

Inverted antecedents in hidden conditionals

Introduction: *Haber* + participle clauses (HPCs) have been characterized by [1] as imperatives in the past.

(1) You are about to make your first soufflé and you would like John (soufflé expert) to help you, but you think he will be away until next Tuesday. You decide not to wait and the result is a fiasco.

a. You: The soufflé was a disaster.

b. Sarah: Haber hecho el soufflé el martes que viene. [HPC]
have.Aux.Inf made the soufflé the Tuesday that comes

‘You should have made your soufflé next Tuesday’

According to [1]’s analysis HPCs are a counterexample to the widely accepted crosslinguistic generalization that imperatives are future oriented. This paper shows that (1b) is not an imperative. Instead, I propose that HPCs are conditionals with inverted antecedents whose consequent has to be retrieved from the context. A parallelism is established with *optative* sentences (*if only I had made the soufflé on Tuesday*).

Bosque’s arguments: [1] provides several arguments in favor of characterizing (1b) as an imperative: (a) it cannot be replied to with “That is false” (it does not have a truth value); (b) it may only have a second person addressee; and (c) it cannot be embedded, (2):

(2) Creo que *(deberías) haber venido ayer.
think.1.sg that should have.Inf come yesterday
‘I think that you should have come’

Against an imperative analysis: It is worth noting that in the *Corpus of reference of Spanish* there isn’t a single occurrence of the canonical imperative form *haced* used as an auxiliary. The claim that examples with infinitival auxiliaries like (1b) are truly imperatives has to be defended in the absence of canonical imperatives forms. **Arguments:** (i) Imperatives are not the only constructions which cannot be replied to with “That is false”. Modal sentences in performative uses cannot be replied to with “that is false” either (e.g. [4]); (ii) Contrary to what [1] claims, the constructions in (1b) can refer to a 3rd person, (3).

(3) A: ‘We will have to see what Félix thinks.’ [free translation]

B: Félix no piensa. No está. ¡ Haber venido !
Felix neg. thinks neg is have.Aux.Inf come

‘Felix does not think. He is not even here. He should have come!’ [RAE.CREA]

Also, constructions like (1b) admit stative predicates, (4a), impossible in regular imperatives, but, crucially, possible with modals, (4b)

(4) a. ¡ Haber -lo sabido antes ! / b. Deberías saber-lo antes.
have.Inf cl.Acc known before should know-it earlier

A last property to be accounted for in an analysis of HPCs is that HPCs are ALWAYS replies:

(5) Sarah enters into kitchen and sees the obviously unsuccessful soufflé. She tells you

a. # Haber esperado a que te pudieran ayudar.
have.Inf waited to that you can help

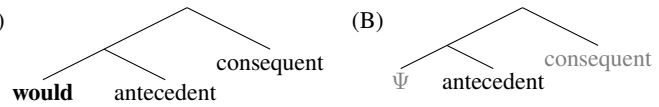
‘You should have waited until somebody could help you’

The utterance of (5a) is infelicitous if you have not said anything.

Overview of the proposal: I argue that HPCs are antecedents of conditionals with a silent consequent. This proposal allows me to explain why they can only be uttered as replies: the consequent of HPCs is silent, but it has to be salient in the discourse so it can be retrieved. **Intuitions:** (i) HPCs are not

would-counterfactuals: counterfactuals like *If you had made the soufflé next Tuesday John would have helped* are true iff in the most similar worlds in which you made the soufflé next Tuesday, John helped (roughly, a causal relation). HPCs are tied to desires, they do not express causality: the counterfactual may be true, but if John's help is not desired, then it is not felicitous to utter (1b) ; (ii) **Counterfactual flavor + obviousness**: the interpretation of an HPC like (1b) is: 'If you had waited, John would have helped you making your desires of cooking a great soufflé true'. The HPC presents the *obvious* alternative to what actually happened in order for the actual world to have had a chance to be according to someone's desires.

Conditionals: A simplified syntax for counterfactuals looks like (A), the parallel illustration for HPCs is in (B). In what follows I argue that HPCs are conditionals spelling out only the (inverted) antecedent. **(Inverted) Antecedents of conditionals**: I argue that there are inverted antecedents in regular conditionals in Spanish. Antecedents without *si* ('if'), (6b), behave differently from antecedents with *si* with respect to pronoun distribution, (6). This argues that (6b) is not equal to (6a) minus *si*. Also, the antecedent in (6b) behaves like inverted antecedents in English in that it does not accept new information focus adverbs, i.e. the antecedent is already established as false in the discourse, it is old information ([2] & [3]).



(6) a. (Sólo) **Si** (tú) **la hubieras invitado** (tú), **habría venido**
 (only) if (you) her had invited (you) have.Pot come
 '(Only) If you had invited her, she would have come'
 b. (*Sólo) (*tú) **La hubieras invitado** (tú), **habría venido**
 (only) (you) her had invited (you), have.Pot come
 '(*Only) Had you invited her, she would have come'

HPCs pattern like Spanish inverted antecedents, (7), supporting an analysis in which HPCs are conditionals spelling out the antecedent. Furthermore, like antecedents of conditionals, and unlike matrix clauses, HPCs accept free choice items in episodic readings, (8).

(7) (*Sólo) (*tú) **haber-la invitado** (tú) (8) Haber hablado con *cualquier* estudiante
 (only) (you) have-her invited (you) have.Inf talked with any student

HPCs don't spell out consequents: If HPCs spelled out consequents, we would obtain something similar to an Anankastic Conditional. In that case, instead of the restrictor, HPCs would spell out the nuclear scope.

(9) Si querías que Juan te ayudara y que el soufflé saliera bueno, tendrías que haber
 if wanted.2.sg that John you help and that the soufflé was good have to have.Inf
 hecho el soufflé el martes que viene.
 done the soufflé the Tuesday that comes

However, (9) and (1b) do not mean the same thing. If Sarah knew that John was going to be back this Friday, but you thought he would be coming next Tuesday, she could have uttered (1b), but not (9) (it would be false). (9) is false because you didn't have to wait till next Tuesday, he could have helped you earlier. According to (1b), if you waited until next Tuesday, John would have helped (but he could have helped also in other days). According to (9), the only day John could have helped you is on Tuesdays.

Optative sentences: Optative sentences in English and Spanish show similar characteristics to HPCs.

(10) If only I had made my soufflé next Tuesday (11) Si solo hubiera hecho el soufflé el martes

In both cases we have a conditional construction in which the antecedent is counterfactual and the consequent is desired. As illustrated, (10, 11), optatives may lack an overt consequent. If the presence of only is linked to desirability in optatives, as suggested in [5], a silent *only* may be present in HPCs.

Bibliography: [1] Bosque 1980: Retrospective imperatives, in *Linguistic Inquiry* 11; [2] Horn 2000: Pick a theory (not just any theory), in *Negation and Polarity* [3] Iatridou & Embick 1993: Conditional Inversion, in *NELS* 24; [4] Kamp 1978: Semantics versus Pragmatics, in *In Formals Semantics and Pragmatics for Natural Languages*; [5] Rifkin 2000: If only if only were if plus only. *CLS* 36