

Me Salí a Caminar: Pronominal constructions with intransitive motion verbs in northern New Mexican Spanish¹

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1. Introduction

The use of pronominal clitics with intransitive² motion verbs, such as in *La pelota se cayó de la mesa* 'The ball [se] fell off the table,' *Después de muy poco tiempo, me regresé a la casa* 'After a very short time, I [me] returned home,' or *Se salió de la casa de su mamá cuando tenía catorce años* 'She [se] left her mom's house when she was fourteen,' have been treated in diverse and quite often unsatisfactory ways by linguists writing on clitic phenomena. These constructions have been called "romance reflexives" (García 1975), "inchoatives" (Mendikoetxea 1999:1639), "middle reflexives" (Klaiman 1992), "obligatory reflexives" (Silva-Corvalán 1994:123; Gutiérrez and Silva-Corvalán 1993:77,84), "refining *se* (*se de matización*)" (Butt and Benjamin 2000: 358), "energetic constructions" (Maldonado 1999:353-398), or labeled as "exceptions, deviations, or simply aberrations of Hispanic speech" (Maldonado 1999:398).³

Due to the various and often vague labels attached to these constructions, and to the relatively scarce attention they have received in the field, the numerous approaches to this phenomenon have left much to be desired. As Maldonado notes, "traditional Hispanic grammars have held that the use of *se* in intransitive constructions is either automatic or it is trivialized to the point that the original expressive meaning of this form is so tenuous that it is almost imperceptible" (Maldonado 1999:356). Traditionally, as can be deduced from the majority of the labels listed above, this use of the clitic has been understood as a type of reflexive. García (1975) suggested that, just as the use of the reflexive pronoun in transitive constructions lowers the verb's transitivity and thus the number of arguments, so, too, does its use with intransitives, making it impossible for the interlocutor to interpret the action as having been caused by an outside agent. The basic function of a reflexive is to "[encode]...a referential identity between the two theta-roles assigned by a transitive verb, Agent and Theme (Patient)" (Klaiman 1992:38). As Maldonado puts it, "there is a kind of shared consensus to analyze the occurrence of the clitic *se* as a problem of inaccusativity. If the 'superficial' object is represented by 2, that is, as patient object in the 'deep structure,' the promotion of 2 to 1 motivates the occurrence of the form *se*" (Maldonado 1999:377). If this is the case, and *se* constructions with intransitive motion verbs are to be considered a part of this category, then at least two participants (agent and patient) must be identifiable. It has been argued, then, that in this framework, the function of the pronominal clitic with intransitives would be to disambiguate the agency of the subject, making it clear that no outside agent was responsible for or involved in the action. In general, however, there is no ambiguity about the agentive characteristics of the subject unless the context indicates otherwise, making this analysis highly inadequate.

¹ I am indebted to the Albuquerque residents who gave their time to participate in this study. Furthermore, I would like to thank Dr. Rena Torres Cacoullas for her countless comments and suggestions on this study. Thanks are also due to Dr. Joan Bybee for sharing her thoughts on this topic. Any faults, of course, are my own.

² Following Maldonado (1999:353, Note 1), by "intransitive" I mean any verb whose basic form has only one argument, such as *salir(se)* 'to leave' or *venir(se)* 'to come.' I also include in this definition verbs such as *bajar(se)* 'to descend, to move down,' that have both an intransitive *Me bajé del carro* 'I [me] got down out of the car' and a transitive representation *Bajé la niña de la silla* 'I took the girl down from the chair.'

³ All translations are mine.

Maldonado (1999) is the first to offer a thorough and enlightening treatment of this topic. Rejecting the idea that these pronominal constructions are simply a problem of inacusativity, simplification, over-generalization, analogy, or loss of meaning, he suggests instead that these are "energetic constructions" that focus on the action, either by emphasizing the moment in which the subject suffers a change of state, or by showing it to be against the normal expectations or desires of the speaker (Maldonado 1999:353-362). Butt and Benjamin (2000:358-372) draw much of their analysis of what they call the "refining *se*" from Maldonado's approach. Though Maldonado's analysis is intriguing, his study, like other studies that discuss these constructions, does not offer any empirical data to support his claims. The purpose of this study, then, is to test the appropriateness of Maldonado's conceptualization of these so-called energetic constructions in two verbs: *ir(se)* 'to go, leave' and *salir(se)* 'to leave, go out.' The results presented here make up part of a larger study, which included six other verbs: *subir(se)* 'to ascend,' *bajar(se)* 'to descend,' *caer(se)* 'to fall,' *quedar(se)* 'to stay,' *regresar(se)* 'to return' and *venir(se)* 'to come.'

While Maldonado's approach can account for the vast majority of the data, it is not adequate. I suggest that the use of pronominal forms of intransitives in the data may also be subject to influences due discursive factors such as parallel processing and pragmatic expression. These data call for an expansion of Maldonado's view of the "pragmaticalization" of these constructions (Maldonado 1999:393), in which considerations of the "pragmatic weight" (Davidson 1996) of the action itself within the context of the discourse, as well as the speaker's own cultural, social and personal constructs, are factors in determining the form used in speech.

2. Methodology

The data for this study were collected by eleven graduate students in a course in Hispanic sociolinguistics at the University of New Mexico in the historic, predominantly Hispanic community of Barelás in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Each student conducted an hour-long conversational interview with an adult living and/or working in Barelás who had spoken some variety of Mexican Spanish since childhood. Each interview was then transcribed. These transcriptions were used to identify all intransitive movement verbs that presented variation in pronominal clitic use, ending up with the eight verbs listed above.⁴ Two verbs, *entrar(se)* 'to enter' and *voltear(se)* 'to turn around,' had only one token in pronominal form, and were thus removed from the study. All tokens of these eight remaining verbs were counted, except a handful of cases in which I could not discern the meaning of the verb in context. This resulted in a total of 837 tokens, 200 with clitic, 637 without.

Defining clitic occurrence as the dependent variable, I coded the data according to the following independent variables: lexical identity of the verb, tense, person of referent, topicality of referent, type of clause (main or other), referent known or new in discourse, the prior occurrence of the same clitic form in the previous two clauses, and subject expression. A referent was considered to be the topic of discourse if it functioned in the role of grammatical subject in the previous clause or clauses. After coding, the data were run through the multiple-regression variable rule analysis program GoldVarb 2001 for Windows, the results of which will be discussed in Section 3.2.⁵ Though I do not argue that pronominal constructions and their bare counterparts are necessarily two ways of saying the same thing, a situation to which variable rule analysis is most often applied, this methodology was still appropriate. As Silva-Corvalán points out, "when the analysis indicates that the variants of a (morpho)syntactic variable...are not synonyms at the level of contextual meaning, it is in any case possible to quantify them, since computerized statistical programs allow us to establish correlations" between the dependent variable and independent variables, controlling for other independent variables (Silva-Corvalán 2001:137).

⁴ When a clitic was present, only tokens in which the subject of the verb was the same as the referent of the clitic were counted as being in the pronominal form.

⁵ For more information on GoldVarb, see Rand and Sankoff (1990): *GoldVarb: a variable rule application for Macintosh*.

3. Results

Though the study included a total of eight verbs, two verbs in particular offer insight into the nature of clitic use variation: *ir(se)* and *salir(se)*, which will be the focus of this paper. In order to present the results of this study in a coherent and thorough manner, this section will be divided into two parts. The first will offer an analysis of the semantic and pragmatic functions of both verbs separately, such that the unique ways each verb is used can be appreciated and comparison between verbs will be possible. This approach will facilitate a careful comparison with Maldonado's hypotheses regarding the category of "energetic constructions," under which all eight verbs potentially fall. The second part of this section will take the data as a whole. I will present the results of the GoldVarb analysis and, in light of these findings, offer some additional possibilities for the interpretation of the use of these constructions.

Table 1 shows the overall frequency of pronominal forms by verb and in total. As can be seen, clitics are most likely to be absent in all but *quedar(se)*, with a clitic use rate of 70.7 percent. Clitic cooccurrence with the other verbs ranges from 10.7 percent with *venir(se)* to 40 percent with *subir(se)*, with an overall average of 23.9 percent cooccurrence.

Table 1. Overall frequency of clitic cooccurrence by verb

Verb	N	% +clitic
<i>(A)bajar(se)</i>	2/6	33.3
<i>Caer(se)</i>	2/7	28.6
<i>Ir(se)</i>	105/386	27.2
<i>Quedar(se)</i>	41/58	70.7
<i>Regresar(se)</i>	2/13	15.4
<i>Salir(se)</i>	19/109	17.4
<i>Subir(se)</i>	2/5	40.0
<i>Venir(se)</i>	27/253	10.7
Total	200/837	23.9

The relative infrequency of the cooccurrence of the clitic may lead us to consider this to be a marked construction. Klaiman (1992:41) argues for this interpretation:

...in comparison with middle verbs, middle reflexives are not only more diverse functionally, but also more marked formally. ...a characteristic of any middle verb is its homophony with the corresponding transitive—i.e. its absence of special marking. This distinguishes middle verbs from middle reflexives, which by definition bear special marking.

I believe, however, that the concept of "markedness" is not particularly useful in this context. The construction with the clitic cannot be, as we shall see, simply opposed to its counterpart that lacks a clitic. As García aptly states, "it is evident...that a 'structuralist' focus on syntax is condemned to failure: unless from the very beginning it renounces explaining the use of forms." Instead, "the (syntactic) analysis of what is said, far from being 'given' *a priori*, depends totally on the communicative option at play, and on the perspective that motivates recourse to said option" (García 1995:34-35). It is with this in mind that I attempt to explain below the motivations and perspectives that lead to clitic use in Spanish intransitive verbs of motion.

3.1 Results by Verb

3.1.1 *Ir(se)*

The verb *ir(se)* 'to go' makes up the largest portion of the data, at 46.1 percent (N=386). Of these, 27.2 percent (N=105) had a clitic. *Ir(se)* is one of the most widely discussed and defined phenomena of this type. The traditional understanding is that *ir* means 'to go,' and does not profile the abandonment of a space, while *irse* means 'to leave,' and thus focuses the attention on the specific moment in which the subject begins the action. Maldonado expands this definition, finding the punctual definition of *irse* faulty, since the action implied may include the entire pathway of the subject in motion (Maldonado 1999:366). Instead, he defines it as the abandonment (though not necessarily the moment of abandonment) of a place (Maldonado 1999:371). According to Maldonado, the clitic functions to energize the event such that the state of change is profiled, focusing on the dynamic nature of the event (Maldonado 1999:367,373).

The data from Barelas was not so clear-cut in the function of the pronominal form, and did not quite fit into either the traditional interpretation or Maldonado's view of energetic constructions. Only 28.6 percent (N=30) of the tokens with clitics meant 'to leave'—quite a bit fewer than the traditional interpretation would predict—as in 1.

(1) 'to leave'

- a. ...increíble que me hubiera aceptado otra vez, porque ella nunca, gente que **se va**, nunca la vuelve a aceptar.
'...incredible that she had accepted me again, because she never, people who [*se*] leave, she never accepts them again.' (JA 10)
- b. Todos **se fueron**. Familias que conocíamos.
'Everybody [*se*] left. Families we knew.' (MA 8)

Yet another third of the tokens with clitics (N=35) fell into Maldonado's expanded definition of *irse* in which it may mean 'to go,' but the abandonment or change of state is profiled. Example (2) is of this type.

(2) 'go + abandonment'

- a. Ellos dicen, ahora sí, **vámonos** p'atrás para Barelas. Que regresamos.
'They say, now yes, let's **go** [*nos*] back to Barelas. So we came back.' (MK 12)
- b. ... cuando le tiraron la bomba --- a los lugares donde dormían ellos, ella **se había ido** --- una hora antes, al aeropuerto.
'...when they dropped the bomb on it --- on the places where they slept, she [*se*] had gone --- an hour before, to the airport.' (MA 6)

While in 1 the focal point is the place that was abandoned, be it a place of work as in 1a or a neighborhood as in 1b, the contexts, i.e. the action after the initial point of departure and the arrival at the final destination, are omitted. In 2, on the other hand, the change of state is profiled, and both the moment of abandonment and the arrival at the final destination are made explicit. Both of these types contrast with 3, in which *irse* seems to mean simply 'to go,' without any implication that an abandonment took place. This interpretation is supported by the existence of minimal pairs, as shown in 4.

(3) 'to go' +clitic

- a. ...como tres o cuatro meses embarazada **me fui** a un Wal-Mart y...
'like three or four months pregnant I [*me*] went to a Wal-Mart and...' (MK 6)
- b. ...las calles eran de tierra que todos se conocían que todos trabajaban en los railroads aquí. No necesitabas carro, **te ibas** caminando.
'...the streets were made of dirt, everybody knew each other, everybody worked on the railroads here. You didn't need a car, you [*te*] went walking.' (JG 2)

(4) 'to go' –clitic

- a. Iba para el fourth..., se me ocurrió **ir[Ø]** al flea market.
'I was going down fourth..., it occurred to me to go[Ø] to the flea market.' (JA 16)
- b. Entonces hacían tres o cuatro altares en el camino porque la gente [Ø] **iba** a pie...del pueblito al cementerio.
'Then they would make three or four altars in the path because the people [Ø] went on foot...from the town to the cemetery.' (DW 5)

Although the first two groups (i.e. those somehow incorporating an idea of abandonment into the event) make up the majority of the data with a clitic, the strong presence of the last group shows that there is not any simple and steadfast dichotomy between *ir* and *irse*. This is also supported by the fact that, while no tokens without clitics meant 'to leave' like those in 1, 15.3 percent of them (N=43) expressed a focus on abandonment similar to those in 2. Examples of this sort can be seen in 5.

(5) 'go + abandonment'

- a. ...dibujábanos un animal diferente. [Ø] **Ibanos** p'atrás y los presentábanos...
'...we would draw a different animal. We would [Ø] go back and we would present them...'. (JG 1)
- b. ...mandaron a gente distintos lugares a estudiar. Yo [Ø] **fui** a Cleveland y...por eso ya tenían puestos...
'...they sent people to different places to study. I [Ø] went to Cleveland and...that's why they already had positions...'. (DW 14)

Table 2 shows the distribution of these three semantic groups both with *ir* and *irse*, as well as the variation of clitic use within each category. As can be seen, the use of the clitic is obligatory in cases in which the initial moment of action, or leaving, is the only focus. In contexts in which both abandonment and the trajectory of the subject to the destination are profiled, the clitic is optional, at about 45 percent. The clitic is least used, at only 13 percent, in situations in which no abandonment is implied.

Table 2. *Frequency of semantic category by form and frequency of clitic presence with ir(se) by semantic category*

	+Clitic (<i>irse</i>)		-Clitic (<i>ir</i>)		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	% +clitic
Leave	30	28.6	0	--	30	100
Go + abandonment	35	33.3	43	15.3	78	44.9
Go	36	34.3	234	83.3	270	13.3
Ambiguous	4	3.8	4	1.4	8	50.0
Total	105	100	281	100	386	27.2

The 13 percent of the 'to go' category that appears with clitics may be in part due to the pragmatic use of the clitic in situations of total exploitation (Maldonado 1999:368), such that the speaker is emphasizing the difficulty, danger or grandeur of the event and her participation in it. This may be the case, for example, in 3 above. In 3a, the speaker points out that she was pregnant when she went to Wal-Mart and something happened to her. In 3b, the speaker contrasts the act of walking with that of using a car. This is an act that both goes against the expectations of the interlocutor, as evidenced by the speaker's overt statement, "you didn't need a car," and that is difficult in comparison. In both cases, the act may be considered a case either of total exploitation or of an energetic construction (since it is

unexpected), if one compares these acts to those expected: staying at home while pregnant (or not being pregnant) and using a car for travel.

Furthermore, these results may be an example of the semantic retention that takes place during the process of grammaticalization in which polysemous forms acquire new meanings while still retaining, either partly or totally, their original meaning (Hopper and Traugott 1993). Thus, as Table 2 shows, while the form *irse* is taking on meanings that were only broached by *ir* before, it has not lost its previous semantic values. Although at this moment each form tends to favor one or the other semantic value—*ir* with no abandonment and *irse* with abandonment—this may be a change in progress, the end result of which may be the further bleaching of *se* and the loss of opposition between these two forms. On the other hand, this may also represent a state of stable variation. Diachronic studies in this area would be useful in further defining the nature of *ir(se)* variation.⁶

3.1.2 *Salir(se)*

Next to *ir(se)*, *salir(se)* 'to leave' constructions with clitics have been one of the most commented upon by scholars. The traditional understanding is that the clitic is obligatory when the subject leaves an organization of some kind. Silva-Corvalán (1994) and Gutiérrez and Silva-Corvalán (1993) use *salir* as their prototype example for what they call the "obligatory reflexive," as shown in 6.

(6) "obligatory reflexive"

- a. **Se salió** muy pronto del juego.
'S/he [se] left the game early.' (Gutiérrez and Silva-Corvalán 1993:77)
- b. **Se salió** del equipo.
'He [se] left the team' (Silva-Corvalán 1994:123)

The data included 109 tokens of *salir(se)*, 17.4 percent (N=19) with clitics. While the data show the clitic to be, it seems, obligatory when discussing leaving the army (N=4), and optional when leaving an organization (N=1), these tokens make up only 26.3 percent of all *salirse* tokens. The rest of the tokens fit quite beautifully into Maldonado's framework for energetic constructions. The remaining pronominal forms, with the exception of two, occur in unexpected situations, which make up 14.7 percent (N=16) of the *salir(se)* tokens.⁷ Of these 16 unexpected situations, 75 percent (N=12) appear with a clitic. Table 3 shows the frequency of clitic use for these categories.

Table 3. *Clitic frequency with salir(se) by contextual category*

Context	N	% +clitic
Leaving army	4/4	100
Leaving organization	1/4	25.0
Unexpected	12/16	75.0
Other	2/86	2.3
Total	19/109	17.4

The tokens classified as unexpected were not, however, 'unexpected' in the most basic sense of the word, since some of them referred to events that were either hypothetical or anticipated. What they did share, though, was unexpectedness in a broader sense: each was either an unanticipated event or an event that contradicted cultural or societal norms. Many of this second group, which make up 72.7

⁶ Preliminary diachronic studies of *salir(se)* suggest that *se* is, indeed, undergoing a process of grammaticalization, including semantic generalization (Aaron manuscript). Maldonado (1989) also argues this point.

⁷ The remaining two examples of clitic use with *salir(se)* do not show evidence of any of the features characteristic of energetic constructions. Possible reasons for this will be discussed in Section 3.2 below.

percent (N=8) of the unexpected situation tokens with clitics, dealt with a type of challenge to authority, as in 7 below.

(7) 'challenge to authority'

- a. Porque nunca, pues, desde los quince años que **me salí** de la casa de mi familia...
'Because never, well, since I was fifteen I [me] left my family's house...' (JA 20)
- b. Nada más me tenían en tratamiento y no. Pero yo no, yo **me salí**, yo **me salí** a caminar.
'They just had me in treatment and no. But not me, I [me] went out, I [me] went out to walk.' (JA 17)

As Maldonado (1999:380) notes, "the expectations [of the speaker] are based on the knowledge shared by a community about the canonical structure of world events, social behavioral norms, and other types of norms." In the case of 7a, a girl living with her Mexican family in the United States leaves her family's house at fifteen, which is certainly not an expected behavior. In the United States, children typically stay at home until at least eighteen years of age, and among many social classes in Mexico, women stay with their parents until or even after they are married. In 7b, a pregnant woman leaves the hospital against her doctor's advice to take a walk, defying the authority doctors in the United States are usually granted. These are both events that go against societal norms, and thus are unexpected, though each case may have been anticipated by the speaker. This type of unexpectedness could be considered a social manifestation of what Maldonado frames in physical terms as a "force dynamic":

For changes to be able to take place, some type of energy must act on a determined element. Before the action takes place there can be some type of resistance that controls the state of the element that will be affected. This creates a situation of *force dynamic*, as Talmy (1985) proposes, in which the energetic element (the *antagonist*) imposes a change in another element (the *agonist*) by blocking or abating the force with which the element remained in a particular state, before the energy acted on it.... In this type of energetic construction there can also be an abstract confrontation of a force dynamic. In general terms, the natural expectations regarding different events in the world constitute the initial force which a specific event confronts (Maldonado 1999:375).

In the case of 7, then, it is the confrontation of the girl's or woman's choice with the force of cultural and societal norms (which normally act to control her behavior) that warrants the use of the pronominal form.

3.2 GoldVarb Results

The coded data, which included eight independent variables (see Section 2), were subjected to multiple regression analysis with GoldVarb. GoldVarb removed three factor groups that it found not to be statistically significant: person of referent, subject expression, and whether the referent was known or new in the discourse. The remaining factor groups were selected as significant, and are shown in Table 4 below.⁸

⁸ Due to the apparent uniqueness of *quedar(se)*, the GoldVarb analysis was run once with and once without this verb. The results showed no differences in significance. Table 6 shows the results with *quedar(se)* included. Also, since the lexical identity of the verb was also selected as significant, a GoldVarb analysis was run separately for the three largest groups: *ir(se)*, *salir(se)* and *venir(se)*. Though not all factors had the same weights or significance, each group had the same tendency in each of these three verbs as in the data as a whole.

Table 4. *GoldVarb Results for clitic presence*

Factor Group	%	Factor Weight	% of data
<i>Tense</i>			
Pluscuamperfect Subjunctive	47	.79	2
Imperfect Subjunctive	50	.77	1
Imperative	18	.76	18
Preterit	35	.65	28
Present Subjunctive	15	.60	2
Imperfect Indicative	20	.47	14
Present Indicative	19	.44	30
Infinitive	18	.40	18
Perfect Indicative	7	.22	2
Progressive	11	.18	2
	Range: .61		
<i>Verb</i>			
<i>Quedar(se)</i>	71	.90	7
<i>Subir(se)</i>	40	.72	1
<i>Caer(se)</i>	29	.58	1
<i>Ir(se)</i>	27	.58	46
<i>(A)bajar(se)</i>	33	.57	1
<i>Salir(se)</i>	17	.40	13
<i>Regresar(se)</i>	15	.32	2
<i>Venir(se)</i>	11	.30	30
	Range: .60		
<i>Parallel Processing</i>			
Yes	50	.75	14
No	20	.46	86
	Range: .29		
<i>Referent topic of the discourse</i>			
Yes	32	.59	40
No	19	.44	60
	Range: .15		
<i>Type of clause: main or other</i>			
Main	28	.54	68
Other	16	.41	32
	Range: .13		

$p=0.019$

Three phenomena seem to be at work in determining the presence of a clitic in these types of constructions. The first is in concordance with what we have seen above. In the most important factor group (i.e. the one with the highest range of factor weights), tense, it is precisely those tenses which either temporally focus the action, in the case of the preterit, or emphasize the action itself (usually through an emotion or desire of the speaker), in the case of the subjunctive and the imperative, that favor the clitic. Conversely, the tense that most disfavors the clitic is the progressive, which does not carry the capacity to emphasize, focus, or bind the action.

The second phenomenon we can see to be at play is that of parallel processing, or what has sometimes been called "birds of a feather" (Poplack 1980). The third, and least influential, is that of what may be understood as "pragmatic weight" (Davidson 1996). This influence can be seen in the fact that being the topic of the discourse and being in a main clause both favor the presence of the clitic. The next two sections discuss these two perspectives.

3.2.1 Parallel Processing

In her 1980 study, Poplack (1980) found that the elision of /s/ in Puerto Rican Spanish was strongly favored by the elision of the previous /s/ in the same NP, and even more so by the elision of the previous two /s/. She called this phenomenon "parallel processing effect" (Poplack 1980). Pereira Scherre (2001:91), who stresses the importance of "consider[ing] preceding markers across linear position as well as other important constraints," found similar results in her study of /s/ aspiration and elision in Brazilian Portuguese. Based on the results of the GoldVarb analysis, I believe that my data are also subject to a parallel processing effect. The presence of a clitic of the same (in the case of cooccurring clitics) or expected (in the case of non-occurrence) form in the previous two clauses before the token favors the presence of the clitic with a factor weight of .747, and its absence only slightly disfavors the presence of a clitic, with a factor weight of .456. Thus, while the absence of a previous identical clitic form seems to have little effect, its presence makes the clitic more likely to appear with the verbs studied.

This interpretation may be useful in explaining the following anomalous examples with *salir* in 8.

(8) 'parallel processing'

- a. Si **se paran**, tú te paras, se --- **se sientan**, tú te sientas, **se salen** pa'fuera, tú sales también. 'If they [*se*] stand up, you stand up, they --- they [*se*] sit down, you sit down, they [*se*] go outside, you go out, too.' (MK 18)
- b. ...como en forma de una placita y las esquinas. Tienes que **fijarte** cuando **te sales**, fijate. '...like in the shape of a little plaza and the corners. You have to look [*te*] at it when you [*te*] leave, you know.' (JG 7)

This finding supports the Weiner and Labov assertion (1983) that a parallel processing effect may be a factor in syntactic as well as phonetic phenomena. We must remember that, while the clitic often—though not always—has semantic content, it is most often optional, not obligatory, in discourse. Though the choice to use the clitic in some instances, of course, does profile the energy of the event in some way, this is not the only option available to speakers who wish to express this meaning in discourse. Adjectives and adverbial clauses can do the job just as well, leaving the pronominal form as just one of many discursive options. It is within this layered situation in which an effect such as parallel processing can have a very strong influence, indeed.

3.2.2 Pragmatic weight

The third, and weakest, force that seems to be at play is one of what Davidson (1996) terms "pragmatic weight." In his study of the expression of subject pronouns in the oral speech of Madrid, the author used this as "a theoretical label which subsumes the notions of 'emphasis' that other authors have proposed, but which explains more fully how speakers use the SPs to disambiguate possible epistemic parentheticals, trigger speech act readings of certain verbs, and increase their 'stake' in whatever they are saying" (Davidson 1996:551). As Table 4 shows, being the topic of discourse and appearing in the main clause of an utterance both favor the presence of a clitic.⁹ In the case of clitic use with intransitive motion verbs, then, speakers may use the clitic to similarly increase their "stake" in the action, as well as to emphasize its pragmatic import within the discourse.

Maldonado suggests a similar concept, which he terms "pragmaticalization":

This development is in accordance with Traugott's tendency of grammaticalization (1982, 1986, 1988), according to which a referential meaning changes to a textual one and, after that, to one linked to the speaker's system of beliefs. I use the term

⁹ The elevated presence of the pronominal forms in main clauses also supports an hypothesis of ongoing *se* grammaticalization, since, cross-linguistically, main clauses are innovative, while subordinate clauses are conservative (Bybee manuscript).

pragmaticalization to refer to the process through which some pragmatic phenomenon is incorporated into the function of a grammatical marker. The term grammaticalization traditionally used by Traugott and her followers is inadequate to refer to the mental construction of dynamic of forces since *se* is, and always has been, a grammatical marker. In fact, I suggest that pragmaticalization is a phenomenon that corresponds to the last step of the process of 'grammaticalization' of Traugott. The incorporation of the speaker's beliefs in a grammatical marker occurs to elements well advanced in the process of grammaticalization, such that the original lexical semantic of a grammatical form has turned into something almost imperceptible (Maldonado 1999:393).

I argue that along with pragmaticalization in energetic constructions, which is inherent in the semantic content of the form, speakers are also motivated to use these clitics according to the pragmatic weight of the action itself in the context of the discourse as signaled by linguistic factors, such as topicality and type of clause.

4. Conclusions

Focusing on *ir(se)* and *salir(se)*, this paper has examined the use of pronominal clitics with eight intransitive motion verbs in the oral speech of Barelás. Comparing my data to Maldonado's hypotheses about energetic constructions (1999), I found that both *ir(se)* and *salir(se)* fit in one way or another into his framework, which hypothesizes that clitics are used to focus the action of the verb or to mark it as unexpected or undesirable. This framework, like my data, rejects traditional interpretations of these constructions. It also, however, proved to be insufficient to account for all of the data. I propose that the factors of parallel processing and pragmatic weight also influence a speaker's choice to use a clitic in these constructions.

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