

## *Lo que viene siendo un planazo: A use-conditional account*

Verbal periphrases in the Romance languages have been studied mostly from syntactic and semantic perspectives, especially with respect to aspect. However, recent studies on Spanish verbal periphrases have identified other meanings associated with these forms, e.g., evaluative meanings (Amaral, 2013) and degree of involvement of the speaker in the eventuality denoted by the non-finite verb (Sáinz Maza-Lecanda & Horn, 2015). In this study, we focus on the construction *lo que viene siendo* in Peninsular Spanish, as in (1). To date this construction has only been briefly described in Mexican Spanish (Lastra & Martín Butragueño, 2016; Pérez Álvarez, 2021). We provide an analysis of *lo que viene siendo* based on the distinction between truth-conditional and use-conditional meaning (Gutzmann 2013, 2015). Specifically, we propose that the construction is a functional use-conditional item (UCI): it takes as its truth-conditional argument the semantic value of the constituent which is focused in the sentence, and its use-conditional meaning is the speaker's attitude towards the semantic value of that constituent.

1. Me duele un poco lo que viene siendo la espalda.  
'I have some pain in *lo que viene siendo* my back.'
  - a. Me duele un poco lo que viene siendo <sup>??</sup>desde hace una semana la espalda.

Using naturally occurring data from Twitter, we first offer a description of the semantic properties of this construction and compare it with the periphrasis *venir* + gerund, an aspectual periphrasis with imperfective value that denotes the continuation of an eventuality (García Fernández, 2006). Unlike the periphrasis, the construction *lo que viene siendo* does not have this aspectual meaning, as the construction cannot occur with *desde hace* 'since' (1a), which is the case for this periphrasis in general. In addition, the construction occurs obligatorily with the verb *ser*. In terms of agreement, the auxiliary verb *venir* may agree with the number of the subject (2) and must occur in the present tense (3).

2. Me duele un poco lo que vienen siendo las rodillas.  
'I have some pain in *lo que vienen siendo* my knees.'
3. \*Me dolía un poco lo que vino/venía/hubiera venido siendo la espalda. [only *viene* is OK]

We argue that *lo que viene siendo*, like pseudo-cleft constructions, is associated with a specific focus-presupposition structure and it modifies the focused constituent. The construction can be removed from the sentence without affecting its truth-conditional meaning. This construction contributes an attitude of the speaker with respect to the denotation of the expression which is focused. This meaning component (a speaker attitude towards the focused constituent) displays properties of expressivity (Potts 2007; Gutzmann 2013, 2015), i.e., it is independent of the truth-conditional meaning of the sentence, it cannot be directly denied in a dialogue (hence the infelicity of 4b), is perspective-dependent (4c, 5), and displays descriptive ineffability as well as immediacy (the content acts upon the utterance in which it occurs), as shown by the infelicity of the constructed continuations in (5).

4. A: Escribí lo que viene siendo un libro.  
'I have written *lo que viene siendo* a book.'
- (a) B: No es verdad. Has escrito un blog.

- ‘That’s not true. You have written a blog.’ [Negation of truth-conditional content]
- (b) B: No es verdad. #Tú crees que es una obra muy buena.  
 ‘That’s not true. #You think it’s a great work.’ [Negation of use-conditional content]
- (c) Mi amigo dice que escribió lo que viene siendo un libro. El pobre tiene vergüenza de todo lo que publica. A mí sin embargo me gusta su trabajo.  
 ‘My friend says that he wrote *lo que viene siendo* a book. Poor guy is always embarrassed of his own work. However, I like his work.’

5) [Example from Twitter:] A: El sábado me voy a dedicar a comer chimichangas y beber margaritas con mi amigo al que hace meses que no veo y la vida ya no me parece algo tan malo.

‘I’m going to spend my Saturday eating chimichangas and drinking margaritas with a friend I haven’t seen in months, and life doesn’t seem to be so bad anymore’

B: Eso es lo que viene siendo un planazo. #Pero a mí me parece que es super aburrido. #Pero yo no he dicho que me parece genial.

‘That’s *lo que viene siendo* an awesome plan. #But I think it’s super boring. #But I didn’t say it was great’

The attitude of the speaker is difficult to render in descriptive content; it may be an implication that the denotation of the focused constituent does not represent a prototypical member of a category, similarly to the meaning of approximatives (Horn, 2002), and can be associated with an evaluation from the speaker, or it may be an expectation about the properties associated with the category denoted by the focused constituent. For instance, in (4), the speaker may be referring to a book that is too short, not of good quality, or lacks some core properties of a book.

This study provides the first account of *lo que viene siendo* in Peninsular Spanish as a use-conditional construction. These findings have implications both for the study of verbal periphrases in Romance and for the study of expressive meanings in connection with information structure.

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