

Multifunctionality in FDG: Spanish *mismo*^{*}

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1 Introduction

Linguistic elements, such as words, phrases, or grammatical structures, may serve multiple functions within a language. Linguistic multi-functionality is central to understanding the versatility and complexity of language systems. The present pages are intended as an illustration of the relevance of the architecture of the theory of Functional Discourse Grammar (henceforth FDG) (Hengeveld and Mackenzie 2008; Keizer 2015) in addressing the multi-functionality of linguistic units.

Specifically, the focus of the analysis that will be presented here is the Spanish word *mismo* ‘same’ and the phrase *lo mismo* ‘the same’, illustrated in (1)-(4).

- (1) *Se han comprado el mismo coche.*
REFL.3. AUX.PRS.3PL bought the.M.SG same.M.SG car.(M).SG
‘They have bought the **same** car.’
- (2) *Para buscar la definición de un término, pulsa sobre la inicial del mismo.*
to seek.IMP the definition of a.M.SG term.(M).SG press.IMP on the initial of.the.M.SG same.M.SG
‘To search for the definition of a term, press on **its** initial.’
- (3) *Lo mismo doy un paseo luego.*
the same give.PRS.1SG a walk afterwards
‘I **might** go for a walk later.’

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(4) *Ven ahora mismo.*
 come.IMP now same
 ‘Come here **right** now.’

In (1) *mismo* is used to express comparison. The second instance of the word in (2) shows its use to refer anaphorically to *término* ‘term’. In (3), the same word serves to express probability. Finally, example (4) illustrates its use as an emphaser of the adverb *ahora* (‘now’). These four examples do not exhaust all possible uses of the word, however.

In this squib, I will demonstrate the usefulness of the theory of FDG in dealing with for multi-functionality, although I am aware that, due to space limitations, I will not be able to do justice to the wealth of uses of *mismo*. The examples used were retrieved from the *Spanish Web 18* corpus (*esTenTen18*), accessed via Sketch Engine, but have been adapted for the sake of simplicity.

2 The functions of *mismo* and *lo mismo*: An FDG analysis

This Section will provide an overview of the different uses of *mismo* that are included in the *Diccionario panhispánico de dudas* (henceforth *DPD*). As will become clear, *mismo* and *lo mismo* share some of the functions, but they differ in that only the former allows for formal variation, being inflected for gender and number (*el mismo*, *los mismos*, *la misma*, *las mismas*), and even accepting suffixation (*-ito/-ita*, *-ísimo/-ísima* and *-mente*). The different functions of *mismo* and *lo mismo* will then be captured using the architecture of the FDG theory, and in particular the layered structure of the clause. The analysis will be structured in terms of the level at which these units play a role: Section 2.1 will explore pragmatic functions, accounted for at the Interpersonal Level, and Section 2.2 will address semantic functions, captured at the Representational Level.

2.1 *Interpersonal functions*

2.1.1 *Referential identity*

The first function that is described in *DPD* is identity, illustrated in (5). This usage, which I will refer to as Referential identity, is accounted for at the IL, as it expresses that the entity to which reference is made happens to be not just identical (as in the comparative function; see Section 2.2.1), but one and the same, as shown in (5).

(5) *La (mism)a persona que inventó la guerra puede inventar la paz.*
 the same.F.SG person.(F).SG who invented the war can.PRS.3SG inventar la paz.
 invent.INF the peace
 ‘The (same) person who invented the war can invent peace.’

This use conveys that there is only one referent involved, that is, there is only one Referential Subact. Because of this, *mismo* can often be omitted with no semantic repercussions at the RL, as shown in (5).

2.1.2 *Emphasis*

In addition to the Referential identity, *mismo* can often be used as an emphatic device, in which case it can occur before or after a noun, as can be seen in (6a) and (6b), respectively, and after a personal pronoun, as in (6c).

(6) a. *Es el mismo diablo.*
 COP.PRS.3SG the.M.SG self.M.SG devil.(M).SG
 ‘It’s the devil himself.’

b. *La película es cruel [...] como la vida misma.*
 the film COP.PRS.3SG cruel [...] like the.F.SG life.(F).SG
 self.F.SG
 ‘The movie is cruel, [...] like life itself.’

c. *Eres el resultado de ti mismo.*
 COP.PRS.2SG the result of you.OBLIQUE self.M.SG
 ‘You are the result of yourself.’

In its use as an emphatic device, *mismo* is analysed as an operator at the layer of the Discourse Act (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 64–65). This means that it has no semantic value, but only emphasizes a Referential Subact.

2.1.3 *Emphatic coordination*

When used in correlative structures with *que* (or more rarely, *como*), *lo mismo* can also be used to ‘denote the sum of two notions’ (DPD), with a meaning similar to *tanto como* ‘as much as’ or to the use of a coordinative conjunction, as exemplified in (7).

(7) *Acá se bebe [,,] lo mismo vino que cerveza.*
 here REFL.3 drink.PRS.3SG the same.CORR wine CORR beer
 ‘Here we drink both wine and beer.’

From the perspective of FDG, this function can be seen as the emphatic coordination of two Referential Subacts, corresponding to two different Individuals at the Representational Level. In these cases, the Speaker wishes to highlight the relevance of both entities, *cerveza* ‘beer’ and *vino* ‘wine’, that is, the use of *X lo mismo que Y* ‘X the same as Y’, serves an emphatic function, contrasting with the neutral *X y Y* ‘X and Y’.

Likewise, *lo mismo* can coordinate two Ascriptive Subacts, corresponding to two State of Affairs, as in (8), or two properties, as in (9), again conveying Emphasis.

(8) *Lo mismo baila que canta.*
 the same.CORR dance.PRS.3SG CORR sing.PRS.3SG
 ‘He/she both dances and sings.’

(9) *Estos rollitos pueden comer=se lo mismo calientes que fríos.*
 these.M roll.DIM.(M).PL can.PRS.3PL eat.INF=REFL.3 the same.CORR
 warm.M.PL corr cold.M.PL
 ‘You can eat these rolls both hot and cold.’

2.1.4 Indifference

Contrasting with the emphasizing function, *mismo* can also express lack of interest in (concern about or sympathy with) the referent, as exemplified in (10).

(10) *Pon=te esa chaqueta misma, llegamos tarde.*
 put.on.IMP=REFL.2SG this.F.SG jacket.F.SG same.F.SG
 arrive.PRS.1PL late
 ‘Just put on this jacket, we are running late.’

This interpersonal function is captured by an interpersonal operator at the layer of Referential Subacts and is not represented at the Representational Level, as the phrase does not convey any representational meaning being only used to communicate the speaker’s disinterest in the choice of a specific referent. The function does have a formal effect, triggering postnominal position at the Morphosyntactic Level.

Phrasal *lo mismo* shares with the adjective the meaning of indifference when used in fixed expressions like *da lo mismo* or *es lo mismo*, exemplified in (11).

(11) *¿Que no hay almohada? Da lo mismo,*
 COMP not EXISTENTIAL.PRS pillow.(F).M give.PRS.3SG the same
puedo dormir sin ella.
 can.PRS.1SG sleep.INF without it.F.SG
 ‘There’s no pillow? Never mind, I can sleep without it.’

In this case, the expression will be treated as a partially specified frame, where the verb is restricted to either *da* ‘gives’ or *es* ‘is’.

2.1.5 Anaphoric reference

The use of *mismo* (and the various inflected forms) as an anaphoric device to refer back to something previously mentioned in discourse is exemplified in (12).

(12) A: *¡Demonios! ¿Qué haces otra vez aquí?*
 damn what do.PRS.2SG again here
 B: *Lo mismo digo.*
 the same say.PRS.1SG
 ‘A: Damn! What are you doing here again?
 B: That’s what I say.’

Lo mismo can be used to refer to different types of units. In (12), it refers back to the previous direct speech quotation, that is, the Discourse Act produced by Speaker A.

2.2 Representational functions

2.2.1 Comparison

Mismo and *lo mismo* share a predominant representational function, as both are typically used to express comparison, conveying the idea that different entities are identical or very similar, as in (13). From the perspective of FDG, example (13) would be analysed as the comparison of two or more Individuals, specifically, the faces of dogs and those of their owners are compared and regarded as similar. Other types of entities can also be compared. Thus, in (14) *lo mismo* is used to compare two State-of-affairs, a car’s sleeping on the street or in a garage. In (15) two Manners of treating the rich and the poor are compared.

(13) [...] *ha sido un recurso cómico habitual de los dibujos animados, el mostrar perros con la misma cara*
 the show.INF dogs with the.F.SG same.F.SG face.(F).SG
que sus amos.
 COMP their owners
 ‘[...] it has been a common comedic trope in cartoons to show dogs with the same face as their owners.’

(14) *No es lo mismo que un coche duerma en la calle a que lo haga en un garaje.*
 not COP.SG.3 the same COMP a car sleep.PRS.SBJV.3SG in the street to COMP it do.PRS.SBJV.3SG in a garage
 ‘For a car sleeping in the street or in a garage is not the same thing.’

(15) [...] *tratas lo mismo a los ricos que a los pobres.*
 treat.PRS.2SG the same DOM the rich COM DOM the poor
 ‘[...] you treat the rich and the poor in the same way.’

2.2.2 Subjective epistemic modality

Lo mismo can also be used with the meaning ‘probably’ to indicate the extent to which the Speaker is committed to the truth of a proposition, as shown in (16).

(16) *este verano lo mismo voy 15 días a hacer un curso*
 this summer the same go.PRS.1SG 15 days to do.INF a course
 ‘This summer I might be going away for two weeks to do a course.’

In this use, *lo mismo* expresses subjective epistemic modality, and, in analogy with epistemic adverbs like *probably* and *possibly*, can be analysed as a modifier of the Propositional Content at the Representational Level (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 151–153).

2.2.3 Anaphoric reference

In Section 2.1.3, the use of *mismo* to refer anaphorically to an interpersonal unit was exemplified in (12). By contrast, reference to two different types of individuals is made in (17).

(17) *Fuera de la cajita están esparcidos otros cachivaches que pudieron ser joyas o amuletos, which could.PST.PFV.3PL COP.INF jewels or charms (que para el caso son lo mismo) which for the case COP.PRS.3PL the same*
 ‘Outside the little box, other trinkets are scattered that could have been jewelry or charms (which, in this case, are the same thing).’

Interestingly, the choice of plural concord (*joyas o amuletos...* *SON lo mismo*, ‘jewels and charms ARE the same’) indicates that two different types of entities are being compared and regarded as equal. By contrast, example (18) shows the use of *lo mismo* to refer anaphorically to units of the Morphosyntactic Level.

(18) *Cuando en casa hablamos de ciegos o deficientes visuales when in come speak.PRS.1PL of blind.PL or deficient.PL visual.PL graves, que para nosotros es lo mismo, nos severe.PL which for us COP.PRS.3SG the same REFL.1PL referimos a personas que vemos un 10 % [...] refer.PRS.1PL to persons who see.PRS.1PL a 10 %*
 ‘When we talk about blind or severely visually impaired people, which is the same thing for us, we refer to individuals like us who see 10% [...]’

The choice of singular concord with the verb (*ciegos o deficientes visuales graves...* *ES lo mismo*, ‘blind or severely impaired individuals...IS the same’) shows that it is not the individuals that are being referred to, but the way to refer to them as either ‘blind’ or ‘visually impaired’. In this case, the Morphosyntactic Level is involved, as metalinguistic reference is made, and they are examples of ‘reflexive language’ (Hengeveld & Mackenzie 2008: 5, 275–277).

In some cases, such as in (19), this function, which is associated with its nominal use, is regarded as unnecessary and its use is discouraged in *DPD*, despite its widespread presence in administrative and journalistic language. According to *DPD*, in such cases, *mismo* could be replaced by other more appropriate anaphoric elements such as demonstratives, possessives, or personal pronouns.

(19) *El que su acción fuera efímera, innecesaria, that their action COP.PST.SBJV.3SG fleeting unnecessary no resta a la misma su significado. not distract PRP the same its meaning*
 ‘That their action was fleeting and unnecessary does not detract from its significance.’

The functional distribution of *mismo* and *lo mismo* across FDG's levels is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Functional distribution of *mismo* across linguistic levels

	<i>Mismo</i>	<i>lo mismo</i>
Referential identity	+	IL
Comparison	+	+
Emphasis	+	IL
Emphatic coordination		+
Indifference	+	+
Anaphora	+	+
Subjective Epistemic modality		+
		RL

3 Concluding remarks

The exploration of *mismo* has demonstrated that FDG's hierarchical architecture effectively disentangles the multiple functions of a single linguistic unit, providing structured grids for comprehension.

References

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