V-Doubling subordinates of immediate succession: a comparative approach between Classical Spanish & Atlantic Creoles

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Abstract

In this paper we study a case of diachronic and diaphasic variation consisting in a subordination strategy for expressing immediate succession present in the cultivated narrative language of Classical Spanish. This strategy is based on verbal doubling (V-doubling), a pattern also found in some contemporary Atlantic creole languages. We analyze the elements that constitute this type of sequences and examine the similarities and differences between the constructions of Classical Spanish and those of the Creoles. We also compare the constructions of Classical Spanish with similar structures without V-doubling, present in all periods of Spanish, in order to detail the
link of V-doubling with focalization of the end of the first event. The strategy analyzed was a transitory way to cover the absence of subordinators expressing immediate succession in an unambiguous way during the chronological period in which it existed.

**Keywords:** subordination, V-doubling, infinitive, gerund, participle.

1. Introduction

1.1. Immediate succession in subordination

In this paper, we study a type of subordination strategy for the expression of immediate succession present in Classical Spanish\(^1\), which is based on verbal doubling (V-doubling). The relationship of immediate succession occurs between two events or states of affairs \((E_1)\) and \((E_2)\) chronologically ordered on the time axis, and between which there is a time segment characterized by its brevity, (1).

\[
(1) \quad \text{Time axis} \quad [E_1] \quad [E_2]
\]

The construction of the meaning of immediate succession is based on various grammatical and non-grammatical (knowledge of the world) components: Aktionsart, correlation of tenses, presence of aspect-temporal modifiers, quantification, negation, etc. This type of temporal relationship can be expressed by means of various syntactic structures. For example, it can appear in two juxtaposed sentences, as in (2a): the interpretation of immediate succession is obtained through the conjunction of factors such as iconicity (the sentence in the first position expresses the event that happens first), the discursive context, the correlation of verb tenses, or the lexical aspect (both events are delimited). Similar factors affect the interpretation of co-ordinate constructions such as (2b).

\[
(2) \quad \begin{align*}
a. & \quad \text{Enciendo el televisor, me quedo dormida} \\
& \quad \text{I turn on the TV, I fall asleep}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
(2) \quad \begin{align*}
b. & \quad \text{Pongo el pie en la calle y empieza a llover} \\
& \quad \text{I set foot in the street, and it starts to rain}
\end{align*}
\]

In the case of subordination, the relational elements expressing immediate succession\(^2\) are a *locus* of historical, geographical, and social variation, in contrast to

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\(^1\) We refer to the Spanish language of the 16\(^{th}\) and 17\(^{th}\) centuries indistinctly with the terms Classical Spanish and Golden Age Spanish.

\(^2\) All subordinators of immediate succession can be translated into English as ‘as soon as’. For this reason, we will not include their meaning in each of them, except when other reasons justify it.
the notions of anteriority and posteriority, which are grammatically codified by means of subordinators which are stable in time, many of them coming from Latin (Herrero 2018, Suñer 2024). A large number of these subordinators had a brief life: this is the case of *abès* ‘as soon as’ (from Lat. *vix*, documented only in 13th century), *en que*, *tan aina/presto como*, etc. Moreover, many subordinators expressing immediate succession change, amplify, or reduce their meaning, like *de que*, *desde que*, *luego que*, etc. (see Herrero 2018 and Suñer 2024). It is also worth noting the number of subordinators of current Spanish coming from correlations: *apenas*, *no bien*, *ni bien*, ... *cuando*, etc. (see Espinosa 2010: 68-69). Another characteristic of these types of units is the wide variety of them that include a quantifier, which could be a way of coding the measure of the interval between the two successive events: *(en) cuanto (que)*, *tan pronto (como)*, *tan luego (como)*, etc. Likewise, many patterns of forming immediate succession subordinators include a negation (or polarity term) associated with the first event *(apenas, no/ni bien*, etc.)

Some of the subordinators expressing immediate succession in present-day Spanish originated in the 15th century, such as *apenas* and *no bien*. However, others, such as *una vez (que)*, *en cuanto* and *tan pronto (como)*, are not documented until the end of 18th century.

The type of subordination studied in this article was a construct specific to cultivated written language between the end of 15th century and the end of 17th century, especially in chivalric novels and chronicles of the conquest of America as well as in other narrative cultivated texts. The construction originated in the Italian of the *Trecento* and *Quattrocento* (see Rohlf 1954/1969: § 990, and Egerland 1996: 99, 1999), and spread from East to West in the same direction as the humanistic currents of thought (see Octavio de Toledo y Rodríguez Molina 2008:288, and Rodríguez Molina 2010: Chap. 6). It is first documented in the Aragonese scriptorium of Juan Fernandez de Heredia and in widespread Catalan works such as *Tirant lo Blanch*, and later in Spanish, see Suñer (in press).

The examples of classical Spanish analyzed in this chapter come from the CORDE corpus, *Diachronic corpus of Spanish*, (RAE-ASALE, [https://www.rae.es/banco-de-datos/corde](https://www.rae.es/banco-de-datos/corde)), which contains Spanish and American data, and CORDIAM, *American diachronic Corpus*, (Company, Concepción dir., Academia Mexicana de la lengua y ASALE, [www.cordiam.org](http://www.cordiam.org)) with American data. Creole language data have been collected in APICS online, *Atlas of Pidgin and Creole languages*, (Susanne Maria Michaelis, Philippe Maurer, Martin Haspelmath, and Magnus Huber eds., [https://apics-online.info/](https://apics-online.info/)).

### 1.2. Temporal subordination with V-doubling in Classical Spanish and current Creole languages

The constructions corresponding to the subordination strategy studied in this paper begin with a verb in the infinitive, (3a), gerund, (3b), or participle, (3c), sometimes preceded by a preposition, which is followed by the complementizer *que* (‘that’) and a finite verb form with the same root as the initial verb.

(3) a. CORDE: Anonymous, *Palmerín de Oliva*, 1511

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mas al } & \text{passar que passó Palmerín} \\
\text{but to.DET } & \text{pass by.INF COMP pass by.PST.3SG Palmerín}
\end{align*}
\]
This strategy was used during a limited period of time in which there were no subordinators that expressed immediate succession in an unambiguous way. During this time, these constructions coexisted with similar constructions of infinitive, gerund, and participle, (4), without doubling, present in Spanish since 11th century and which are maintained in the current language. Unlike V-doubling constructions, the latter, although they can be interpreted as temporal subordinates, lack the nuance of immediate succession.

(4)  a. **CORDE**: Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, *Historia de Indias*, c 1527-1561

   Al salir de la boca (del Drago),
   to.exit.INF of the mouth of the Drago
   vido una isla al norte.
   see.PST.3SG an island to the north.
   ‘When he came out of the dragons mouth, he saw an island to the north.’

   b. **CORDE**: Fray Antonio de Guevara, *Reloj de Príncipes*, 1529-1531

   Llegando este philósopho a la ciudad de Corinto, hallólos
   arrive.GER this philosopher in the city of Corinth find.PAST.3SG
   a todos jugando.
   at all of them playing
   ‘When this philosopher arrived in the city of Corinth, he found all of them playing’

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3 In this example, the main verb in the third person singular (firió) has as subject an empty category whose referent can be recovered from the antecedent Palmerín that appears in the previous subordinate clause or may correspond to another participant in the events narrated. In any case, it is part of a narrative fragment that describes the fight between different characters and how the various sets of events follow one another. In this context, the repetition of the verb emphasizes the immediacy between what is narrated in the subordinate and in the main sentence.
c. CORDE: Miguel de Cervantes, La Galatea, 1585

Llegados los pastores a la fuente, hallaron
Arrive.PTCP.M.PL the shepherds at the well find.PST.3PL
en ella a tres caballeros […]
at her at three knights

‘When the shepherds arrived at the well, they found three knights there […]’

A subordination pattern similar to the construction in (3) appears in some current Atlantic Creole languages, such as Guadeloupean and Martinican creoles, (5), in which it is the only subordination strategy to express immediate succession.

(5) Guadeloupean and Martinican Creole
[Fini i fini], i chapé.
Finish 3SG finish 3SG escape
‘As soon as he finished, he left.’

The aim of our work is to carry out a compositional analysis of this type of constructions and to review the similarities and differences between the constructions of Classical Spanish and those of the Creole languages. We devote section 2 to the study of Spanish constructions and compare Spanish sequences with and without doubling to determine the contribution of this resource to the meaning of immediate succession. In section 3 we analyze similar constructions in Creole languages, and in section 4 we compare Spanish and Creole constructions and argue that both structures are manifestations of the same linguistic phenomenon.

2. V-doubling in Classical Spanish

Temporal subordinated clauses with V-doubling in Classical Spanish, as those we have referred to in 1.2, are introduced by a fronted verb in infinitive, gerund, or participle (V₁), followed by the complementizer que, which, in turn, is followed by a finite verb (V₂) whose root is the same as that of V₁. In section 2.1 below, we review the chronology of these constructions; in section 2.2, we present a selection of data; in section 2.3, we describe their main characteristics, and in 2.4 we explain the contribution of the V-doubling in temporal subordinates of Classical Spanish in comparison with parallel structures that do not contain V-doubling.

2.1. Chronology

Temporal subordinates with V-doubling are documented in Classical Spanish, mainly between the end of 15th century to the end of 17th century. As we have already indicated, they always coexist with infinitive, gerund, and participle temporal subordinated sentences without V-doubling, which appeared earlier and are still in use in today's Spanish.

Constructions of the type «al + V infinitive», (4a), have been documented since the origins (Lope Blanch 1957: §1) and are still in use in current Spanish. Analogous constructions with V-doubling, i.e. those of the type «al + V₁ infinitive + que + V₂»,
however, can only be found between the end of 15th and the end of 17th centuries (Lope Blanch 1957: §4).

Sequences with the form «(en) + V gerund», (4b), also exist in Old Spanish and persist in present-day Spanish; among them, those headed by the preposition are rarely documented since the 18th century (Pato 2010: 838). As for gerund constructions with V-doubling, they are documented between the 16th century to the end of 17th century.

The constructions of the type «V1 participle + que + V2» are documented between the 16th century and the end of 17th century. Regarding this type of sequences, there are similar subordinates, also with participle, in which V2 does not repeat the same root as V1 but consists of an auxiliary form. These structures, to which we will return in 2.2, are found between the 14th and 18th centuries. Both constructions coexist with absolute participle constructions, which are found in Spanish from the earliest texts.

2.2. The data

Let us now look at some examples of the constructions we are analysing here. The sequences containing an infinitive are preceded by the sequence «preposition + article» al, whose presence is obligatory, (6).

(6) a. CORDE: Gutierre Díaz de Games, El Victorial, 1431-1449
   [Al caer que cayó la grand lonbarda],
   to DET fall INF COMP fall PST 3SG the big cannon desconcertóse.
   get puzzled PST 3SG
   ‘Once the big cannon was destroyed, he got puzzled’

b. CORDE: Cervantes, Rinconete y Cortadillo, 1613
   [Al volver que volvió Monipodio],
   to DET come back INF COMP come back PST 3SG Monipodio,
   enter PST 3PL with him two girls.
   ‘Once Monipodio came back, two girls went in with him’

Gerund constructions, exemplified in (7), are optionally preceded by the preposition en (‘in’), which is absent in (7a) and present in (7b).

(7) a. CORDE: Fray Antonio de Guevara, Reloj de príncipes, 1529-1531
   [yendo que fue a visitar a una mujer] [...],
   go GER COMP go PST 3SG to visit to a woman
   halló que la estaba mamando una perrilla
   find PST 3SG COMP to her was nursing a little dog
   ‘Once he went to visit a woman, he found that she was nursing a little dog’

b. CORDE: Cervantes, Segunda parte del Quijote, 1615
   [y en poniendo que puso los pies en el don Quijote],
   and in put GER COMP put PST 3SG the feet on it don Quijote
   disparó la capitanía el cañón de crujía
   shoot PST 3SG the Captain’s ship the cannon of midship gangway
'And, once don Quijote put his feet on it, the Captain’s ship shoted the cannon of the midship gangway'

As we have already mentioned, there are two types of participle constructions. In the first one, \( (8) \), \( V_2 \) does not repeat the root of \( V_1 \), but corresponds to an auxiliary verb. In \( (8a) \) it is the verb \textit{ser}, which in Old Spanish was used as an auxiliary for the compound forms of unaccusative verbs; in \( (8b) \) it is the verb \textit{haber}, the only auxiliary for compound verb forms that has come down to modern Spanish. These constructions are documented prior to the ones with \( V \)-doubling, from the 14\textsuperscript{th} century onwards. From the 18\textsuperscript{th} century to the present day, they are only found in a few texts with an archaizing purpose (see Pavón & Suñer 2017).

\( (8) \)

\( a. \) CORDE: Juan Fernández de Heredia, \textit{Traducción de la Historia contra paganos}, 1376-1396

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[Et tornados que fueron d’alli], (…) ellos fizieron guerra en Assia.} \\
\text{war in Asia} \\
\text{‘Once they returned from there, they made war in Asia’}
\end{align*}
\]

\( b. \) CORDE: Luis Milán, \textit{El cortesano}, 1561

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[bebido que hube del agua],} \\
\text{I drink of water} \\
\text{‘Once I drank some water, I saw myself in it as beautiful as I was ugly before.’}
\end{align*}
\]

In the second type of construction, which has the same interpretation of immediate succession, there is \( V \)-doubling, \( (9) \).

\( (9) \)

\( a. \) CORDE: Juan de Sámano, \textit{Relación de la conquista de los Teules chichimecas}, 1530

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[Llegado que llegó al primer pueblo] (…),} \\
\text{arrive to the first village} \\
\text{‘Once he reached the first village (...) he met a lot of people who were in the field.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\( b. \) CORDE: Testimonio original de información para el cargo y descargo de Pedro de Valdivia, Chile, 1548

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{[venido que vino el hombre],} \\
\text{and the man} \\
\text{‘and once the man had come, the Indians had removed the said neighbor.’}
\end{align*}
\]

### 2.3. Characteristics of \( V \)-doubling constructions in Classical Spanish
The Classical Spanish constructions analyzed correspond to the basic structure reproduced in (10).

(10) (P) V₁ (infinitive/ gerund/ participle) [que [ST V₂ finite]
(root V₁ = root V₂)

The participle constructions, as we have seen in the data of the previous section, are not preceded by a preposition; the gerund constructions can optionally be preceded by the preposition en (‘in’); as for the infinitive constructions, they must be preceded by the contracted form of «preposition + article» al. According to this data, it follows that the preposition is obligatory only with infinitive constructions. In this case, the preposition legitimizes the adverbial character of the subordinate clause or, in other words, its ability to appear in an adjunct position, that is, in a position not governed by a lexical element.

As for gerund and participle constructions, they don’t need an explicit subordinating element to appear as adjuncts. This fact can be explained by assuming the hypothesis of Gallego & Hernanz (2012), who propose that the morphology of both verb forms (-ndo in the case of the gerund and -do/a in the case of the participle) has a preposition in its sublexical structure (a central coincidence preposition in gerunds and a terminal coincidence preposition in participles). Thus, the combination of the prepositional properties of the participle and the gerund, as well as the explicit preposition with infinitives would make adverbial subordination and temporal reading possible.

In sequences corresponding to structure (10), the subordinate clause refers to a telic event, that is, to a time-bound event, and occurs always in sentence-initial position. The relationship of immediate succession between the main event and the subordinate event is also constructed by means of the temporal correlation that the subordinate verb establishes with the main one: the main sentence expresses an event that takes place immediately after the event expressed in the subordinate clause. Another property of the sequences analyzed here is the presence of the complementizer que, which is the subordination mark in Spanish when the subordinate clause contains a verb in finite form, between V₁ and V₂.

In the sequences with V-doubling studied here, the temporal meaning is constructed compositionally, and the following elements are involved in this process:

a) As we have already seen, the preposition is obligatory in the sequences of the type «al + infinitive», since it is required for the construction to be grammatical and interpretable (Rico 2014, 2016). «En + gerund» constructions are grammatical without preposition; however, the preposition is necessary for temporal antecedence interpretation (Pato 2010, RAE 1917). Finally, constructions with participle are ungrammatical with preposition.

b) As the examples in 2.2 show, when the action refers to the past, the tense of V₂ is usually the past perfect simple indicative. When the time sequence refers to future events, we find the present subjunctive in the subordinate clause, (11a). Sporadically, one can also find the present, (11b), provided that the temporal correlation with the verb of the main clause allows the interpretation of immediate succession. Given that, as indicated above, the subordinate clause refers to a telic event, the usual present tense interpretation is obtained in this case (RAE-ASALE 2010, 23.5g; Martínez-Atienza 2004, 3.2.2; 2017: 2.4.2).
(11) a. CORDE: La corónica de Adramón, 1492
[En llegando que llegue más aquella gente
in arrive.GER COMP arrive.PRS.SUBJ.3SG closer those people
que all y viene] venyds algo detrás de my
that there come.PRS.3SG come a little behind of me
‘As soon as those people who are there come, come after me.’

b. CORDE: Fray Antonio de Guevara, Reloj de príncipes, 1529 – 1531
[en abriendo que abren los animales los ojos],
in open.GER COMP open.PRS.3PL the animals the eyes
luego conocen a los amigos que han
immediately know.PRS.3PL to the friends that have.PRS.3PL
de seguir y a los enemigos de que se
to follow,INF and to the enemies from who PRON.3REFL
han de guardar
have.PRS.3PL to protect.INF.
‘As soon as the animals open their eyes, then they know the friends they must follow and the enemies they must protect from.’

Although there are two verbal forms, V-doubling structures are only related to a single argumental grid. If there is an explicit subject, it must be linked to V_2; there is no evidence of constructions like (12).

(12) a. ??Al volver Monipodio que volvió…
to.DET come back.INF Monipodio COMP return.PST.3SG
‘Once Monipodio came back…’
b. ??y, en llegando él y Lauso que llegaron…
and, in arrive.GER he and Lauso COMP arrive.PST.3PL
‘…and, once he and Lauso arrived…’

Also, if the verb governs an object, like los pies (‘the feet’) in (13), it must be linked to V_2:

(13) y en poniendo que puso los pies en él Don Quijote…
and in put.GER COMP put.PAST.3SG the feet on it Don Quijote
‘…and, once Don Quijote put his feet on it…’

2.4. The contribution of V-doubling to the meaning of immediate succession in Classical Spanish

Infinitive, (14a), gerund, (14b), and participle, (14c), temporal constructions without V-doubling are the most common structures in Spanish, in both written and spoken language, in all periods, from the 11th to the 21st century. See the examples in (4), as well as those in (14), which correspond to present-day Spanish.
The main differences between these subordinates and the corresponding with V-doubling are the following:

1) In contrast with temporal V-doubling constructions, temporal non-finite subordinates without V-doubling do not necessarily express immediate succession between two events (cf. (14b)).

2) In constructions without V-doubling, the value of immediate succession must be inferred from other elements: Aktionsart, verbal tense, syntactic aspect, presence of adverbs expressing temporal delimitation (see, among others, Rico 2014, 2016). Thus, for example, in (14a), the interpretation of immediate succession is obtained thanks to the delimited character of the subordinate event, as well as to the perfective verb tense of the main clause.

3) Unlike V-doubling constructions, that must necessarily precede the main clause, temporal non-finite subordinate clauses can precede or follow the main clause: compare (14a, b, c) with (15a, b, c).

(14)  
(a) Al abrir el horno, salió una densa humareda.  
‘When the oven was open, a dense smoke came up’  
(b) (En) saliendo del cine, tropezó.  
‘When/While (s)he was leaving the cinema, (s)he stumbled’  
(c) Acabada la guerra, la familia Prim huyó a Francia.  
‘Once the war ended, Prim family ran away to France’

(15)  
(a) Salió una densa humareda al abrir el horno.  
‘A dense smoke came up when the oven was open’  
(b) Tropezó (en) saliendo del cine.  
‘(S)he stumbled, when/while (s)he was leaving the cinema’  
(c) La familia Prim huyó a Francia acabada la guerra.  
‘Prim family ran away to France once the war ended’

The contrast between the two types of constructions confirms that the main contribution of V-doubling is the unambiguous interpretation of immediate succession by emphasizing the relevance of the fact that the event expressed in the subordinate has ended just before the short interval that precedes the beginning of the event expressed in the main clause. This interpretation is also linked to the fact that sequences with V-doubling must precede the main clause: the anteposition makes it possible to establish a connection with the previous discourse, and, in Diessel’s words, provides “a thematic ground or orientation for subsequent clauses” (Diessel 2005: 459). It is no coincidence that, as indicated in 1.1, constructions with doubling are documented in texts with a primarily narrative component, such as chivalric novels and chronicles of the conquest of America.
As we have previously pointed out, V-doubling was a transitory strategy of subordination. In Medieval and Classical Spanish there is a shortage of temporal conjunctions expressing immediate succession in an unambiguous way (cf. Octavio de Toledo y Rodríguez Molina 2008). Complex conjunctions unambiguously expressing immediate succession (\textit{una vez que} ‘once’, \textit{tan pronto como} ‘as soon as’, etc.) are obtained through a process of grammaticalization that was completed between 16th and 18th centuries. The emergence of this type of conjunctions must be related to the decline of V-doubling constructions expressing the same content.

3. Verbal repetition in Creole Languages

Constructions in which a verb appears at the beginning of the sentence (V-fronting) and the same verb form is repeated in its canonical position (V-doubling) are a widespread phenomenon cross-linguistically. Many Creole and non-Creole languages use V-fronting (with V-doubling) to express focus. Section 3.1. provides relevant data on V-doubling with focal value in Creole languages. In section 3.2. we describe the few Creole languages that have V-doubling constructions for the marking of temporal subordinates, as it seems to be the case in the Spanish constructions of the Golden Century, see Section 2. Finally, section 3.3 summarizes the syntactic and interpretative properties common to all Creole languages that express temporal subordinates by means of V-doubling constructions to draw parallels with the V-doubling temporal subordinates of the Spanish Golden Age, see Section 4.

3.1. V-doubling and focus

V-doubling constructions occur widely in Atlantic creoles and pidgins to express focus (red dots), see Figure 1 and Table 1, see \textit{APICS} (2013: feature 105, \url{https://apics-online.info/parameters/105#2/13.8/10.0}).

\textbf{Figure 1.} Feature 105: V-doubling and Focus (from \textit{APICS} 2013)

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure1.png}
\caption{Feature 105: V-doubling and Focus (from \textit{APICS} 2013)}
\end{figure}

\textbf{Table 1.} Feature 105: Values (from \textit{APICS} 2013)

\begin{table}[h]
\centering
\begin{tabular}{|c|c|}
\hline
\textbf{Language} & \textbf{Value} \\
\hline
Spanish & 105 \\
\hline
\end{tabular}
\caption{Feature 105: Values (from \textit{APICS} 2013)}
\end{table}
According to Figure 1 and Table 1, more than half of the creoles analyzed in APICS do not use V-fronting to express focus, see Maurer (2013). Among those that do (29 languages), the fronted V is related to a copy in the basic position. The doubling construction can vary according to different parameters: absence or presence of a highlighter, copular or non-copular highlighter, presence or absence of a relativizer/relative pronoun heading the background sentence, and a combination of the above three parameters. The relevant data is shown below.

In Trinidad English Creole (English-based Creole language spoken in Trinidad Tobago), V-fronting implies the use of the copular marker *iz*, (16), see Mülheisen (2013), and Maurer (2013).

(16) Trinidad English Creole

*iz* walk he walkin.

COP walk 3SG walk.PROG

‘He really is walking.’

In Berbice Dutch Creole (Dutch-based Creole language spoken in Berbice), V-Fronting implies the use of a copular marker *da* before V₁, and the focus marker *so* postposed to V₁, (15), see Kouwenberg (1994), and (2013).

(17) Berbice Dutch Creole

*Da* me *so* o wa mutε.

COP go FOC 3SG PST go.PFV

‘He had really gone.’

In Santome (Portuguese-based Creole language spoken in the islands of São Tomé, Principe, and diaspora, especially Portugal), the construction emerges with the non-copular highlighter *so* without a relativizer, (18), see Hajermaijer (2013).

(18) Santome

*Bô* ska bè bè -Inô, kume *so* n ska kume.

2SG PROG drink NEG eat HL 1SG PROG eat

‘You are drinking! -No, I am eating.

In Nigerian Pidgin (English-based Creole language spoken across Nigeria), doubling constructions include a non-copular highlighter *nâ* before V₁ and the relativizer *we* between V₁ and V₂, (19), see Faraclass (2013), and Maurer (2013).

(19) Nigerian Pidgin

*Nâ* wâka *we* à wâka.

HL walk REL 1SG walk
‘It is walking that I did.’

Guinea Bissau Kriyol (Portuguese-based Creole language spoken in Guinea Bissau and Gambia) uses no highlighter but the relativizer *ku*, (20), in V-fronting constructions, see Intumbo, Inverno & Holm (2013), and Maurer (2013).

(20) **Guinea Bissau Kriyol**

*Kuri ku i na kuri, i ka na buá.*

run REL 3.SG PROG run 3.SG NEG PROG fly

‘He is running, he is not flying.’

Finally, in Saramacan Creole (English & Portuguese-based Creole language spoken in Surinam, French Guiana), the verb *síki* ‘be sick’ can be fronted in (21) leaving a copy in the background without a highlighter and without a relativizer, see Maurer & the APICS Consortium (2013), and Aboh, Veenstra, & Smith (2013).

(21) **Saramaccan**

*Síki di wómi síki.*

be.sick DEF.SG man be.sick

‘The man is really sick.’

The V-doubling constructions expressing focus in the above examples are quite heterogeneous. Saramaccan Creole, (21) has the simplest construction: $V_1$ subject $V_2$, without any copula/highlighter, relative or focus marker. Berbice Dutch Creole, (17), and Trinidad English Creole, (16), include a copula (*da* and *iz*, respectively) placed before $V_1$. In Nigerian Pidgin, (19), there is a non-copular highlighter (*nā*) located before $V_1$, while in Santome Creole, (18), the highlighter (*so*) appears after $V_1$. Relatives occur only in Nigerian Pidgin (*we*), (19), and Guinea Bissau Kriyol (*ku*), (20), and in both cases the relative is located between $V_1$ and $V_2$. Finally, only Berbice Dutch Creole uses a focus marker (*so*) placed after $V_1$, (17). The syntactic pattern that emerges from all this data is schematized in (22).

(22) $(\{\text{COP} \sim \text{HL}\}) \ V_1 \ (\{\text{FOC} \sim \text{HL}\}) \ (\text{REL}) \ \text{SUBJECT} \ V_2$

Except Saramaccan Creole and Nigerian Pidgin, the other creoles with V-doubling include tense and/or aspect features. Trinidad English Creole, (16), Berbice Dutch Creole, (17), Santome Creole, (18), and Guinea Bissau Kriyol, (20), use aspect markers. In the first two, this mark appears after $V_2$, while in the latter two it arises before $V_2$. Berbice Dutch Creole is the only one of the languages analyzed that expresses past tense features, which are placed before $V_2$, (17). Combining the pattern of (22) with the features of aspect and tense, we obtain the scheme of (23).

(23) $(\{\text{COP} \sim \text{HL}\}) \ V_1 \ (\{\text{FOC} \sim \text{HL}\}) \ (\text{REL}) \ \text{SUBJECT} \ (\{\text{ASPECT} \sim \text{TENSE}\}) \ V_2 \ \text{ASPECT}$

The preceding scheme allows us to make the following generalizations about V-doubling constructions with focal value in Atlantic Creoles:

1. The minimal structure for expressing focus by a V-doubling cleft is (24).
Since creoles are non-null subject languages, the subject is obligatory and, in the examples analyzed, the subject is located before $V_2$.

The relative is optional in these constructions, but if it is present, it is placed between $V_1$ and $V_2$, and it always precede the $V_2$ subject: $V_1 \text{(REL) SUBJECT } V_2$.

Aspect and tense (if present) are always related to $V_2$.

According to the general structure proposed in (23), we should distinguish between two types of creoles: those in which $V$-doubling occurs as a focus mark (Santome, Nigerian Pidgin, Guinea Bissau Kriyol, and Saramaccan Creole), and those that, in addition, are clefts from a structural point of view, because they include a copula or a highlighter with copula value before $V_1$ (Trinidad Creole and Berbice Dutch Creole).

This distinction is crucial to characterize the temporal subordination structures with doubling of 3.2, since they have focal value but are not structurally clefts.

Despite the appearance of two verb forms, only one thematic grid is expressed. This means that, when the verb selects an object, it is associated to $V_2$, as the examples in (25)-(26) show, see Colot and Ludwig 2013, and Farquharson (2013).

V-doubling constructions expressing focus are relatively common in Creole and non-Creole languages. In contrast, the same pattern is much less prominent in the function of marking a temporal subordinate clause and appears only in Creole languages.

According to APICS (2013: https://apics-online.info/parameters/99#2/30.3/10.0), only seven Creole languages, five of them in the Atlantic area, use this construction in temporal subordinates. See the red dots in Figure 2 and their respective values in Table 2.

**Figure 2.** Feature 99: Verb doubling in temporal clauses (from APICS 2013)

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4 Jamaican is an English-based Creole spoken primarily in Jamaica and among the Jamaican diaspora, see Michaelis & Haspelmath (2013).
Creoles with V-doubling in temporal subordinates differ with respect to their lexifier languages and their respective substrate languages although they share some common characteristics. Haitian Creole, (27), as well as Guadeloupean and Martinican creoles, (28), have French as their lexifier language, see Lefebvre (1998: 369), Fattier (2013), and Colot and Ludwig (2013).5

(27) Haitian Creole
[Rive a Jan rive], Mari pati. arrive DEF John arrive Mari leave ‘As soon as John arrived, Mary left.’

(28) Guadeloupean and Martinican Creole
[Fini i fini], i chapé. finish 3SG finish 3SG escape ‘As soon as he finished, he left.’

V-doubling is found also in Berbice Dutch Creole (Dutch-based), (29), and Cape Verdean Creole of Santiago (Portuguese-based Creole spoken in the archipelago of Cape Verde), (30), see Kouwenberg (1994) and (2013), and Lang (2013).

(29) Berbice Dutch Creole
[Di drai wat ju drai- te], o kut- te ju. DET turn REL 2SG turn- PFV 3SG catch- PFV 2SG ‘As soon as you turn around, it catches you.’

5 According to Lefebvre (1998: 363), temporal subordinates with V-doubling in creoles that have French as a lexifier language could be a reminiscence of a similar structure from the substrate Gbe languages as shown in (i), from Fongbe, a Kwa language spoken in Benin.

(i) Fongbe
Wá Jan wá (tróló) bɔ Mâri yi. arrive Jean arrive (as soon as) and Marie leave ‘As soon as Jean arrived, Marie left.’
Temporal subordinates with V-doubling in (25)-(28) are quite heterogeneous, but they all have in common a focal value. However, these subordinates are not clefts from a structural point of view because they lack copular and non-copular highlighters preceding V₁.

The Creoles of Guadeloupe and Martinique illustrate the simplest syntactic pattern, (31), see Maurer (2013).

(31)  \[ V₁ \text{ SUBJECT } V₂. \]

Berbice Dutch Creole, (29), and Cape Verdean Creole of Santiago, (30), have a phrase boundary marker: in the former it is a relative pronoun (\textit{wat}, coming from the lexifier language), in the later it is a simple conjunction (\textit{k}, also coming from the lexifier language). In both cases, this element is placed between V₁ and V₂. In addition, these same Creole languages include an aspect marker (\textit{te} in Berbice Dutch and \textit{ta} in Cape Verdean Creole, respectively), but in (29) this element appears after V₂, whereas in Cape Verdean Creole, (30), the aspect marker is in front of V₂⁶. The basic order of all these elements is schematically shown in (32).

(32)  \[ V₁ [\text{(C) SUBJECT (ASPECT) } V₂ \text{ (ASPECT)}] \]

In addition, The V-doubling constructions in Berbice Dutch Creole and Haitian Creole include definite articles that are not found in other creoles, nor in V-doubling constructions with focal value, see section 3.1. Unfortunately, there is no agreement in the literature on what the semantic contribution of these marks is and how they should be analyzed. In Berbice Dutch, the article \textit{di} is placed before V₁, (29), so Kouwenberg (2013) argues that V₁ is a nominalized form equivalent to "the turning of you turn", see also Maurer (2013). The situation is even more complex in Haitian.

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⁶ In his pioneering work on Nicaraguan Creole, Holm (1978: 235) documents temporal subordinates with V-doubling, (i), but Bartens (2013) found no trace of this construction in their data collection for \textsc{APICS} (2013).

(i)  \[ \text{Nicaraguan English Creole} \]
\[ \text{Di kom yu kom}.... \]
\[ \text{PST come 2.SG come} \]
\[ \text{‘As soon as you come, …’} \]

Note that in Nicaraguan Creole, (i), the tense marker appears before V₁, in contrast to Haitian Creole (see Lefebvre and Ritter 1993: 68), and the other creoles we analyzed in this section, where the tense markers are related to V₂. We have no interesting explanation for this asymmetry.
Creole, where the article a can be both postposed to V₁ (Lefebvre 1998: 369), (33a), and V₂ (Lefebvre & Ritter 1993: 65), (33b)².

(33) Haitian Creole

a. Rive a Jan rive, (epi) Mari pati.  
   arrive DEF Jean arrive (and) Marie leave  
   ‘As soon as John arrived, Marie left.’

b. Rive Jan rive a, Mari pati.  
   arrive Jean arrive DEF Marie leave  
   ‘As soon as John arrived, Marie left.’

3.3. Structural and interpretive properties of temporal subordinates with doubling

Despite the differences between the various creoles with V-doubling in temporal subordinates discussed in 3.2 above, there are some common characteristics that allow generalizations to be made.

1. Temporal subordinates with V-doubling linearly surface as (34), where the fronted V₁ is phonologically identical to V₂ in the basic position, see De Graaf (1992).

(34) V₁ [(C) [TP (…) SUBJECT V₂…]]

2. Temporal subordinate clauses with V-doubling must occur in sentence initial position. In these cases, the subordinate sets a time-reference background for the onset of the following event, see Glaube and Zribi-Herst (2012: 99).

3. Temporal subordinates with V-doubling in the Atlantic Creoles express immediate succession, except in the Cape Verdean Creole of Santiago. In this language, the temporal subordinate is preceded by the central coincidence preposition na ‘in’. Likewise, the verb expresses the development of an undelimited action (kume ‘to eat’). Consequently, the meaning associated with the Cape Verdean Creole temporal subordinate, (30), is one of simultaneity: specifically, the main event, which is a punctual achievement, is included into the first.

4. V-doubling temporal constructions are associated to a single argumental grid, see Glaube and Zribi-Hertz (2012: 83). The following premises are derived from this property.

i) V₁ cannot have an overt subject of its own.

ii) If the V governs an object, the object may only be realized on V₂, (35), see Glaude and Zribi-Hertz (2012: 99).

(35) Haitian Creole

[Manje Pòl te fin mange diri a], (epi) Elsi soti.  
Eat Paul ANT finish eat rice LA THEN Elsi go.out

² Maurer (2013) suggests that the presence of a nominalized form of V could lead to a causal reading. We do not address this issue, as it is beyond our goals.
Once Paul had finished eating the rice, Elsi went out.’


(36) Haitian Creole

*[Gran Pôle gran], (epi) Elsi pati.

big Paul big then Elsi leave.

Lit: ‘Once Paul is big, Elsi left.’

(37) Haitian Creole

[Gran Pôle fin gran], Elsi pati.

big Paul ACC big Elsi leave

Lit: ‘Once Paul had become big, Elsi left.’

(‘Once Pal had grown up, Elsi left.’)

6. Relative pronouns are uncommon worldwide (Comrie and Kuteva 2005: 202), and they mostly occur in Creoles whose lexifier is a European language.

7. The V-doubling temporal subordinates of Creole languages have a focal value, as in the V-doubling sentences of Santome Creole, Guinea Bissau Kriyol and Saramacan Creole (see section 3.1.). However, they are not clefts, as the V-doubling sentences of Trinidad English Creole, Berbice Dutch Creole, and Nigerian Pidgin (see section 3.1), because there are no copular and non-copular highlighters before V1.

4. Similarities and Differences between V-doubling temporal subordinates in Golden Age Spanish and Atlantic Creoles

Before comparing the syntactic and semantic properties of temporal subordinates with V-doubling in Atlantic Creoles and in Classical Spanish, it should be noticed that there are very different language varieties and registers. The V-doubling construction is the only option available to the speakers of the Atlantic creoles to express temporal subordinate sentences on which the culmination of the first event is to be focused. On the contrary, the constructions of Classical Spanish with V-doubling coexist with other syntactic patterns to express temporal subordinate sentences, and they have never been used in the spoken language. In fact, they constitute an expressive resource of specific narrative texts, such as chivalric prose and the chronicles of the conquest of America. Moreover, Classical Spanish and Atlantic creoles are very different languages from a typological point of view. Nevertheless, there are many similarities between the constructions of Classical Spanish and those of the Atlantic creoles. First, both share the same basic pattern, (38).

(38) \[ V_1 \ (\text{COMP}) \ V_2 \]

In some Creole languages, the COMP position is not lexically manifested, whereas in Berbice Dutch Creole and in Cape Verdean Creole of Santiago it is saturated by a relative (wat) and a conjunction (k’), respectively. In both cases, these elements are inherited from their lexifier language: Dutch and Portuguese,
respectively. In Classical Spanish COMP is obligatorily expressed by the conjunction que: V₁ que V₂.

V-doubling constructions in both Classical Spanish and Atlantic Creoles have one thematic network (the one related to V₂), even though two verb forms appear in the subordinate, see sections 2 and 3. In Classical Spanish, this premise is always true for both external and internal arguments. In Atlantic Creoles the internal arguments are always selected by V₂, but in Haitian Creole the external argument (Pòl) of the verb eat seems to be related to V₁, (35). Since we have so few examples, it is not possible to make a hypothesis to explain this behavior. In any case, even this example fits the initial pattern of V-doubling structures in Creole languages: V₁ SUBJECT V₂, see section 3.2.

Atlantic creoles and Golden Age Spanish differ in the subject position of V-doubling constructions. In creoles, the subject (if present) is obligatorily placed before V₂ since they lack verbal inflection and are non-null subject languages, (39): V₁ subject V₂. In the case of an overt subject that coincides with a relative, the relative always precedes the subject. In Classical Spanish, which is a null-subject language, the subject may not appear lexically expressed, (41), or it may be placed after V₂, (40), since V-doubling triggers the inversion of the subject-verb order: V₁ COMP V₂ (SUBJECT).

(39) Guadeloupean and Martinican Creole, APICS, Colot and Ludwig (2013)
[Fini i fini], ...
finish 3SG finish
‘As soon as he finished, …’

(40) CORDE: Cervantes, Rinconete y Cortadillo, 1613
[Al volver que volvió Monipodio],… (C.S.⁸)
to.DET return.INF CONJ return.PST.3SG Monipodio
‘Once Monipodio came back, …’

(41) (CORDE: Fray Antonio de Guevara, Reloj de príncipes, 1529-1531)
[Yendo que fue Ø a visitar a una mujer], … (C.S.)
go.GER CONJ go.PST.3SG SUBJ to visit ACC a woman
‘Once he went to visit a woman, …’

Despite the typological differences between the two languages, in V-doubling temporal constructions tense and aspect features—and also agreement features in the case of Classical Spanish—are related to V₂, i.e. V₂ sets the temporal background for the onset of the following event, see Glaude and Zribi-Herzt (2012: 99). The fact that V₂ is associated with both the thematic network, and tense and aspect features indicates that V₂ is the full verb of the sentence, while V₁ is the verbal root that will be copied to the focus position. The defectivity of V₁ is not so clearly perceived in Creoles since the verbal root does not merge with verbal morphology (because they are isolating languages), whereas in Classical Spanish (a fusional language) the defectivity of V₁ corresponds to the use of non-personal verb forms.

⁸ Classical Spanish.
Likewise, the V-doubling temporal constructions of Atlantic Creoles and Classical Spanish must precede the main clause, in contrast to other types of adverbial subordinates, which can either precede or follow the main sentence, or even interrupt it as parenthetical information. This fact must be derived from the focal origin of the V-doubling construction (discussed in sections 3.1 and 3.2), which marks the relevance of the culmination of the first event.

5. Conclusion

In this article we have analyzed from a syntactic and interpretative point of view the temporal subordinates with V-doubling in Classical Spanish. These constructions are found in cultured Spanish narrative texts, such as novels of chivalry and chronicles of the conquest of America, between the end of the 15th century and the end of the 17th century but they have never been used in spoken language, in which other types of strategies were used to construct temporal subordinates.

By comparing the V-doubling constructions of Classical Spanish with the V-doubling temporal subordinates of some Atlantic Creoles (Haitian, Guadeloupean & Martiniquean, and Berbice Dutch Creoles), we have shown that both types of structures share relevant properties.

First, both are focal constructions, where $V_1$ -a (defective) copy of $V_2$- has a focus position, while $V_2$ is in the background of the subordinate sentence. The thematic grid as well as tense and aspect features are related to $V_2$ in both types of languages.

Second, both constructions express the relevance of the culmination of the first event, followed by a brief interval of time, the end of which coincides with the beginning of the second event.

Third, in both types of languages, the V-doubling subordinate must occupy an initial position, possibly because of the focal value of $V_1$.

Fourth, $V_1$ is a defective verbal form in both types of languages. In Atlantic Creoles, which are isolating languages, the defectivity is manifested simply by the verbal root. Classical Spanish, which is a merging language, does not allow bare verbal roots to emerge in the syntax, so the defectivity of $V_1$ is manifested by the merging of the verbal root with the morphology of the non-personal infinitive, gerund, and participle verb forms.

The two types of languages differ in characteristics related to linguistic typology, but also in the fact that Classical Spanish constructions have an ephemeral life, are extremely marked, and are only documented in written texts. In this paper we have argued that the abrupt disappearance of V-doubling constructions in Classical Spanish at the end of the 17th century coincides with the emergence of subordinators that clearly express the notion of immediate succession. In sum, the V-doubling constructions of Classical Spanish entered the language opportunistically, as they occupied a gap that was empty in the linguistic system, and disappeared without a trace when they were replaced by less marked adverbial subordination strategies.

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