Linguistica sine finibus
Estudis dedicats a Montserrat Batllori Dillet

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ESTUDIS DEDICATS A MONTSERRAT BATLLORI DILLET

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ON THE ROLE OF TEXT-TYPE RELATED CONSTRUCTIONS IN THE EMERGENCE OF MEDIEVAL SPANISH IMPERSONAL ACTIVE *SE*

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Abstract

This article explores the reanalysis of passive *se* to impersonal active *se* in medieval stages of Spanish by analyzing three medieval legal texts. The data show that generic passive *se*-sentences are almost exclusively found in subordinate environments in which *se* is normally forced into a pre-verbal position. Within these context-types, there are two that stand out: relative *que* constructions (lexical DP + *que* + *se* + verb) and sequences introduced by *commo* or *segun*(*d*/t) (*que*) + *se* + verb without any lexical DP material to serve as a theme subject. The article argues that the high occurrence of the pre-verbal clitic alignment and the loosened connection to (in *que* relatives) or dropping of lexical DPs (in *commo* or *segun*(*d*/t) (*que*) structures) in medieval legal texts prove to have important implications for overall developments in the reanalysis and spread of impersonal active *se*.

Resumen

Este artículo explora el reanálisis del *se* pasivo > *se* impersonal activo mediante el análisis de tres fueros medievales. Los datos muestran que la pasiva refleja de sentido genérico se encuentra casi exclusivamente en contextos subordinados en los que *se* debe estar en posición preverbal. Dentro de estos contextos, destacan dos: las frases relativas (SN + *que* + *se* + verbo) y las secuencias introducidas por *commo* o *segun*(*d*/t) (*que*) + *se* + verbo sin ningún material léxico que sirva de sujeto temático y que, por tanto, ya sugiere una interpretación impersonal activa. El artículo argumenta que la alta ocurrencia de la posición preverbal de *se* y la conexión menos clara con el material léxico (en dichas construcciones con *que* relativo, *commo* y *segun*(*d*/t) (*que*)) en los textos legales medievales tienen importantes implicaciones para el reanálisis y la difusión del *se* impersonal activo.

1. INTRODUCTION. IMPERSONAL CONSTRUCTIONS IN MODERN AND MEDIEVAL STAGES OF SPANISH[1]

Modern Spanish has a range of constructions that can be summarized under a broad definition of impersonality, i.e. constructions that are considered impersonal because of their structural characteristics or those that are primarily considered impersonal on the semantic level. The broad scope of the term *impersonality* reflects that often more than one linguistic domain is involved ((morpho-)syntax, semantics, information structure, etc.) and under this view, the notion of impersonality can also refer to constructions involving subjects that do not show the prototypical characteristics of subjecthood (animate, agent, topic, definite, referential) (cf. Batllori 1998, Malchukov/Siewierska 2011, Cennamo 2016, Cabredo Hofherr 2017, Waltereit 2017, Wolfsgruber to appear).

Within this very broad notion of impersonality, modern Spanish features the following impersonal constructions: generic 2sg, antecedentless 3pl, the impersonal pronoun *uno*, the periphrastic passive, quasi-argumental (with meteorological verbs like *llover* 'to rain') and non-argumental expletive null-subjects (with verbs like *parecer* 'to seem'), existential constructions, psych verbs and a group of constructions that is formed by the 3sg/pl reflexive clitic *se* + verb, i.e. anticausative constructions, passive constructions and impersonal active constructions involving *se* (cf. Ricós 1995, Sánchez López 2002, Bogard 2006, Kaiser, Oliviéri and Palasis

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2013, Wolfsgruber 2017, 2019, 2021, Bentley/Ciconte 2016, Fábregas 2021, among many others).[2]

Medieval stages of Spanish have a similar but not identical repertoire. According to Batllori (1998: 387), antecedentless 3PL is used as an impersonalizing strategy from the beginnings of the Spanish language, as is plain 3SG in the form of *dice/habla* '(one) says'. Concerning the use of generic 2SG, only one case seems to be documented up to the 16th century (Keniston 1937: 495-496 *apud ibid.*). Quasi-argumental (with meteorological verbs like *llover*) and non-argumental expletive null-subjects (with verbs like *parecer*) are found, but with meteorological verbs, structures like *fazer nieve/fazer agua* lit. 'to make snow/water', as in (1), are used in some cases alongside *nevar* 'to snow' and *llover* 'to rain' (cf. Batllori 1998: 386). There are also impersonal uses of *ser/estar* 'to be' as shown in (2). Existential constructions with a form of *haber* 'to have' and a locative pro-form, mostly *y* but also *allí* 'there', are widely encountered, — an example is in (3). Like many other medieval Romance varieties (e.g. medieval Italian, medieval French, etc.), medieval Spanish makes use of the indefinite pronoun *om*(*n*)*e* < Lat. HOMO in (4). The periphrastic passive in (5) is very commonly used as an impersonalizing construction. According to Batllori (1998: 391), it is the most widely used construction (of the ones presented here) in *Calila e Dimna*.

(1) Fazie   nieve   e   granizava
     make.IMPF.3SG   snow   and   hail.IMPF.3SG
     'lit. It made snow and hailed.'

[*Libro de Buen Amor*, 964a *apud* Batllori 1998: 386,
glosses and translations added throughout]

(2) Aun   era   de dia,   non era   puesto el   sol
     still be.IMPF.3SG   of day,   NEG be.IMPF.3SG settled the   sun
     'It was still day, the sun had not set.'

[*Cid*, v. 416 *apud* Batllori 1998: 387]

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2 In a broad definition of impersonality, some also count psych verb constructions in, because their subject does not show prototypical characteristics (inanimate, theme, new information) while the animate dative experiencer passes some syntactic tests for subjecthood (cf. Masullo 1993, González 1988, Fernández Soriano 1999, Gutiérrez-Bravo 2006 among others). For an account on the diachronic developments concerning the argument and event structure of psych verbs in Spanish, see Batllori, Gibert-Sotelo and Pujol (2019).

(3) Entre   los otros buhos, avia   y   uno que
    among   the other owls   have.IMPF.3SG   there one COMP
    era   muy bieio
    be.IMPF.3SG   very old
    'Among the other owls, there was one that was very old.'

[*Lucanor*, p. 124 *apud ibid.*]

(4) esta poca de dulçor   que   ome   ha   en este mundo
    this little of sweetness COMP   man.INDEF   have.PRS.3SG   in this world
    'The little sweetness one has in this world'

[*Calila,* p. 121 *apud ibid.* 391]

(5) una   fuente que   es   llamada   la   fuente de la   luna
    a   spring COMP   be.PRS.3SG   call.PTCP   the   spring of the moon
    'A spring that is called *the spring of the moon*'

[*Calila*, p. 231 *apud ibid.* 391]

While the majority of constructions seems to be widely attested throughout the centuries (in some cases with slight modifications), medieval Spanish *om(n)e* vanishes in the course of the 17th century and is replaced by *uno*, which surfaces more substantially in the course of the 16th century. *Uno* is the most frequently used overt impersonal pronoun in modern day Spanish (cf. Brown 1931, Lapesa 1950, Batllori 1998, Company Company and Pozas Loyo 2009).

Medieval Spanish also knows the combination of *se* + verb to mark anticausatives, passives and impersonal active constructions. Reflexively marked anticausative constructions (with an inanimate subject shown in (6)) and passive *se* in (7) are well attested throughout the medieval period and across text-types. Conversely, impersonal active *se* (8) — though to a certain extent already present on the semantic level over a longer period of time — shows only more detectable formal signs of existence from the second half of the 13th century onwards (cf. Brown 1931, Lapesa 1950, Monge 1955, Ricós 1997, Batllori 1998, Bogard 2006, Wolfsgruber 2017, among others).

(6) affinase   la   piedra por   si   &   enduresce
    sharpen.PRS.3SG.REFL   the   stone   by   herself   and harden.PRS.3SG
    'the stone sharpens by itself and hardens'

[*Lapidario*, par. 1]

(7) en   estas   tierras   agenas   verán   las   moradas   cómmo
    in   these   lands   distant   see.FUT.3PL   the   homes   how
    se   fazen
    REFL   make.PRS.3PL
    'in these distant lands they will see how homes are made'

[*Cid*, 90]

(8) si   se   cree   los   magicos,   expellen   las
    if   REFL   believe.PRS.3SG the.PL   magician.PL   dismiss.PRS.3PL the
    tempestades
    storms
    'And if one believes the magicians, they [the stones] dismiss storms'

[*Lapidario*, p.4]

The present paper aims at shedding more light on two specific incipient context-types which are believed to constitute a basis for the reanalysis and spread of passive *se* > impersonal active *se* in legal texts. It will be argued that these are subordinate contexts and formulaic expressions that force *se* into a pre-verbal position and that thus exhibit a surface structure which facilitates the reanalysis of passive *se* to impersonal active *se*. While instances of passive and impersonal active *se* can be found in different text-types (legal texts, narrative verse/prose and scientific prose texts), these initial contexts are particularly frequent in the analyzed legal texts.

The study of grammatical developments in specific text-types or textual traditions is particularly relevant for rendering a nuanced picture of language change as well as the different stages involved in an on-going change and the spread of innovations. Spanish legal texts, for example, are often situated in a more Latin-dominant tradition, whereas for other *genres* (and other varieties), more vernacular models may apply. These traditions may also affect how particular constructions are used and what they are used for. Studies that keep an eye on possible text-type sensitive changes and put them in perspective with the constructions' behavior in other textual traditions are therefore crucial to our understanding of incipient stages of change and its spread (cf. Kabatek 2004, López Izquierdo and Castillo Lluch 2015 among many others). The present paper focuses on the basis for and incipient stages of impersonal active *se* in legal texts. In order to contextualize genre-specific findings, a comparison to scientific prose texts will be made where necessary.

Section 2 will discuss the general characteristics of the development of passive *se* to impersonal active *se*. Section 3 will then scrutinize the use of *se* in the three legal texts; it will be shown that subordinate contexts and formulaic expressions are by far the most common contexts for generic passives and (ambiguous) impersonal active *se*-constructions. Section 4 then correlates these findings with the overall grammaticalization path for *se*, namely *reflexive > middle > anticausative > passive (> impersonal)* (Sansò 2011 and sources cited therein; see also Geniušienė 1987, Cennamo 1993, Michaelis 1998, Heine/Kuteva 2002:252-253, Haspelmath 2003:22) and the more fine-grained path discussed in Wolfsgruber (2017, 2019, 2021). Section 5 summarizes the main findings of this paper.

2. HOW IMPERSONAL ACTIVE *SE*-CONSTRUCTIONS COME ABOUT IN MEDIEVAL SPANISH

As shown in examples (6)-(8), reflexively marked anticausative constructions, passive and impersonal active constructions involving *se* are attested in medieval Spanish. While anticausative and passive *se*-constructions are widely used and well established in all sorts of texts, impersonal active *se*-constructions are in a nascent state. On the semantic level, they can be grasped from the earliest texts (because the impersonal nature of the passive opens up this interpretation already to a certain extent), but they only show more manifest signs of development on the formal level which converge more significantly in the course of the second half of the 13th century and thereafter. Other medieval varieties behave similarly (for Old Italian, see Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011), for a comparative view on medieval Spanish, French, Catalan and Occitan, see Wolfsgruber 2017 in which it is shown that medieval French exhibits different developments).

The passive *se*-constructions are also among the impersonal constructions because the subject of these constructions is normally an inanimate theme subject (DP) and the agent of the action described by the *se* + verb complex is only optionally expressed by a prepositional phrase introduced by *por* 'by' (note that medieval stages show more use of *por* than modern Spanish). The passive *se* sentence in (7) is a somewhat not

prototypical example in that the theme subject *las moradas* 'the homes' is in a pre-verbal and fronted position whereas normally a post-verbal position is more prone to yielding a passive interpretation. The main part of the sentence is then introduced by *cómmo* 'how' and in this part, there is no overt reprise of the *las moradas* theme subject. It is crucial that since the lexical DP is the theme subject of the passive sentence, that the verb agree with the lexical DP, i.e. *las moradas* [...] *se fazen*. If this is not the case, as is shown in (8) above, an impersonal active construction can be assumed. Since the theme DP does not longer agree with the verb, we have to assume that it is no longer the subject of a passive *se* sentence but has been reanalyzed as the object of an impersonal active *se* sentence.

In the literature on the reanalysis of passive *se* towards a marker of impersonal active constructions, the role of post-verbal subjects is emphasized (cf. Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011), a structure as shown in (9), taken from the same passage of *Cid* as (7):

(9) verán   por los ojos cómmo se   gana   el pan
    see.FUT.3PL by   the eyes how   REFL   earn.PRS.3SG the bread
    'They will see by the eyes how bread is earned.'

[*Cid*, 90]

The reason for this is that the post-verbal theme subject of a passive *se* sentence (*se*$_{passive}$ V S) and the object of a normal transitive (S V O) sentence share the position on the surface level (see Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011: 198-199 for a detailed discussion based on Old Italian). It has been put forward that in the course of the reanalysis, the post-verbal DP of passive *se*-sentences — because of its surface position that is seemingly identical to that of objects in transitive sentences — is reanalyzed as the object of a transitive-like structure, i.e. *se*$_{impersonal}$ verb object $_{(former subject)}$.[3] In this scenario, it may be assumed that at least in intermediate stages, *se* might actually be interpreted as an impersonal subject clitic which then evolves to a mere morphological exponent of an arbitrary null-subject (*pro*$_{arb}$). For a more detailed discussion of this matter, see e.g. Otero (1986), Martins (2005) and Wolfsgruber (2017, 2021).

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3 *Reanalysis* is a covert process in which a surface structure may be interpreted differently on the deep, structural level. At the beginning, the surface structure does not give away that a reinterpretation of the structural dependencies has taken place (cf. Langacker 1977: 58, for a recent discussion, see Detges et al. 2021).

Example (10) shows the intermediate stages of this reanalysis and its subsequent extension to all verb classes (also unaccusative and unergative verbs at the end) as laid out by Bassols de Climent s.a. and discussed in Monge (1955: 76, for a more recent discussion along those lines, see again Giacalone Ramat and Sansò 2011). Section 4 will integrate this view with the overall grammaticalization path for *se* and a more fine-grained view of the medieval data situation.

(10) «se   dicen   estas   cosas»   (estas cosas   son   dichas)>
     REFL   say.3PL   these   things   these things   be.3PL   say.PTCP
     «se   dice   esto»   [es   dicho   esto   (sujeto)]>
     REFL   say.3SG   this   be.3SG   say.PTCP   this   subject
     «se   dice   esto»   [es   dicho   esto   (complemento)]>
     REFL   say.3SG   this   be.3SG   say.PTCP   this   object
     «se   dice   esto»   (uno   dice   esto)>
     REFL   say.3SG   this   one   say.3SG   this
     «se   dice   así»>   «se   habla   así»>
     REFL   say.3SG   so   REFL   speak.3SG   so
     «se   habla»>   «se   corre»
     REFL   speak.3SG   REFL   run.3SG

Another structure that is repeatedly mentioned is the use of *se* + modal verbs + infinitive, because the co-occurrence with the infinitive (itself a form without person agreement markers) favors the dropping of the overt lexical DP, according to Monge (1955). These already present more discernable hints of the reanalysis. The example in (11) is particularly interesting because there is again a fronted DP (*el libro de las reglas*) and the sentence is again introduced by *commo*.

An interesting intricacy of this particular example is that *trobar/trovar* 'to compose verses' is a loan from medieval Occitan in which it is listed as a transitive verb (cf. DOM *s.v.*). From this point of view, this example would be an instance of an intransitively used transitive verb. However, when looking at the Spanish data on this verb, the RAE dictionary classifies it as intransitive. A search in the CORDE corpus reveals that no transitive instances of *trobar* in the meaning of 'to compose verses' can be found between 1200-1400 C.E., which may also indicate that this is not a case of lexical argument dropping but of *se* already reaching

into intransitive realms in its impersonal active function. In that case, this would be the first instance (1326 C.E.).[4]

(11) El   libro de las reglas commo se   due   trobar.
     the   book   of   the rules   COMP   REFL   must.PRS.3SG compose.INF
     'The book of the rules how verses are composed'

<div align="right">(Monge 1955: 80)</div>

Regardless of the possible (in)transitive status of *trobar*, it seems to me that the example combines two important characteristics for the impersonal active *se*-construction to come about: i) separating the lexical DP from the *se* + verb complex either by positioning it in a matrix clause-like environment or in a fronted DP position outside the *se* + verb structure and ii) introducing the *se* + verb structure by *commo/que* or other subordinate cues. This not only loosens the link between the lexical DP and *se* + verb complex but also attracts *se* into a pre-verbal position, which in turn strengthens the pre-verbal occurrence of *se*. The consolidation of this *se* + verb sequence could be one of the main cues for speakers to trigger and support an SVO re-interpretation of the passive *se* sentences.

The next section focuses on these specific contexts and their evolvement as formulaic expressions, explores how they are linked with the reanalysis of *se* as a marker for impersonal active sentences and their ties to particular text-types. In section 4, their implications for a more fine-grained path and the overall developments in the passive > impersonal active shift will be discussed.

3. THE ROLE OF SUBORDINATE CONTEXTS AND FORMULAIC PATTERNS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF IMPERSONAL SE IN MEDIEVAL SPANISH LEGAL TEXTS

For this study, three legal texts have been analyzed quantitatively (*Fuero de Soria, Fuero de Sepúlveda, Ordenamientos de las Cortes de Toro*) and two scientific prose texts (*Lapidario*, Alfonso X and *Lapidario* 1420).

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4 Monge mentions this example in the vicinity of *se* extending its use to intransitive verbs in its impersonal active function by the end of the 15th century, however, he is less clear on the status of this particular example (cf. Monge 1955: 80).

The main focus will be on the legal texts, though. The two text-types make up roughly 105,000-110,000 words each (Table 1). They cover two time spans, 1301/1425 for the legal texts and 1250/1442 for the scientific prose texts:

Table 1. Overview of selected texts

Name of the text	Probable year of composition	Probable year of manuscript[5]	Word count
Legal texts			
Fuero de Soria	1196	prob. ca. 1301-1310; after 1275	52483
Fuero de Sepúlveda	1295	1309	26673
Ordenamientos de las Cortes de Toro	1371	1401-1425	25715
Total			104,871
Scientific prose texts			
Lapidario (Alfonso X)	1250	ca. 1250	104776
Lapidario 1420	1420	1442	7988
Total			112,764

The study specifically focuses on generic *se*-passives (generic *se*-passives are *se*-passives that use imperfective tenses and describe non-individuated events) and (ambiguous) impersonal active uses of *se*.[6]

The study reveals a striking detail about generic *se*-passives that may sharpen our understanding of how these structures had their play in the extension and conventionalization of impersonal active *se*-constructions. In the analyzed legal texts, 135 out 168 (about 80 %) of all generic

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5   The CORDE corpus, which was used for the analysis, does not distinguish between year of composition and year of manuscript. The latter distinction was added whenever possible, by consulting the *cordemáforo* (Octavio de Toledo y Huerta and Rodríguez Molina (2017)) and for the *Fuero de Soria*: Castillo Lluch at https://people.unil.ch/monicacastillolluch/indice-de-fueros/fuero-de-soria/.

6   For a much broader study of these texts and the overall developments of passive *se* > impersonal *se*, the reader is referred to Wolfsgruber (2017). In the present paper, some of the then annotated data are newly analyzed and their implications for the reanalysis of *se* are reevaluated.

se-passives are found in subordinate contexts. As you can see in Table 2, all three texts exhibit very similar results:

Table 2. Absolute and relative frequencies of generic se passives in subordinate contexts in the legal texts

Text	Generic passive *se* occurring in subordinate contexts	All generic passive *se*-constructions	%	Use of *que*	% *que*
Sepúlveda	8	10	80 %	03 / 10	30 %
Soria	70	91	76,92 %	35 / 91	38,46 %
Toro	57	67	85,07 %	41 / 67	61,19 %
	135	168	80,35 %	79 / 135	58,51 %
				79 / 168	47,02 %

The subordinate structures are most frequently introduced by the use of *que* 'who/what/that' and *si* 'if' but also *commo* 'how', *porque* 'because', *quanto* 'how much' *segun*(*t*/*d*) *que* 'according' and *quando* 'when'. Out of these 135 subordinate *se*-passive constructions, 79 (roughly 59 %) occur with *que*. These constructions follow the structure already alluded to in (11), in most cases, lexical DP + *que* + *se* + verb. Only in four cases where *que* was not functioning as introduction to a relative clause but to a *that*-clause was there overt lexical material within the *se* + verb sentence part. In all other cases, the overt lexical material has been kept in a normal root clause or in a fronted position outside the embedded *que* structure. (12) instantiates an example in which a relative *que* sentence is inserted after *et aquellas cosas*. *Et aquellas cosas* is then again taken up by *esas mismas* in the main clause. In this particular sentence, also the root clause exhibits a generic passive *se* structure:

(12) Et   aquelles   coses   que   se   pueden   uender
      and   those   things   COMP   REFL   can.PRS.3SG   sell.PTCP
      esas   mismas   se   pueden enpennar
      those   same   REFL   can.PRS.3SG pawn.INF
      'And these things that can be sold can also be pawned'

[*Fuero de Soria*, p.161]

For comparison, in the selected scientific prose texts, the use was not as striking. Here the older text (*Lapidario*, Alfonso X) shows comparable

frequencies to the ones found in all three legal texts (67/102 subordinate contexts (ca. 66 %)), out of which 53 were *que* (roughly 52 %). The later text (*Lapidario* 1420, anonymous), which is the latest text in this collection (the manuscript dating from 1442), shows a divergent picture with only 10/32 (ca. 31 %) generic passives being attested in subordinate contexts, 6/32 (roughly 19 %) are *que* structures. The remaining generic passive contexts are main clauses. The *Lapidario* 1420 overall exhibits traits of Latinate structures, such as ACI-like constructions, and may be seen as more in the context Renaissance influence than the other analyzed texts. Note, however, that this text in general demonstrates a considerable rise in more overt impersonal active *se* manifestations with verbs of saying and cognitive activity. An overview of the percentages is given in Table 3:

Table 3. Absolute and relative frequencies of generic se passives in subordinate contexts in the scientific prose texts

Text	Generic passive *se* occurring in subordinate contexts	All generic passive *se*-constructions	%	Use of *que*:	% *que*
Lap Alfonso	67	102	65,68 %	53 / 102	51,96 %
Lap 1420	10	32	31,25 %	6 / 32	18,75 %
	77	134	57,46 %	59 / 77	76,62 %
				59 / 134	44,02 %

The discussed pattern – lexical DP + que + *se* + verb – also comes in variations (shown in (13)). In this particular variation of the pattern, the lexical DP is introduced by a preposition, i.e. it is a PP. In this case we may assume that the lexical material is no longer the nominative theme subject of a passive *se* sentence but that it bears inherent case and is left out of subject-verb dynamics. This in turn implies that there is good reason to classify these instances as impersonal active *se*, as is echoed in the translation of example (13):

(13) Del   portadgo, cómmo   se   deve   tomar.
     of.the   toll   how   REFL   must.PRS.3SG collect.INF
     'About the toll, how one has to collect [it]'

[*Fuero de Sepúlveda*, p. 136]

But this is not the end. The pattern evolves further and turns into more and more formulaic chunks that are only very abstractly connected with a possible lexical theme subject. Those subjects are no longer expressed through linguistic material in a particular sentence, but loosely refer to some general e.g. *act of mentioning*, etc. within the written text or tradition. In later texts, higher frequencies of *com*(*mo*) and *segun*(*t*/*d*) (*que*) + *se* + verb + a possible prepositional phrase are found, as exemplified in (14):

(14) segund   que   al   comienço   deste   ordenamiento   se
     according   COMP   at.the   beginning   of.the   law.code   REFL
     contiene
     contain.PRS.3SG
     'as is contained at the beginning of this code'

[*Toro*, p. 229]

While these structures may be deemed impersonal active because no overt lexical subject can be identified, they may also be categorized as elliptical generic passives. Anyway, they do show important signs of conventionalization of *se*-structures without lexical subjects and they are more frequent in the later texts. Specifically, with *commo*, there is a tendency of using modal verbs in these elliptical patterns which enhances the interpretation of an agent-like impersonal null-subject. (15) shows *commo* + *se* + modal (*deve* 'must') + infinitive without a lexical DP:

(15) en   las   leyes   quel   Rey don Alfonso [...]   fizo   enlas
     in   the   laws   COMP.the   king don Alfonso   make.PST.3SG   in.the
     Cortes de Alcalá   enque   se   contiene   commo   se
     Court of Alcalá   in.COMP   REFL   conain.PRS.3SG   how   REFL
     deue   prouar   contra   los alcalles   que   algo
     must.PRS.3SG   prove.INF   against   the mayors   COMP   something
     leuaren
     take.FUT.SUBJ.away.3SG

     'in the laws that King Alfonso made in the Court of Alcalá in which is contained how one has to take legal action against mayors who would take something for themselves'

While structures like those in (14) and (15) are only rarely attested in earlier texts (3 in *Fuero de Soria* (1 *commo*, 2 *segund*); 2 (*commo*), in *Fuero de Sepúlveda*), there are 1 *commo* structure and 20 *segun*(*t*/*d*) (*que*) in the *Ordenamientos*.

As for the scientific prose texts, the *Lapidario* (Alfonso X) has 4 *segun*(*t*/*d*) (*que*) instances and 1 *commo*. The *Lapidario* 1420, however, shows no

segun(*t*/*d*) (*que*) and only 1 *commo* structure is found. (16) is the only *commo* (*assicomo*) example of the *Lapidario* 1420, again there is no lexical subject material anywhere nearby *se* + *dize*:

(16) E assicomo   se   dize,   suele   ser   guarda
     and so.as   REFL   say.PRS.3SG   use.PRS.3SG   be.INF   guard
     dela uirginidad;   la   qual   piedra, [...]
     of.the virginity   the   that   stone
     'And as one says, [it=the stone] is the guard of virginity, said stone […]'
<div align="right">[Lapidario 1420, p. 19]</div>

4. SUBORDINATE CONTEXTS, FORMULAIC EXPRESSIONS AND THEIR ROLE WITHIN THE GRAMMATICALIZATION PATH

The frequent use of passive *se*-sentences in subordinate contexts seems to be a significant basis for the overall reanalysis of passive *se* to impersonal active *se*. While the impersonal active interpretation might have already been present on the semantic level for some time, the subordinate contexts furnish several characteristics that facilitate important prerequisites for this reanalysis to become more substantially noticeable on formal grounds.

The patterns discussed so far have more general connections to the overall reanalysis of passive *se* > impersonal active *se*. Wolfsgruber (2017) proposed a more fine-grained path rooted in the observations discussed by Monge (1955 based on Bassols de Climent; see (10)) and Giacalone Ramat and Sansò (2011)) and on the contexts revealed by a larger corpus study which included legal texts, narrative texts and scientific texts and focused on the medieval stages of several Romance languages. The finer grained path in (18) (adapted from Wolfsgruber 2017, 2019, 2021) means to exemplify how the structures reflect the more and more detectable morpho-syntactic signs of the reanalysis and their relation to the overall grammaticalization path proposed in the literature and displayed in (17).[7] The structures in (18) surface between 1250 and 1442.

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7 Note that (18) does not reflect strictly chronological developments because some of the structures appear simultaneously or within a few years. These signs converge more significantly from the second half of the 13th century onwards. The dotted line represents the point where the constructions counted as impersonal active and not as ambiguous impersonal active in the larger corpus study (cf. Wolfsgruber 2017).

(17) reflexive > middle > anticausative > passive > impersonal

<div style="text-align:right">(cf. Michaelis 1998: 86; Sansò 2011: 2, among others)</div>

(18) fine-grained path of passive > active impersonal:

a. Ambiguous constructions (this may include instances where it is unclear what the subject of a *se* + verb pattern is due to the unclear context or sentence structure (e.g. here either a lot of clauses may surface between the possible lexical subject and *se* + verb or the context does not allow a clear deduction of whether the subject of the *se* pattern is a referential *pro* or *pro*$_{arb}$) — Ambiguous impersonal

b. *se dice que* (*se* + verb + *que*)

c. formulaic patterns: *según* (*que*) *se dice en este libro* (*según* (*que*) + *se* + verb)/*com se fa*/*si fazer se puede... [...] se dice [...]* etc. 'as is done/as one does'

d. *se sigue:___* (*se* + verb + :___)

e. *se conviene* (*se* + impersonal verb or verbs that are used that way)

f. AcI-like structures

g. missing agreement between lexical DP and verb

h. *se* + unergative/*se* + unaccusative verbs — Impersonal active

The patterns discussed in this paper can be seen as tackling different aspects of the overall passive > impersonal active step as well as contexts a) and c) of the fine-grained path in (18). Let me explain: First of all, a reinterpretation of *se*$_{passive}$ V subject > *se*$_{impersonal}$ V object (or initially more likely *se*$_{subject}$ V object) is assumed, as put forward in the literature and as discussed in section 2. The subordinate environments in which the generic passive *se*-constructions are found in the analyzed legal texts have — as a general tendency — the crucial property of forcing *se* into a pre-verbal position (cf. e.g. Fontana 1993, Bouzouita 2008, Mackenzie 2019 among many others). In the root clauses of medieval Spanish, there is (still) a strong possibility to find *se* and other clitic material in enclitic positions. However, *que* 'who/what/that' and *si* 'if' but also *commo* 'how', *porque* 'because', *quanto* 'how much' and *quando* 'when', etc. of subordinate structures attract *se* to a pre-verbal position. This produces a *se* + verb complex on the surface structure which, as a consequence, may become more and more fixed, specifically when expressing the passive/impersonal function and thus maybe displaying a much-needed ingredient for an SVO interpretation.

Second, the DP material that can in some cases be seen as the lexical DP subject of relative *que* sentences is either surfacing as part of the root clause above the subordinate *que* structure or fronted and immediately followed by *que* + *se* + verb. This pattern (lexical DP either fronted or part of a different clause) weakens the connection between the lexical subject DP and the *se* + verb complex and most probably catalyzes constructions in which no overt lexical DP is present anymore or only very vaguely perceivable. For example, structures like *as commonly understood, as contained in this book*, illustrated in (14), etc. can give rise to patterns in which it is unclear to what a *pro* of a passive *se*-sentence may refer. This tendency is encountered (across text-types) in context a) environments of (18) and may very well be supported and probably initially triggered by the subordinate generic passive structures under discussion.

The second pattern under scrutiny uses *segun*(*t*/*d*) (*que*) or *commo* and the like but moves away from an initial bi-partite structure exhibited in relative *que* clauses in that it is mostly elliptical and formulaic at times and does not mention the lexical subject anymore (reflected as context c) in (18)).

For the analyzed legal texts, the importance of subordinate structures in general and the DP + *que* + *se* + verb pattern in particular as well as its elliptic and more formulaic instantiations seem to be one of the main routes for evolvement of the passive *se* to impersonal active *se*.

As has been briefly alluded to, this is not to say that the overall developments follow this exact same route. As has been shown concisely, both *Lapidarios* exhibit slightly different tendencies with the *Lapidario* 1420 revealing more ACI-like constructions and a focus on the use of verbs of saying and cognitive activity in combination with impersonal active *se* structures. The *Lapidario* 1420 is already tapping into the Latinate structures that become more and more frequently used in the 15th and 16th centuries.

A more detailed study of different text-types thus provides us with the possibility of tracing initial manifestations of constructions and their nascent stages more closely which in turn may reveal more holistic knowledge about the general dynamics involved.

5. CONCLUSIONS

This article has provided evidence that generic passive *se*-constructions show peculiar characteristics in medieval legal texts. They overwhelmingly often surface in subordinate contexts with *que* as the leading complementizer. Within these structures, relative clauses introduced by *que* and preceded by the lexical material that can be seen as the theme subject of the passive *se*-sentence (DP + *que* + *se* + verb pattern) are highly significant. The subordinate structures as a whole and the relative *que* structure in particular seem to constitute an important reservoir for the reanalysis of passive *se* > impersonal active *se* in that they demand the clitic to be in a pre-verbal position, thus fixing the *se* + verb linearization which has been viewed as crucial for SVO interpretation and the reanalysis. It also loosens the connection between the lexical (subject) DP and the *se* + verb complex across the sentence boundary which is also reflected in the use of more formulaic elliptic constructions with *commo* or *segun*(*t*/*d*) (*que*) + *se* + verb especially in the later text. In these structures, no overt lexical subject DP is found anymore.

These insights from the analyzed legal texts are also connected to the overall more fine-grained path assumed. The path describes the more fine-grained contexts that come with the spread of the reanalyzed impersonal active *se* structure. The studied developments in the legal texts mainly reflect contexts a) (ambiguous impersonal) and c) (formulaic expressions) in the fine-grained path.

CORPORA

[CORDE] Real Academia Española. *Corpus Diacrónico del Español*. https://www.rae.es/banco-de-datos/corde

[DLE] Real Academia Española. *Diccionario de la lengua española*. https://dle.rae.es/

[DOM] Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften. *Dictionnaire de l'occitan médiéval*. https://dom.badw.de/altokzitanisch.html

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