

Proper names in Spanish nominalizations in *-ada*

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An interesting and productive phenomenon regarding proper names is their use as verbal predicates (*Maradona* > *maradonear*_{VERB}) and, consequently, the possibility of creating nominalizations in *-ada* (*maradoneada*). These uses trigger many discussions on meaning because, as is well known, proper nouns are said to lack descriptive content, and are supposed to have a referential interpretation instead. Nevertheless, there are many constructions in which proper names acquire a conceptual meaning which deviates from the meaning of “being named X”. In fact, these uses let us obtain an interpretation in which, in this case, the event described by the verb alludes to a salient characteristic attributed to the person the name refers to. The salient feature is not necessarily fixed and may change depending on the acquaintance of the interlocutors with the person in question and their knowledge of this person’s habits, capacities, etc., among other things. In many cases, the conceptual meaning is not clear at all (1) (*Cristina*>*cristineada*), (2) (*Mujica*>*mujiqueda*).

(1) Trump se está mandando Cristineada tras Cristineada pero si lo digo me linchan. [A user of X, 24 September 2024]

‘Trump keeps on behaving like Cristina, but if I say so, I’ll be lynched’

(2) y en una de sus mujiquedas características... [J. M. Karg, *Cenital*, 2 December 2024]

‘... and in one of Mujica’s characteristic attitudes...’

The focus of this research is on the analysis of nominalizations in *-ada* derived from proper names or, more precisely, from verbs formed from proper nouns. Regardless of the flexibility of conceptual meaning, there are formal features and structural properties that contribute to the predicative interpretation and show that these constructions exhibit a high degree of compositionality.

Following Grimshaw’s (1990) classic distinction between eventive and resultative nominalizations, proper names with *-ada* (PrN-*ada*) display an ambiguous interpretation depending on the context in which they are used. According to Grimshaw, eventive nominalizations are interpreted as processes and denote the activity or action of the base (e.g., *the translation of the proposal*), whereas resultative nominalizations are

associated with the product or state resulting from that action (e.g., *the translations on the table*).

The data show that the distinction between eventive and resultative nominalisations is blurred in these cases: PrN-*ada* seems to encode both meanings (process and result of that process). In relation to its aspectual structure, the sequence denotes achievements, i.e., dynamic, durative and telic events. Finally, when pluralized, they are interpreted with an iterative value.

All in all, PrN-*ada* have a morphologically complex structure of both a nominal and eventive nature whose interpretation is generally of result and denotes an unergative event that describes a prototypical behaviour associated with a PrN. As has been suggested by many authors, there is a certain parallelism between the syntactic configuration of the root base -in this case, unergative- and the internal structure of the nominalisation.

Within the generativist model known as Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993), our proposal is that roots are syntactic objects that lack semantic and phonological content (Pfau 2009) and part of the interpretation they receive depends on the structure in which they are assembled. This approach assumes the late insertion of phonological exponents and argues for the idea that roots are not categorized, but acquire their category in the course of the derivation (Embick & Marantz 2008). We assume, then, that proper names contain a root and that the observed difference between referential and predicative readings as well as the aspectual and eventive/resultative properties, result from the position in which the root is merged and its combination with categorizers and other functional projections. We also examine the difference between PrN-*ada* and common nouns-*ada* in order to understand the role of the root and the projections involved in each case.

References

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