s time, she says, on spying the oracle, God is here, behold him here’.

With the same adverb the only comparable examples in Portuguese can be found, combining *eis* + coreferential clitic with the subject of the verbs *ir*, *vir*, *aparecer*, *entrar*, *surdir*. The data of the corpus consulted (Davies & Ferreira) is from the 16th century until the present.¹⁵

d) Longa / Lorenzo / Rigau (1996: 75) mention the possibility of the construction with other emphatic elements, as in *¡Xa as chegan elas!* or, in Galician Spanish, *¡Mira cómo lo viene, el avión!* In my corpus I have not found any witness who can corroborate, enhance or broaden this information.

2.4. The subject

In the registers analyzed, the subject is generally a person, although this feature is not required. Any NP compatible with the characteristics of the verb and its construction can be a subject:

(16) *Aí o vén.* [= the dog, the car, the story that I am going to tell]

Alí a está [= the female dog, the moon, the blanket]

Aí as están [= the girls, the letters sought]

¹⁵ Here are some examples in Portuguese authors, which are regarded as illustrating the verbs referenced and the temporal are mentioned: “Por esta travessa se vai acolhendo; *ei-lo vai correndo*, fugindo a grão leve, qu' um real me deve” (Luis de Camões); “*Ei-lo vem. Vê-lo* Fernando bem em cima na portela?” (Gil Vicente); “Meu fantástico sonho de beleza À grande luz do dia *ei-lo aparece!*” (Antero de Quental); “Saltando para a tipóia do trono, *ei-lo entra* na Ajuda governado pelo snr. José Luciano” (Fialho de Almeida); “Onde e quando menos se esperasse Rolão Rebolão, *ei-lo surdia* aos pés de uma pessoa, casquinando a sua risada histórica e sarcasta!” (José Régio). All these examples come from the *Corpus do Português* by Davies / Ferreira, consulted in abril 2013.

Some informants display reticence towards using the clitic which refers to non-living entities: they accept unreservedly *alí os están* (= men, children, animals) but not *alí os están* (= objects).

Practically all the examples provided until now rely upon a third-person subject, in singular or plural, in accordance with the most common and broadly-documented characteristics. However, in the current state of the construction, singular or plural first and second person subjects are possible, without the clitic changing for this reason in order to maintain the agreement with the person in question. Once again, I believe that this is a case of widening usage, caused by the progressive installation of the construction within the system. The fact that the verb and its subject changes, but not the clitic, supports this evolutionary sequence. Some examples of the spontaneous use can be seen on the internet: the first is preceded by the photo of the Cantodorxo bagpipe band, from O Grove (in the epicentre of the delimited dialectal area); the second is the greeting by the author of the blog on discovering an acquaintance amongst the commentary writers:

- (17) *Aí os estamos...* unha fotiña do noso grupo de gaitas, que aínda que é pequeno, dá para moito, para moitas festas e romarías! (17/01/2008).
'There they are... a little photo of our bagpipe group, which although still small, can do lots, and many fiestas and local pilgrimages!'
Aí A estás! Vente, que a Rosana quere aprender ganchillo, e diso seguro que sabes máis ti (11/11/2012).
'There she is! Come on, Rosana wants to learn crochet, and surely you must know more about it than I do'.

In the greater part of the registers the subject is not specific, which undoubtedly contributes to conjecture regarding the possibility that, in an exceptional manner, its function was covered by the clitic. All speakers always have the option of expressing the subject or not: *Aí o vén (el) / Aí vén (el)*. It might be recalled that in *Aí o vén* there is no doubt about the identification of the subject, as it is mentioned beforehand in the discourse: the recognition wishes to make the interlocutor a participant in the

experience of seeing how he approaches, attracting his attention towards this point. The presence of the subject pronoun is accompanied by nuances, such as that of the contraposition, of which the unstressed syllable is exempt (*aí (o) vén el* may indicate that *ela* is missing, for example). However, I believe that it is more important to point out that some of my informants believe that the character of criticism that they perceive in a general way in the construction is accentuated (see 2.5): that is, not just ‘*quen vai / vén / está...*’ (who goes / comes / is present...) is mentioned explicitly but also ‘*quen merece unha severa crítica*’ (‘who deserves severe criticism’) through its absence, disappearance or delay.

By taking into consideration the cases in which the subject is not omitted,¹⁶ the following behaviour can be observed: it occupies the posverbal position, without standing out because of its prosody; the pronominal subject is more frequent if it is accompanied by a predicate (18); the use of a pronoun quantifier for totality (19); the nominal NP is infrequent, as generally it is in apposition, but oral and written examples are not lacking (20):

- (18) *Aí o vén el coa súa pachorra* (Muros-CO).
 ‘There he comes with his laid-back attitude’.
- (19) *Alí os estaban todos, uns a estirar e outros a roer.* (13/02/2012).
 ‘There they all were, some stretching out and the others nibbling away’.
- (20) *Entramos os tres, e alí o estaba o Conserxe a baterlle zoupadas co dereito e co revés da mao a un embrullo* (Méndez Ferrín, 1991).
 ‘The three of us went in and there was the *Concierge* laying into a bundle with his right hand and with the back of his hand’.

2.5. Other characteristics

The function is appellative and carries the deixis: it is a question of reinforcing the presential display, directing the gaze of the listener to a point (the adverb in focus)

¹⁶ Constructions in which the postverbal NP is elucidative and framed by pauses are omitted: “*Alí os veñen, catro nenas e dous nenos*” (“There they come along, four girls and two boys”), “*Alí as van, Manola coa nena e unha sobriña*” (“There they go, Manola with the girl and a niece of hers”). Constructions with clichés at the beginning, however much they coincide with the subject, are also eschewed: “*Os cartos, aquí os están*” (“The money, it’s here”).

where the subject is in movement or static;¹⁷ if it is not presential, the intentionality is to evoke the scene in the memory. The extralinguistic context always has a common characteristic: something is not there, something is missing, something is being sought, something does not arrive, and, with certain surprise, can finally be shown in a specific place.¹⁸ It draws attention to something which occurs. This is why it is not possible in negative predicates.

- (21) *Aquí non as están.
 *Aí non o vén.

The prosodic features connected to the position of the clitic were already alluded to, in a focalization structure (see §2.3). In some cases the intonation is exclamatory, but this is not a requisite or a constant feature.

There are considerable informants who allow us to see that the use of this construction can be socially inconvenient or incorrect, because they believe that they bear an implicit criticism regarding the subject's behaviour, which is shared aloud with the listener; some of the child informants even state that they know the construction but that they never use it out of good manners. This informant from Trazo-CO, with higher education but without specialized linguistic training, expresses it well:

In Trazo we can say "Alí vén" as much as "Alí o vén", but the meaning is slightly different. When we say "Alí o vén" we are giving a negative connotation to a person about whom we were probably already talking. For example: a boy who played a trick and we are talking about the trick that he played. If at that moment the boy comes over we can say "Alí o vén". Generally we say "Alí vén".

Soto (2013) goes further and states that the clitic possesses, on occasions, a "despective value".¹⁹ There is no shortage of informants who refer to the convenience of introducing a dative of solidarity in order to make the expression friendlier; in actual fact, what they do is to imply the listener in the criticism, as by being shared it ceases

¹⁷ Soto Andión (2013) defines this acceptance of *ir* as "Pasar siendo señalado por alguien" ("To pass by being pointed out by someone").

¹⁸ These semantic characteristics mean that it is not strictly identical to *velaí* and *velo aí*, or to *eis*, which can be purely presentative.

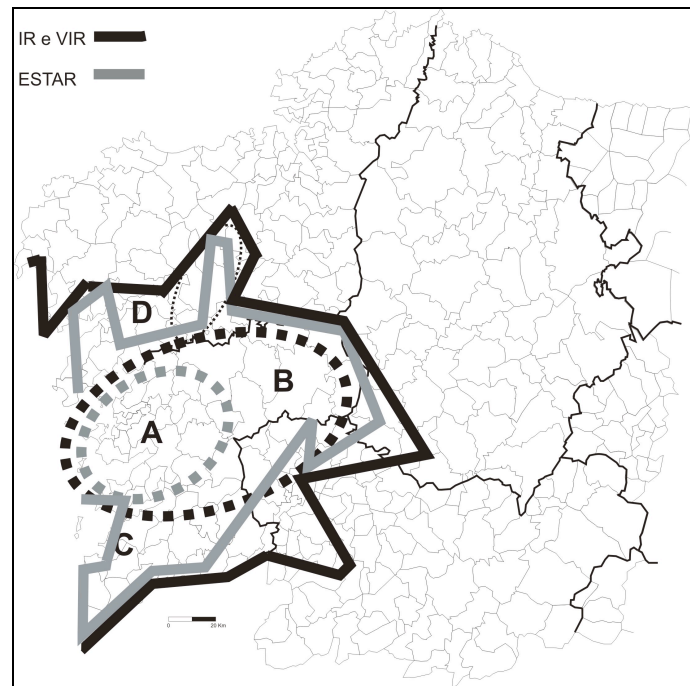
¹⁹ "Valor despectivo."

to belong to the speaker.

3. Geolinguistic distribution and progressive diffusion

The speakers who use this construction always have two options, the second of which is labelled: *{aquí, aí, alí...} está*, without clitic, common to all Galician speakers; *{aquí, aí, alí...} o está*, with clitic, in diatopic distribution. For some years I have described the second as a south-westerly feature, but new data allows the area which it occupies to be delineated with greater precision.

With the cartography of registers with the verbs *ir*, *vir* and *estar* (the three most frequent) having been completed, I can conclude that there are hardly any differences in the geographical extension of the use with *ir* and *vir*, with those with which it reaches maximum diffusion in territory and speakers, as shown on Map 1 with a continuous straight line. The geographical diffusion with *estar* is less, even though it is the most extended and recognised by the remaining verbs. I have charted its maximum area with a continuous grey line. Apart from these isoglosses, in fieldwork only fragmentary and sporadic data, which needs to be corroborated, was found. The density of registers is not the same throughout the area or for all verbs: the area of *ir* / *vir* is denser and more compact than that of *estar*, which means that not all the informants of the area delineated with grey isogloss recognize the second; the dashed lines enclose in the respective ellipses the areas of greater concentration of data and which are the most compact in both cases.



Map 1. Territorial Expansion of the construction with the verb *ir / vir* and *estar*

As is observed in map 1, the areas are sketched out in successive expansion from a single centre: $A \subset B \subset C \subset D$.²⁰ We begin from a central space (A) with the Pontevedra Estuary and the River Lérez as a central axis, and where *aí o vén / aí o vai* as much as *aí o está* occur with greater intensity. In considering only the compact area of the verbs of movement (B), this space extends to the north and south until the Arousa and Vigo Estuary, and to the east until the edges of the total area. If we examine the maximum area of *estar* (C), we see two channels of expansion along the north: one along the coastline and another following the Atlantic axis, through Padrón and Santiago, towards A Coruña; and also an expansion to the south, which comprises part of the Tui area. Finally, the maximum area of *ir* and *vir* (D) comprises the south of province of A Coruña (including the Muros and Noia estuary), enters the south-western part of Lugo and more broadly in the west of Ourense, and goes as far as the River Miño along the entire border between Galician and Portugal. Observe that the linguistic border coincides with the political one along the River Miño; however, within Ourense province, the isogloss does not reach the dry-land border.

²⁰ They are appreciations regarding the current vision of the maps. Maps are not available for us to provide an opinion regarding expansions or retractions over the territory in previous periods.

Everything would seem to indicate that the phenomenon is undergoing expansion and is not in a phase of withdrawal. The diffusion along the Atlantic axis is a good example of this process of territorial change, as this route has functioned for centuries as a transmission channel for prestigious linguistic forms.²¹ There are abundant registers in all the districts situated on both sides of this route from Padrón to Ordes inclusively (which have been highlighted as a second dense area for *ir / vir*), and sporadic registers which reach the Ártabro gulf. The progress along the coast also proceeds in the same direction, until reaching maritime towns like Muros and Corcubión, in contradistinction to the general perception of the speakers of the western interior of the Coruña area, which they do not recognise as their own. In part, there are other examples of the construction breaking its dialectal boundaries: speakers from other areas consulted by me show that they use it because of “contamination” (from Compostela, from Vigo, etc.), and not because it belongs to their original linguistic baggage. Scholars who offer abundant examples in the corpus come from geographical areas in which it undoubtedly does not exist.

The cartography in overlapping areas, some of which are successively integrated within others, also bears witness to the progressive consolidation and expansion within the system suggested here. As we advance from the periphery of the area (D) towards the nucleus (A), the construction occurs in a more systematic manner, attaining a greater number of verbs and offering more extensions of usage unknown to the others. This effect is caused by the fact that it is precisely in this central area where the use of the accusative clitic with this pragmatic value is more advanced and is better installed in the heart of the system.

²¹ The Atlantic axis, as a space of movement for linguistic developments, is reflected also on other maps. As in this case, and advancing from S to N, I have shown previously the diffusion of *alá* and *acá*, to the detriment of *acó* and *aló*, with arguments which are pertinent in the case in question (Álvarez & Xove, 2008).

4. Hypotheses regarding origin

The objective of my study was not to resolve the matter of the origins of this construction, nor does my current historical knowledge allow me to make solid conjectures, but I shall present some hypotheses and discuss others.

The fieldwork data shows that *Aí o vén* is an equivalent quite close to the *Velo aí vén* and *Velaí vén*, but it does not seem that the origin of this use of the clitic with these intransitive verbs is part of an extension of this adverbial phrase, where initially it was the DO of *ver*. Broad dialectal areas of the north of Galicia, where *Velo aí vén* has a strong presence, have no contact whatsoever with *Aí o vén*; the data shows, however, that in area (D), the clitic proceeds to be incorporated in *Velo aí o vén* and in *Velaí o vén*, the use being extended to them from *Aí o vén*. Nevertheless, I believe that it could have contributed to the implantation of *Aí o vén* and similar forms (where the adverb is presentative, as has been shown in §2.3) to the analogy with *velo aí vén* and *eilo vén* where the distinctly presentative adverbs are accompanied by an accusative clitic motivated syntactically at the origin.

The speakers attest consistently to the analogy with *Aí o tes*, *Velo aí o tes* and *Velaí o tes*, which fulfils the same demonstrative function and where the clitic is justified as a DO of *ter*. It is not unusual, after identifying as their own the construction and when offering examples of their own, that they use the verb *ter*. I am not suggesting that this is the origin of the construction, but I do believe that the analogy must have contributed to its triumph and diffusion.

I think it probable that the starting point lies in the constructions *ei* > *eis*, a cognate of the Castilian *he*.²² From the earliest times they have been accompanied by a NP or an accusative clitic, of any person, which in old Galician offers an interesting

²² Coromines proposes as an etymon the “ár. *hâ* (pron. vulgar *hê*), que tiene o mesmo valor” (“ár. *hâ* (vulgar pronoun *hê*)), which has the same value. As documented in the *Cid*, the forms of the central Hispanic romance languages are diverse: with the most current *he*, *e*, *ahé* and *fe* are registered. This is followed by a name or a pronoun, and soon by a deictic adverb which in some cases agglutinates (*ahéy* < *ahé hi*); the combination of *he aquí* tends to be generalized from the 15th century (1980-1991: s.v. HE). If Coromines’ etymological proposal is correct, two questions soon arise which I can only pose: are the first Galician-Portuguese testimonials *eilo*, *eime*, etc. loans from Castilian or other central Hispanic dialects which do not lose the intervocalic -l- ? How can -s (and even -is) in Galician and Portuguese be explained, and with what chronology?

anomaly which is demanding of a more lengthy study: after the Galician *eilo* / *eila*, we tend to assume a final *-s* which justifies the presence of the allomorph *-lo* and, therefore, an adverb *eis* which coincides formally with the solution that has been well known through Galician and Portuguese since the Early Modern Period. There is nothing to support the idea that the *-s* is primitive, as in its origins it is missing in occurrences with other clitics (*eime*, *eivos*), and in fact *ei* is also documented with the same value (*ey teu irmão vê a ti*; for the debate and examples, see Lorenzo 1977: s.v. HEYLOS). There would be therefore a *Ei o vén* syntagma, a variant alternating with *Eilo vén*, both with the same presentative adverb *ei(s)* and not with the adverb of place *aí*: the first with the allomorph expected after a vowel and the second with an irregular pronominal form. The movement of the clitic to constructions with *aí*, through formal confluence, seems straightforward, and by extension to the other deictic adverbs. What has been said in §2.3 in regard to *ei* as a presenter in XIX-century texts should be recalled here (15).

On the basis of the cartography, I have been able to conjecture, moreover, that the construction which acts as a starting point is that of the verbs of movement, and that from here it extends to others. In support of my hypothesis, I will state that all adducible registers of *eis* which are similar in construction, in the Galician of the Early Modern Age (and in their majority from contemporary Portuguese registers), are produced with these verbs

5. Conclusion

In my opinion, the accusative clitic which accompanies these intransitive predicative verbs has a pragmatic function which consists of recognizing a subject that is already known, directing the attention of the listener towards the place where s/he is present. The **conductive** context is characterised by surprise or relief at this finally occurring.

In my analysis I have been able to corroborate how essentially there are important limitations in the nominal forms which can occupy each one of these places:

in the case of the adverb, those of the series *aquí, aí, alí...*, *velaí...*, *velo aí...*, and even of the archaic *ei(s)*; in that of the clitic, only the third person non-reflexive accusative (*o, a, os, as*); in that of verbs, fundamentally *ir, vir, estar* and *andar*.

However, the analysis of the corpus provided allows me to observe some processes of change which cause the grammatical description not to be equally unique and valid for all speakers. These processes, which tend to consolidate the position of the construction within the grammatical system and to widen the options for usage or the range of implied forms, become specific in the aspects which will be highlighted presently. I believe that in them lies the explanation for the apparent descriptive discrepancy according to various authors.

(a) The expansion of the list of verbs affected. Beginning with the verbs of movement *ir / vir* and early on *estar*, and perhaps *andar*, it extends to other stative verbs (*quedar*, and to a lesser extent *seguir*) and could be beginning the extension to other verbs with related meanings (basically in the line of ‘emergence on the scene’).

(b) The expansion of the list of adverbs affected. Beginning with the adverbs of place of the series *aquí, aí, alí* (if my hypothesis regarding the origin is correct, it would emerge first from *ei = aí*), it is extending to the series *velaí* and, in its wake, to the series *velo aí*. Other extensions cannot be ruled out, such as that previously mentioned in §2.3d.

(c) The expansion of implied verbal tenses. It begins with the present indicative (with the possibility of an *ad oculos* demonstration) in order to incorporate first the imperfect tense (or the present of the past) and subsequently, in a more occasional manner, other tenses from the same mood.

(d) The expansion of the range of possible subjects. This stems from the third person (non locutory, non allocutory), which explains the use of the clitic *o / a / os / as* in agreement, but it is extending to other people, in the singular and plural, without this affecting the form of the clitic which continues to be the third person.

In terms of the origin, I believe that, if the analogy with the presentational adverbs *velo aí* and *eilo* (where the accusative clitic is motivated syntactically from its sources) could have indeed contributed, together with other analogical processes, then the history of *aí (~ ei) o vén* is connected with the vicissitudes of *ei(s)*. In this

hypothesis, the construction would be extended from *aí* to the other deictic adverbs. The question will only be able to be resolved properly when an in-depth study is carried out concerning several incidental issues, namely regarding *ei(s)*, *velo aí*, *velaí* and other similar forms.

The construction enjoys great vitality not only in the everyday language of the districts discussed, and through all kind of speakers, but also in written language at different levels and registers. In this sense, it can be pointed out that in the literary language of recent decades it is recurrent not only in authors who belong to the area that has been mapped out, but others who hail from other places. This means that they have incorporated, consciously or not, this feature into their grammar, in the same manner as different informants with linguistic training who have been consulted.

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