

The avertive *hube de* + infinitive in Spanish

Avertives *hube de* + Infinitiv im Spanischen

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Recibido: 24/04/2019

Aceptado: 22/03/2020

Abstract

In this contribution, we present the results of a representative perception study that was carried out to determine how the verbal periphrase *hube de* + inf. is understood in Cuban and Argentinian Spanish and whether the Galician avertive led to the presence of this category in those varieties. By means of analysing interviews conducted in different Spanish cities (Barcelona, Madrid, Santiago de Compostela), Argentinian cities (Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Córdoba and other cities in the province of Córdoba), Uruguay (Montevideo), and Cuba (Havana, Santa Clara), it was possible to show that in the Cuban variety of Spanish and in River Plate Spanish—Uruguay, Buenos Aires, Argentinian Northwest—there is no trace of an influence of the Galician avertive *hube de* + inf., while it gives proof of the existence of at least a perception of the avertive *hube de* + inf. in the Cordoban variety of Argentinian Spanish.

Key words

Verbal periphrases; avertive; *inminencia frustrada*; Galicia; Cuba; River Plate

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Zusammenfassung

Der Beitrag betrachtet die Ergebnisse einer repräsentativen Perzeptionsstudie zur Ermittlung der Art und Weise, wie die Verbalperiphrase *hube de* + Infinitiv im kubanischen und argentinischen Spanisch verstanden wird und ob galicisches Avertiv zur Präsenz dieser Kategorie in diesen Varietäten beigetragen hat. Interviews wurden in verschiedenen Städten durchgeführt: in Spanien (Barcelona, Madrid, Santiago de Compostela), Argentinien (Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Córdoba sowie weiteren Städte in der Provinz Córdoba), Uruguay (Montevideo) und Kuba (Havanna, Santa Clara). Die Analyse konnte zeigen, dass es in der kubanischen Varietät des Spanischen und im Spanischen am Río de la Plata (Uruguay, Buenos Aires, Argentinischer Nordwesten) keine Belege für einen Einfluss des galicischen Avertivs *hube de* + Infinitiv nachweisen lassen, wogegen es Nachweise für eine Perzeption als Avertiv im Spanischen der argentinischen Provinz Córdoba gibt.

Schlüsselwörter

Verbalperiphrasen, Avertiv, frustrierte Imminenz, Galicien, Kuba, Río de la Plata

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1. Introduction

As several authors, such as Heine / Kuteva (2010: 538), have already claimed, Galician is among the—very few—European languages (such as French, Turkish and Bulgarian) where a more or less grammaticalized expression of the avertive category, as it has only recently been called to label “an action which was potentially imminent but did not ultimately get realized” (Kuteva 2001: 78; cf. Kuteva 1998), can be found. The avertive, apparently only used in the past tense, denotes a verb situation that was on the verge of taking place but did not (cf. Heine / Kuteva 2010: 535). The avertive category is described as semantically complex as it sits at “the intersection of no less than three functional domains: temporality (it denotes pastness), aspectuality (it stands for a verb situation which was imminent), and modality (counterfactuality: the verb situation was not realized)” (Heine / Kuteva 2010: 535).

Indeed, in Galician, there is the construction *haber* [in *pretérito perfecto simple de indicativo* (indicative of the preterite)] *de* + infinitive (cf. 1), generally considered to be a *perífrasis temporal de inminencia* or *perífrasis temporal de inminencia frustrada* (temporal verbal periphrasis of frustrated imminence) and classified as perfective-aspectual by authors such as Kabatek (1996: 133); according to Álvarez *et al.* (1998: 405), this construction indicates that an action was on the verge of being carried out but subsequently was not (“indica acción que estuvo a punto de realizarse pero non se realizou”).

- | | | |
|---|-----------|---------------|
| (1) <i>Houbo</i> | <i>de</i> | <i>facelo</i> |
| 3SG-have-PRET-PERF | to | do-it |
| ‘He/she/it was about to do it (and didn’t)’ | | |

As a matter of fact, among the younger generations of Galician speakers, allegedly because it lacks an equivalent in Castilian Spanish, this *perífrasis de inminencia* (verbal periphrasis of imminence) is less frequent than among older speakers (cf. Ochoa 2000: 6), but there are no representative empirical analyses available on this subject (§ 4.1.2 on the presence of the avertive interpretation of Spanish *hube de* + inf. among our Galician informants). Nonetheless, there is no doubt that before its frequency of use presumably started to diminish or become reduced, there must have been—at least occasionally—an influence in the opposite direction, as the avertive *hube de* + inf. of Galician seems to have spread from Galician to the Spanish spoken in Galicia (García 1976: 334; Seco 1986: 214–215). It is not clear if this concerns only the Spanish of bilinguals or also the Spanish of monolingual speakers of (Galician) Spanish.

García (1976), for example, sustains that in *castellano agallegado*—something like “Galicianised Spanish”—*haber de* + inf. has the value of ‘being on the verge of’

when the auxiliary verb is in *perfecto simple* (preterite), and therefore, expressions such as *hube de decirlo* do not mean ‘I had to say it’ but ‘I almost said it / I was on the verge of saying it’. Taking into consideration the lack of relevant studies regarding this construction, it is not clear though who would be the ones to use this construction in Spanish with the avertive meaning: speakers of Galician with a low command of Spanish, who learned Spanish as a second language and do not have a profound knowledge as a result of the unsystematic acquisition? Bilingual speakers? Or also even monolingual speakers of Spanish?

The same possible influence could hold true for other varieties of the Spanish language that used to be or still are in contact with Galician or with Spanish spoken by Galicians, as is the case of Spanish in Argentina and Cuba. Both countries received large streams of Galician-speaking immigrants during the last centuries. As a matter of fact, the varieties of Spanish spoken in the bilingual areas of Spain have only quite recently begun to attract the interest of scholars, and maybe this is the reason the influence of the Spanish regional languages (and of the Spanish of these regions) on Spanish in the Americas has not yet been paid much attention to by linguists working on the American varieties of Spanish (cf. Sinner 2004: 1, 37-43; Frago Gracia 1999: 34-38) For a discussion of this and for examples of the influence of Galician on Argentinian Spanish cf. Sinner (2016).

For Argentinian Spanish, the use of the verbal construction *haber de in perfecto simple* (preterite) + inf. with the meaning it has in Galician was mentioned once, over 70 years—that is, at least two generations¹—ago, by Capdevila in 1940: “Cuando un argentino dice que *hubo de viajar a Europa*, quiere significar que, habiendo estado a punto de hacerlo, no lo hizo” (Capdevila 1940: 110)². This usage mentioned by Capdevila has not been commented on in any other publication on Spanish grammar we have knowledge of. Nor does it appear in any of the important monographic volumes on Spanish *perífrasis verbales* (verbal periphrases), the dictionary of *perífrasis verbales* edited by García Fernández *et al.* (2006) or any of the publications on Argentinian Spanish and its regional varieties, such as Fontanella (2000). If it does actually exist, it could be related to the influence of the Spanish spoken by the vast number of Galicians who migrated to Argentina. It is considered highly difficult, if not impossible, to determine the importance of the immigrants’ influence on the use or change of certain linguistic phenomena. Yet, despite the fact that the adaptation of the majority to the immigrants is, allegedly, an exception (cf. Bernhard 1998: 7), there is at least no doubt about the possibility of an influence of the migrants’ language on the language of the host country (cf. Sinner 2005a: 142). It is a process that seems

1. *Generation* generally refers to the average age difference between children and their father or mother (cf. Mannheim 1964: 512).

2. ‘When an Argentinian says *hubo de viajar a Europa*, it means that despite having been on the verge of travelling to Europe, he did not do so.’

to depend largely on the number of immigrants of a certain variety and at a certain place. It seems likely, for example, that it was precisely the Galician migration of the 19th and 20th century that contributed to the rise in the use of certain morphological features in the Spanish of some American countries, most particularly Cuba³. As Novicov (1979: 233) states, unquestionable, it was the Galician immigration of the 19th and 20th century which had a considerable impact on the augmented frequency of use of the forms ending in *-ra* as indicative pluperfect in some American countries. The exact origin of the migration streams arriving to Argentina from Spain is hardly documented and we know even less about the distribution of the influx from Galicia in this South American country.

Given the Galician influence on Galician Spanish, an impact of the semantics of *hube de + inf.* in Argentinian and Cuban Spanish does not seem unlikely. While it is not always possible to claim with absolute certainty that a specific structure can only be seen as a result of linguistic interference, in the case of *hube de + inf.*, other explanations than a result of contact seem rather unlikely. We believe we can say without any restrictions that in case there are hints for a use or interpretation of the structure with the avertive meaning, they can only be due to the impact of the Galician or the Galician Spanish on the local variety of Spanish. As a matter of fact, there are structures which could be considered as avertive in other languages, but none of them is merely limited to a certain tense corresponding to *hube de + inf.* Furthermore, none of the languages with a more or less grammaticalized expression of the avertive category happens to be among the contact languages of Spanish in Argentina and Cuba.

To verify Capdevila's position and shed light on the possible impact of Galician on South American varieties of Spanish, in this contribution we are going to analyse the way the structure *hube de + inf.* is understood in different varieties of Spanish. The claimed existence of the avertive category in Argentinian Spanish will be scrutinized by means of empirical data, as will be the possibility of its existence in Cuban Spanish. In the next chapter, we will justify the chosen methodology, and in chapter 3, we shall present the results of the analysis.

2. On the avertive structure under scrutiny

Constructions that express that something is about to happen are called imminent constructions in Spanish (*de inminencia*), and structures like *ir a + inf.* 'going to

3. In Cuba, unlike what happened in other South American countries, the Galician immigrants as a whole did not choose to settle in the cities but rather spread across the entire country. As Neira Vilas (1995: 153) points out, the long-lasting and numerous presence of Galicians left a strong cultural and linguistic imprint. The author also mentions some Galician words integrated into the Spanish spoken in Cuba (Neira Vilas 1995: 151-158).

+ inf.’ are perceived as such; it is seen as proof for an imminent meaning of these constructions that the periphrastic complex might be substituted by *estar a punto de* + inf. ‘to be about to + inf.’, but not by the synthetic future form which does not possess this value (Rădulescu & Topor 2008: 699; cf. Gómez Torrego 1988: 68). As Rădulescu & Topor (2008: 700) point out, from the imminent meaning of *ir a* + inf. it is possible to obtain a meaning known, in Spanish linguistics, as conative or *de conatu* (Gómez Torrego 1988; Gili Gaya 1994; Olbertz 1998; Fernández de Castro 1999), which indicates an action that, despite being initiated or attempted, does not actually happen or end up fulfilled—“acción que se inicia o intenta, pero que no llega a verificarse” (Lázaro Carreter 1974: 108)—. As we have shown, if these structures are more or less grammaticalized, they are labelled as avertives by Kuteva (1998, 2001). Grammatical descriptions or explanations of conative interpretations of structures such as *ir a* + inf. ‘going to + inf.’ usually operate with examples. Gómez Torrego (1988: 75), for instance, gives the following example to explain that in order to affirm that the attempt to fulfil an action has failed, the speaker takes into consideration gestures by the person who did not get to act as proposed:

(2) <i>El</i>	<i>viajero</i>	<i>va</i>	<i>a</i>	
The-SG-M	traveller-NOM-SG-M	3SG-go-PRS	to	
<i>decir</i>	<i>algo,</i>	<i>pero</i>	<i>el</i>	
say-INF	something,	but	the-SG-M	
<i>chamarillero</i>	<i>le</i>	<i>interrumpe</i>		
junk dealer-NOM-SG-M	him/her-DAT	3SG-interrupt-PRS		

‘The traveller is going to say something, but the second-hand dealer interrupts him’

The gesture that allows to infer that the agent does not get to fulfil such an action could be the simple act of approaching the dealer, as if to prepare to speak to him. Veyrat Rigat (1992) analyses the context in which *ir a* + inf. appears in its different meanings and observes that the conative meaning is recognizable from its distribution in the coordinate (3), subordinate (4) or juxtaposed clause, but that it never appears in simple clauses (5). In (6), *ir a* + inf. does not express the failed attempt, but that the event in *hacer un mitin* ‘have a meeting’ is presented as a future in the past, even though nothing is said about whether it finally took place or not:

(3) <i>Iba</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>entrar</i>	<i>y</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>me</i>
1SG-go-IPF	to	go_in-INF	and	NEG	1SG-DAT

dejaron (Veyrat Rigat 1992: 659).

3PL-let-PRET-PERF

‘I was going to go in but they would not let me’

(4) *La* *niña,* *que*
The-SG-F girl-NOM-SG-F REFL-PRON

fue *a* *salir,*
3SG-go-PRET-PERF to go_out-INF

tropezó (Veyrat Rigat 1992: 659).

3SG-stumble-PRET-PERF

‘The girl, who was going to leave, stumbled’

(5) *Voy* *a* *entrar,* *me*
1SG-go-PRS to go_in-INF 1SG-DAT

empuja *y* *caigo* (Veyrat Rigat 1992: 658).
3SG-push-PRS and 1SG-fall-PRS

‘I was going to enter when he pushed me and I fell’

(6) *El* *candidato* *iba* *a*
The-SG-M candidate-NOM-SG-M 3SG-go-IPF to

hacer *un* *mitin*
make-INF a-SG-M meeting-NOM-SG-M

electoral.

electoral-ADJ

‘The candidate was going to have an election campaign meeting’

The conative value furthermore is discernable because of the tense of the auxiliary verb, usually put in indicative imperfect (3) and accompanied by contextual elements such as *cuando* ‘when’, *siempre* ‘always’, *en cuanto* ‘as soon as’. As Gili Gaya (1994) points out, those are the reference points to mark the moment in which the event designated by the verb in infinitive is interrupted:

(7) *Me* *iba* *a* *marchar* *cuando*
1SG-REFL 3SG-go-IPF to go-INF when

<i>sonó</i>	<i>el</i>	<i>teléfono.</i>
3SG-ring-PRET-PERF	the-SG-M	phone-NOM-SG-M

‘I was going to leave when the phone rang’

As can be seen in these examples, there are also other tenses than the indicative imperfect to be found, such as the indicative simple past tense like in (4), and the indicative perfect in (8):

(8) <i>Cuando</i>	<i>he ido</i>	<i>a</i>	<i>contestar</i>
When	1SG-go-PERF	to	answer-INF
<i>me</i>	<i>han atajado</i> (Gili Gaya 1994: 108).		
1SG-DAT	3PL-stop-PERF		

‘When I was going to answer I was stopped’

In all these examples, also quoted in Rădulescu & Topor (2008: 700), it can clearly be seen that the frustration of the purpose can be determined from the information contained in the sentence, such as “but the second-hand dealer interrupts him” in (2) or “but they would not let me” in (3). In the case of sentences such as (7), we believe it is not even possible to speak of a frustrated attempt, as some authors do and as the Spanish term *inminencia frustrada* (‘frustrated imminence’) implicates. On one hand, it can be argued that the speaker did not actually *try* to leave, but rather *intended* to leave, and *intention* is not the same as an *attempt*. Therefore, the definition of Lázaro Carreter (1974: 108), an “action that, despite being initiated or attempted, does not actually happen or get fulfilled” would have to be complemented by an “action which is intended to be done but not accomplished”. On the other hand, it does not seem correct to speak of *frustrated* attempt because in this case, in contrast to the other sentences, we cannot infer from the context if the person actually stayed where s/he was afterwards, that is, if the person stayed where s/he was and did not actually do what s/he said s/he was going to do. The only information we obtain from sentence (7) is that the speaker was about to leave when the phone rang. We do not know if the same person did not, in fact, leave after the phone call.

These cases illustrate the problem we face when we want to analyse the use of the avertive *hube de + inf.*: in real language, we do not always get clues that make the proposition as transparent and obvious as in the given examples and that would allow for a clear-cut differentiation of attempts as [+frustrated] or [–frustrated]. In the case of *hube de + inf.*, there is no way to exclude the possibility of the structure actually having the value of an expression of future or obligation. As long as the context does not provide information that makes the avertive usage explicit, the structure itself

could have any of the possible semantics. As a matter of fact, when working with different corpora of oral and written language, we quickly realized that in most contexts it was not possible to distinguish the meanings underlying the analysed structure. When we asked native speakers of different varieties of Spanish, they simply understood *hube de* + inf. in accordance with their own diatopic variety, that is, generally either temporal or obligative. In the majority of times, they understood it without even considering other possible interpretations of the sentences, if they hadn't already admitted to being incapable of determining the value the structure had in the given sentences.

In the case of *hube de* + inf. the same holds true as for cases of *haber de* + inf. in general and for other verbal periphrases, as the majority of authors notice the different values: aspectual—imminent and prospective—, modal—intention—, and temporal—future— cannot be not clearly distinguished (cf. Rădulescu & Topor 2008: 696). The indecision of many of the informants regarding the value of some verbal periphrases does not come as a surprise if we take into consideration positions such as the one by Gómez Torrego (1988: 68), who affirms the step from the temporal value to the aspectual value is almost imperceptible.

As the context generally does not help much or allows for interpretations with subtle differences, this leaves us with the difficulty of having to discover the meaning of a sentence by asking the speakers. In the case of *hube de* + inf., the avertive meaning is so specific that we cannot do anything but ask the users how they actually perceive it, instead of asking about how they use it. It is well known that speakers are generally not conscious of what they do, linguistically speaking, and therefore it seems much more adequate to investigate the way they perceive certain structures or ask for the conclusions regarding certain contexts⁴. We will justify or explain this with another case of interpretation of the structure *haber de* + inf., the obligative value. It is this meaning speakers of many varieties of Spanish associate with the construction when hearing or reading it. At the same time, it does not seem to be the meaning speakers with clear linguistic models of the Galician language “favour” when confronted with the construction and asked about its value. The judgments of speakers influenced by another language can differ heavily. In a study of the Galician speakers' judgments of *haber de* + inf. with obligative value in the Galician language, Kabatek (1996: 136) showed clear patterns of rejection on the part of speakers with clear linguistic models of Galician, while it was accepted by speakers whose Galician is heavily influenced

4. As we commented before (Sinner 2004: 113-114), Coseriu (1973: 60) believes speakers are fully aware of the system and the so-called “linguistic laws”, and that they do not only know what they say, but also how something is said or how it is not said, as otherwise we would not be able to speak at all. This position seems unconvincing as it was proven that speakers rather have no idea what they are saying, are not able to reproduce the exact formulation of something they just said (Bollnow 1966: 171-172) and, therefore, it is to be presumed that they will have an even less clear idea of their own linguistic behaviour.

by Spanish. To express future value, informants preferred *vou facer* 'I am going to do' over the structures *hei facer* and *farei* while the first of those two is rejected by speakers with better command of Galician; speakers of younger generations seem to consider *hei facer* as archaic, something which could be due to Spanish influence given that in that language the periphrasis *ir a + inf.* prevails. Apparently, the diatopic and social dialect of a speaker influences not only the way a given element is interpreted, but also the whole chain of expressions semantically or formally related with *haber de + inf.* Therefore, when the speakers are asked about one element, the others cannot be left aside.

3. The study

The analysis of the avertive use of *haber de + inf.* is inserted into a larger, longitudinal study of verbal periphrases such as exposed in Sinner (2005b; cf. Sinner 2002). The contrastive analysis is based on interviews conducted in Spanish cities (Barcelona, Madrid, Santiago de Compostela), Argentinian cities (Buenos Aires, Mendoza, Santiago del Estero, Tucumán, Córdoba and other cities in the province of Córdoba), in Santiago de Chile, and several Cuban cities, among them the capital, Havana. In the case of *haber de + inf.*, other cities were added to the survey. In the case of the avertive periphrasis, special importance is given to the Argentinian province of Córdoba. Not only did the only author who mentioned the avertive meaning in Argentinian Spanish, Capdevila, come from Córdoba; it is also the only place outside Galicia where we actually heard someone use the structure *haber de + inf.* with an obvious avertive meaning. The province of Córdoba received large-scale immigration from Spain; the consideration and/or interpretation of demographic data is problematic though, as the existing statistics and registers do not take into account which place in Spain the Spanish immigrants came from. Mostly, they simply appear as having arrived in Córdoba from the port of Buenos Aires, which was the first place in Argentina where immigrants from Europe would usually disembark in the last two centuries.

We used two different questionnaires (coinciding in the structures we are analysing) and whenever it was possible, we completed the questionnaires with control interviews (such as those described in a study about the knowledge of Majorcan elements among Catalan speakers in Sinner 2003). This contribution is based on the following questionnaires with speakers born, raised and residing in the respective places:

Place		Number of questionnaires	Number of additional interviews
Spain			
Galician-speaking area:	Galicia	20	7
Catalan-speaking area:	Barcelona	14	6
	València	1	1
Monolingual Spain			
	Córdoba (Andalucía)	1	1
	Madrid	1	1
Canary Islands		2	2
Basque-speaking area		1	1
Cuba			
	Havana	20	20
	Santa Clara	15	15
Argentina			
	Buenos Aires	20 (ten of them with close relatives from Galicia)	20
	Tucumán	2 (both with close relatives from Galicia)	2
	Santiago del Estero	24	–
	Mendoza	3	3
	Córdoba (Capital)	100	–
	Laboulaye (Córdoba province)	60	–
	Mina Clavero (Córdoba province)	40	–
	San Francisco del Chañar (Córdoba province)	30	–
Uruguay			
	Montevideo	10	10

Table 1. Distribution of informants according to provenance

Given the larger numbers of informants, in the case of the questionnaires from Córdoba (Argentina), in the statistical analysis we took into consideration sociolinguistic data such as age and social status (based on income, work and schooling) (§ 4.3.2).

The informants were asked for the structures which according to Capdevila have an avertive meaning in the Spanish of Argentina: *hube de + inf.* and *hubo de + inf.* We chose to use sentences with the analysed verb conjugated in the first and third person singular to see if there were any differences between the way the informants understood them and in order to be able to detect possible discrepancies that might be due to the divergent frequency and different acceptability of certain structures depending whether they are in first and second or in third person singular (see Muller 1985, 1986).

In the first questionnaire, we asked for *hube de* + inf. only, showing them the sentence *Pedro dice: En febrero hube de viajar a España* which, depending on the reading of the periphrasis, could be interpreted as ‘Pedro says: In February I had to travel to Spain / I was going to travel to Spain / I was about to travel to Spain’ and might imply the avertive meaning, thus leading to the conclusion that the trip did not take place. The informants were then asked

- a. if they understood the sentence (yes / no), and if they did not understand it, why not;
- b. if they could say the same in other words and give an example for such a reformulation;
- c. if Pedro did actually travel to Spain (yes / no / impossible to know);
- d. if they believe they could have said something like this themselves or what would be their way to express the same meaning.

In the second questionnaire, the informants were given a more extensive questionnaire with both *hube de* + inf. and *hubo de* + inf., that is, the structure in first person singular and third person singular, together with some other verbal periphrases: *acabar de* + inf. ‘to have just done something’, *estar a punto de* + inf. ‘to be about to do something’, *tener que* + inf. ‘to have to do something’. The two structures we wanted to analyse appear in the following dialogues:

(1a)

Don Raúl encuentra a doña María en el kiosco. ‘Don Raúl meets Doña María at the kiosk.’

Don Raúl: ¡Buenas tardes, doña María! ¿Cómo le va? ‘Don Raúl: Good afternoon, Doña María! How are you?’

Doña María: ¡Buenas tardes, don Raúl! Estoy muy bien, ¿y usted? ‘Doña María: Good afternoon, Don Raúl! I am fine, and you?’

Don Raúl: Muy bien también. El otro día vi a su hija... ‘Don Raúl: Also fine. The other day I saw your daughter...’

Doña María: Hube de llamarla... ‘Doña María: I was about to call her / I wanted to call her / I had to call her...’

(1b)

Cristian está hablando por teléfono con su hermana Daniela. ‘Cristian is talking on the phone with his sister Daniela.’

Cristian: Te llamo por lo del abogado... ‘Cristian: I am calling you about the thing with the lawyer...’

Daniela: Sí, dime. ‘Daniela: Ok, tell me, what is it?’

Cristian: ¿Pasó ya por la casa? ‘Cristian: Has he already dropped by?’

Daniela: Hoy hubo de pasar... ‘Daniela: Today he was supposed to come / he had to come / he was about to come...’

These two dialogues were followed by a series of questions, among them always one about the fulfilment of the action (if the phone call was made or if the lawyer came to Daniela’s place). We asked:

- if the action happened to be executed;
- if the informant had heard or read the given structure before;
- if the informant understood it;
- if the informant could have used it her / himself;
- if the informant knew someone who could have possibly said it;
- if the informant knew another way of expressing the same.

In the second part of the questionnaire, we asked control questions with short sentences with multiple choice options about the fulfilment of the action. The ones regarding the analysed structures were IIb) “Hube de llamarla” ‘I was supposed to / had to / was about to call her’ and IIe) “Hubo de llamarla.” ‘He / she / it was supposed to / had to / was about to call her’⁵. In both sentences, the informants had to choose one of the following options:

- Sí, se hizo la llamada/sí pasó. ‘Yes, the call was made/he dropped by.’
- No, no se hizo la llamada. ‘No, the call was not made/he did not drop by.’
- No sé. ‘I don’t know.’
- Prefiero no contestar. ‘I prefer not to answer.’

4. Results

As only in the case of the data from the Argentinian province of Córdoba the exact statistical data are relevant regarding the presence of a perception of an avertive meaning, we shall dispense with indicating them in the other chapters.

5. We have kept the original numbering here.

4.1. Spain

4.1.1. Spain excluding Galicia

There are absolutely no hints the informants could have attributed an avertive meaning to the sentences. Practically all of the informants said it was impossible to know whether or not the action (phone calls, travel) took place, and in the interviews, some of the informants said that it was not possible to know if the action had been fulfilled as that part of the information was lacking in the sentences or dialogues.

4.1.2. Galicia

In Galicia, the situation is different. As a result from our study we are able to affirm that among the (bilingual) speakers of Galician and Spanish we interviewed to determine the way they understood the structure in Spanish, the avertive meaning was still very much recognized, and generally without indicating any alternative meaning. There were no differences between the structure in first or third person singular. Only one out of 20 informants answered that the actions took place or probably took place. Twelve of the Galician informants interpreted *hube de + inf.* as clearly avertive. This could also be a result of the introduction of Galician in the educational system in Galicia, a question that still needs further analysis, and it does not mean the same people would actually use this structure. Yet, the fact that three of the informants who did not include the avertive meaning said that in Galician there is actually such a meaning, could be a result of schooling in Galician since the 1980s. The result ‘perception of avertive meaning’ in relation to the variable “place of origin” is *per se* statistically relevant. For the assessment of the relevance of the variable *linguistic background*—with variables such as monolingual Spanish speaker, bilingual with different degrees of proficiency in both languages, with Spanish as mother tongue or with Galician as mother tongue, etc.—, further analysis is required.

4.2. Cuba

In the study carried out in Cuba, it becomes clear that the Cuban informants do not interpret the structure as avertive at all. Still, the answers seem worthy of being commented on.

4.2.1. *Hube de + inf.*

In the case of the sentence *Hube de llamarla...*, 34, that is, all but one of the informants, responded that the action was fulfilled and that Doña María indeed called her

daughter. The only informant who preferred not to answer stated she did not understand the structure at all. It is interesting to find evidence that of those who indicate the fulfilment of the action, there are three who admit they actually did not understand the structure, something they rectify in the interview explaining they were not sure or simply “deduced somehow” the action was fulfilled. Almost all who believe the action was fulfilled explain the structure is equivalent to structures such as *tener que* + inf. ‘have to + inf.’ or *haber necesidad de* + inf. ‘have necessity to + inf.’, that is, they interpret the structure basically as an obligative periphrasis, or substitute it with the verb accompanying the auxiliary verb. Six of the informants, half of them from Havana, say *hube de llamarla* means *la llamé* ‘I called her’. Only a tiny minority of two informants, both also from Havana, believe they use the structure and would utter such a sentence. The tenor of the Cuban answers is that the given structure is “not a normal structure” in Cuban Spanish. The five informants who believe they know someone who might use it explain those people are Spaniards, people working at a University or people who use it for writing literature.

4.2.2. *Hubo de* + inf.

The responses regarding the structure *hubo de* + inf., that is, in the third person singular, resemble those for the structure in the first person singular, with the same sporadic contradictions (such as saying they know the meaning and indicating not to understand the structure, which can be explained as deducing the meaning from the form, per analogy with other structures they use in their variety of Spanish, etc.). It is particularly interesting that two informants who in the case of *hube de llamarla* believed it to be equivalent to *la llamé* ‘I called her’ say *hubo de pasar* means *debía haber pasado* ‘he should have dropped by’, that is, indicating the first action was fulfilled and the second was not, despite the structures only differing in the external referent (given in the first vs. the third person singular). When asked about the reason for this, they both explained the difference with the fact that a person talking about her- or himself obviously knows what happened, while in the third person, with the external view, the structure is more likely to mean the action was not fulfilled but should have been. Once again, the interpretation is clearly obligative, and also the two people who believe to know someone who might use the structure hint at native speakers of “the European variety of Spanish” or with a university background.

We can clearly conclude that the avertive interpretation is not present at all in the Cuban group. Therefore, a Galician influence in this regard can be ruled out. Further studies should be carried out in different rural areas, as the Galician immigrants in Cuba also went to smaller settlements and towns. The presence of Galician family names, place names or the existence of Galician cultural associations in some places in the past could guide this further investigation.

4.3. River Plate: Argentina and Uruguay

The results from the survey done in the River Plate states of Uruguay and Argentina will be presented in two parts: The Argentinian province of Córdoba and the remaining cities.

4.3.1. Uruguay and Argentina excluding Córdoba Province

The results in the interviews regarding both the first and third person singular are very heterogeneous for the given explanations (for example, about the knowledge of people who might use the structure or about the grammaticality or ungrammaticality of the structure some informants felt the urge to comment on). Yet, we can clearly state that among the informants from these cities, there are no hints at an avertive interpretation of the given structure. There is a wide range of answers, as can be seen, for example, by the different attempts to reformulate the structure. Essentially, they substitute it with *tuve que + inf.*, *tenía que + inf.*, *debí + inf.*, *debía + inf.* ‘I had to + inf.’, reducing it to simple past. When asked about the fulfilment of the action expressed by the verb in the infinitive, they felt, as a whole, either insecure about the right answer or admitted to not actually knowing the meaning of the given structure.

Three of the informants, from the upper-middle class and with an academic background, identified the sentence as “archaic”, “an archaism” or “like from the past”. An informant whose mother and maternal grandparents came from Galicia associated the structure with the Spanish spoken by people “from the interior of Argentina, especially Salta and Tucumán”—which is actually the area of origin of her paternal grandfather and her father. Her interpretation of the structure is not avertive, and it cannot be seen as a hint at the presence of Galician in that northwestern province; it is probably more likely to be the result of the fact that the Spanish from these provinces differs a lot from River Plate Spanish, conserving many elements seen as archaic in the rest of Argentina; this might have led to the association of archaic or little-used structures with these regions. There is no data from a perceptive dialectology point of view for Argentina so we cannot look at Argentinians’ mental maps of their country (cf. Preston 1982), but we believe that the northwestern provinces are generally associated with archaic language use. A look at the overall results from the northwestern provinces—Salta, Tucumán and Santiago del Estero—in fact clearly demonstrates that there are practically no traces of the avertive meaning of the verbal periphrasis we are looking for, and more remarkably, that the informants from these regions do not actually know how to interpret the structure for not using it at all. Very often the informants seemed puzzled about the structure in itself, an impression that is backed by the obviously contradictive answers to the control questions which allow to infer that the informants actually answered the first questions about the structure’s meaning guessing or deducing from analogy in form.

4.3.2. Córdoba Province, Argentina

4.3.2.1. The data

As already stated, given the large numbers of informants taking part in the survey carried out in the province of Córdoba, in this case we were able to take into consideration three extralinguistic variables: age, sex and social class (based on income, work and schooling, applying an adapted version of the Winkler-index for social status, Winkler 1998) (cf. table 2). The distribution between the Cordoban cities was designed in order to take into consideration the quantitative distribution of inhabitants of these cities: Córdoba Capital 1,309,536; San Francisco del Chañar 2,067; Mina Clavero 6,855; and Laboulaye 19,908⁶.

	Córdoba Capital	Laboulaye	Mina Clavero	San Francisco del Chañar
Sex				
Male	46 (46.0%)	30 (50.0%)	18 (45.0%)	16 (53.3%)
Female	47 (47.0%)	27 (45.0%)	21 (52.5%)	14 (46.7%)
No data	7 (7.0%)	3 (5.0%)	1 (2.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Age				
Below 20	18 (18.0%)	19 (31.7%)	7 (17.5%)	11 (36.7%)
20-39	47 (47.0%)	18 (30.0%)	17 (42.5%)	10 (33.3%)
40-59	21 (21.0%)	15 (25.0%)	9 (22.5%)	7 (23.3%)
60-79	6 (6.0%)	5 (8.3%)	6 (15.0%)	2 (6.7%)
80 and older	1 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
No data	7 (7.0%)	3 (5.0%)	1 (2.5%)	0 (0.0%)
Social Class				
Lower class	1 (1.0%)	4 (6.7%)	1 (2.5%)	2 (6.7%)
Lower-middle class	10 (10.0%)	9 (15.0%)	8 (20.0%)	6 (20.0%)
Middle class	28 (28.0%)	21 (35.0%)	14 (35.0%)	7 (23.3%)
Upper-middle class	21 (21.0%)	6 (10.0%)	5 (12.5%)	1 (3.3%)
Upper class	7 (7.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
No data	33 (33.0%)	20 (33.3%)	12 (30.0%)	14 (46.7%)

Table 2. Profile survey province of Córdoba (Argentina)

6. The data was extracted in 2011 from the website of the Argentinian *Instituto Nacional de Estadística y Censos de la República Argentina*; <http://www.indec.gov.ar>.

The informants from Córdoba (Capital) were between 16 and 83 years old and from every social class (lower, lower-middle, middle, upper-middle, upper); the informants from Laboulaye were between 12 and 69 years old and from every class bar upper; the informants from Mina Clavero were between 14 and 64 years old and also from every class bar upper; the informants from San Francisco del Chañar were between 14 and 70 years old and, once again, from every class bar upper.

Not all the informants responded to all the questions and some interviews were not finished for different reasons; this explains why in the different examples tested, we did not always process the same number of responses. As the data was analysed with the SPSS programme, which allows such data sets to be processed, the divergence in the questionnaire responses did not interfere with the outcome.

4.3.2.2. The linguistic variables

Out of a total of 230 Cordoban interviewees, 10.4% indicated they could have said the sentence *hube de llamarla* and 14.8% said they could have used *hubo de pasar*. 20.4% believed to know someone who could have said *hube de llamarla*, while 28.3% think so in the case of *hubo de pasar*. 18.3% believe to have heard a structure like *hube de llamarla*, and 26.5% do in the case of *hubo de pasar*. These are notably higher values than in any other of the Argentinian regions or other Spanish-speaking territories under scrutiny in this project.

The results concerning the fulfilment of the action are equally remarkable (cf. table 3). In the case of *hube de llamarla* in Ia), *yes* is very clearly the least frequent answer: only 22.6% of the respondents believe the phone call was made. Almost half of the respondents—49.3%—say the action was unfulfilled while 28.1% answer they don't know or that it cannot be known (see table 3). This result alone already can be seen as a clear sign that Capdevila's claim was right at least for his own dialect, the Córdoba variety of Argentinian Spanish.

In the case of *hubo de pasar* in the second dialogue (Ib), the results are only slightly less clear. Again, with 15.1%, *yes* is the least frequent answer; 40.8% believe the action was not fulfilled, and 44% don't know or believe it is not possible to know if the lawyer already dropped by, increasing considerably this option compared to the results regarding the first person singular in Ia).

	<i>Did María call her daughter?</i>			<i>Did the lawyer drop by?</i>		
	Frequency	%	% valid	Frequency	%	% valid
Yes	50	21.7	22.6	33	14.3	15.1
No	109	47.4	49.3	89	38.7	40.8
Don't know / cannot be known	62	27	28.1	96	41.7	44
Total	221	96.1	100	218	94.8	100
Missing (system)	9	3.9		12	5.2	
Total	230	100		230	100	

Table 3. Fulfilment of action in part I

The control questions in part II with the multiple choice options regarding sentences without context confirm the image we obtained in the analysis of the responses in part I. We can see that in part II, the results are even more pronounced than in the first part of the survey. 54.9% of the informants responded negatively to control question IIb) regarding the fulfilment of the action. The tendency towards the confirmation of Capdevila's position is, thus, even clearer than in Ia). Once again, the result is clearer in the case of the first person singular than in the third person singular, where 42.9% believe the action was not fulfilled (see table 4).

	<i>Hube de llamarla. Was the phone call made?</i>			<i>Hubo de llamarla. Was the phone call made?</i>		
	Frequency	%	% valid	Frequency	%	% valid
Yes	47	20.4	21.9	53	23	25
No	118	51.3	54.9	91	39.6	42.9
I don't know / cannot be known	50	21.7	23.3	68	29.6	32.1
Total	215	93.5	100	212	92.2	100
Prefers not to answer	1	0.5		4	1.7	
Missing (system)	14	6.1		14	6.1	
Total	230	100		230	100	

Table 4. Fulfilment of action in part II

There is a considerable variety in answers and percentages between I and II. While in the case of the question if Doña María called her daughter (Ia) with the structure in first person singular, 22.6% of the respondents answered positively, 49.3% neg-

atively with the remaining 28.1% indicating not to know or that it was impossible to know, in the corresponding control question (IIa) regarding the sentence without context, *hube de llamarla*, 21.9% responded positively, 54.9% negatively and 23.3% said they did not know or that it was not possible to know. This tendency is even more pronounced if we look at Ib)—did the lawyer drop by?— and control question IIe), both regarding the third person singular. While in the first case, 15.1% answered positively, 40.8% negatively and 44% responded they did not know or it was not possible to know this, in the control question, 25% answered yes, 42.9% no and 32.1% either did not know or indicated that is not possible to know. According to the analysis with the SPSS programme, the differences between the responses for first and third person singular are not statistically relevant and can be (statistically) explained within the normal group deviations. Differences like these are an expectable deviation in studies on grammatical structures (see 5).

If we look at the absolute numbers, the inconsistency of the answers is even more salient. Only 60 of the respondents answered the two questions regarding the first person singular consistently, and in the case of the third person singular, a mere 45 answered the same way both times. Only 62 informants in total answered consistently throughout the whole questionnaire. If we subtract the informants who answered “I don’t know / it is not possible to know” in all cases, we get values as low as 54 (for *hube*), 22 (*hubo*) and 43 (all four questions). Regarding the assumed usage of the periphrases, we arrived at equally low numbers: merely 11.1% and 15.6%, respectively, think they could have said *hube de llamarla* or *hubo de pasar*, and only 21.7% and 30.7%, respectively, said they know someone who could have used these structures. Among the people who were mentioned as potential users of the given structures, essentially we got the following indications: (i) older people, (ii) language teachers, (iii) Spaniards, (iv) grandparents.

4.3.2.3. Correlation with extralinguistic variables

The correlation of the data regarding the linguistic variables with the extralinguistic variables—this was done with the Chi-Square test—provides an interesting insight. In correlating the origin of the respondents (Córdoba Province vs. other regions in the River Plate area) with the perception of the action as not fulfilled (that is, with a perceived avertive meaning) in the case of Ib) [*el abogado*] *hubo de pasar*, we obtain a significance of 0.049. This value indicates there is indeed a significant correlation between origin and perception of avertive meaning, i.e. the responses are not a mere coincidence and would be the same in larger groups, that is, the results are representative. If we correlate the responses for Ia), *hube de llamarla*, with the place, the significance is also significant (0.024).

The correlation of the origin of parents and grandparents provides more evidence for the assumption that the impact of their Galician—or, indirectly, their Galician

Spanish—played a decisive role in the existence of an avertive meaning of *hube de + inf.* in Cordoban Spanish. If we correlate the results from I and II with the variables ‘parent from Spain’ and ‘grandparent from Spain’—16 informants indicate that one parent, both parents or at least one grandparent immigrated to Córdoba from Spain—, we obtain statistically significant results in the case of the question if the informant knows someone who could have said *hubo de pasar* (significance 0.033); the correlation of ‘grandparent from Spain’ with the indication of some other way of saying *hubo de pasar* in Spanish is equally significant (0.121).

While the correlations of the perception of an avertive meaning with age or social class do not show any significant results, a significant relation was found between the informants’ age and the use and understanding of the periphrasis: In the province of Córdoba, the indication of having heard or read the structure before, of understanding it (and, basically, of knowing someone who might use the structure) tends to rise with the rising age of the informants. This, together with the above mentioned results regarding origin—place of birth of parents or grandparents—could be understood as a hint at the fact that the ones who actually use the structure are from the older immigrant generations (grandparents and, to a lesser extent, parents).

5. Conclusions

Our contribution presents the results of a representative perception study of *hube de + inf.* in different varieties of Spanish carried out to determine if the Galician avertive actually lead to the presence of this category, especially in Cuban and Argentinian Spanish. As the structure under scrutiny, due to the necessity of clarifying context which not always exists, cannot be analysed with corpus data, and as a result of the difficulty of eliciting the structure, the chosen methodology was a combined perception analysis on the ground of dialogues and isolated sentences without any further context containing information regarding the fulfilment of the action expressed in the infinitive of the verbal periphrasis. The methodology of testing the perception instead of the production or using corpus analysis has proved fruitful. The perception study shows clearly that in the Cuban variety of Spanish and in River Plate Spanish—Uruguay, Buenos Aires, Argentinian Northwest—there is no trace of an influence of the Galician avertive *hube de + inf.*, while it gives proof of the existence of at least a perception of the avertive *hube de + inf.* in the Cordoban variety of Argentinian Spanish. The results suggest that the avertive meaning could have been in usage amongst the older, immigrant population, while the informants themselves seem not to use the structure, notwithstanding the fact they apparently understand it the way it was used in Galician or Galician Spanish. Thus, the structure with the meaning discussed here is a candidate to be considered and mentioned in the analysis, description and evaluation of the Galician influence on Argentinian Spanish.

The differences between the responses regarding the first and third person singular can be explained with a tendency to differently rate structures in first or second person and those in third person. As for the divergence in frequency, due to their function as dialogue pronouns, they have a different status in speakers' judgments; this phenomenon is apparently expectable in studies on linguistic judgments regarding aspects such as knowledge, usage and acceptability (Muller 1985, Sinner 2005c), and does not challenge the overall results. It should be stressed that is normal for there to be oscillations in the answers about aspects such as grammar, acceptability of structures, frequency or novelty value of words, etc., both between different interviewees and in the same person at different times. For example, there is no doubt that there are more "generous" informants in terms of acceptability judgments than others (Ross 1973), or that apart from judgments shared by most people from the same community there are differences in the judgments, or judgments clearly to be considered as individual (Techtmeier 1987: 31). Linguistic awareness is marked by the communicative experiences of the speakers, by language learning, especially during school, and by the values and norms of the community in which they live; and the differences in the experiences different individuals make—even within the same community—necessarily lead to differences in judgments about linguistic phenomena (Techtmeier 1987: 31-32). Hesitations or variability in responses are therefore no reason to question the methodology itself, provided that it is proven, with the appropriate statistical methods, that they are (or that they are not) due to mere coincidence, which can be determined by means of significance tests (Cowart 1997: 11; Plag & Zimmermann 1998: 215) such as those carried out in this study (cf. Sinner 2004: 111-112).

Future research will have to focus on the usage of the structure *haber de + inf.* in Argentinian Spanish in general, that is, in all the different possible meanings it has in Spanish. This seems indicated as the study, and particularly the survey carried out in Santiago del Estero, showed the consternation of some informants regarding the structure and its possible meaning. Other observations we made and different descriptions of the expression of obligation, future tense, etc. seem to indicate the structure is diminishing in usage or has already disappeared from normal usage in at least some of the River Plate varieties of Spanish.

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