

The rise and development of the presentative progressive construction in Latin

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ICLL XX

LAS PALMAS DE GRAN CANARIA, 19 JUNE 2019



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Quid?

(1) **Viderunt** [...] **Nazarium** **super mare ambulans** [...].

‘They saw Nazarius walking on the sea’ (*Passio Nazarii et Celsi* 1.5.21)

(2) **Audierunt** **eum** **decantantem** [...] **laudes deo** [...].

‘They heard him sing praise to God’ (*Passio Victoris et Coronae* 1.642.20)

[**V**_{PERC} **NP**_{ACC} **PRS.PART**_{ACC}]

Compare:

(3) **Viderunt** **Nazarium** **super mare ambulare.**

(4) **Viderunt** **Nazarium** **qui super mare ambulat.**

Hypothesis 1

Bolkestein (1976), Maraldi (1980):

Form:

viderunt

V_{PERC}

Nazarium

NP_{ACC}

ambulantem

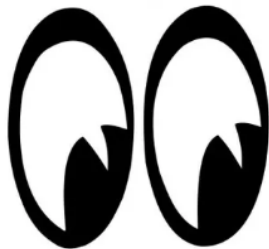
PRS.PART_{ACC}

[P1_{INSAT} P2_{DO}]

Function:

perception

progressive event



Hypothesis 2

Greco (2013), Zheltova (2017):

Form:

viderunt

V_{PERC}

Nazarium

NP_{ACC}

ambulantem

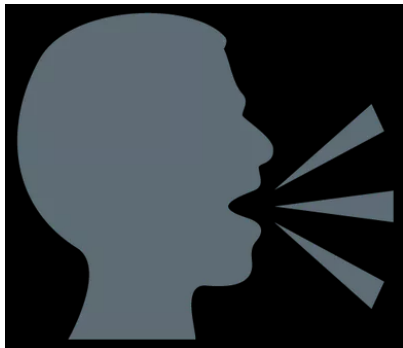
PRS.PART_{ACC}

[P1_{INSAT} P2_{DO}]

Function:

evidentiality

progressive event



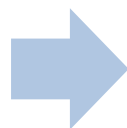
What about?

(5) **Ecce** **dominum** **stantem ad summitatem scale [...].**

‘Behold! The Lord is standing at the top of the stairs’ (*Vita Pardulfi* 1.29)

(6) **Ecce** **veniens** **sancta Tetta [...].**

‘Behold! Saint Tetta is coming’ (*Vita Adelphii* 227)



What is the analysis of these constructions?

Research questions

1/ What is the formal and functional analysis of the Latin structure

$[V_{\text{PERC}} + NP_{\text{ACC}} + \text{PRS.PART}_{\text{ACC}}]$?

2/ Is there a link between this structure and the structures with *ecce*? If so, which one?

Theoretical framework

Construction Grammar (Goldberg 1995, 2006; Croft 2001):

A construction is an arbitrary form-function pairing:

e.g. the word *avocado*

e.g. the ditransitive construction:

S	V	Obj1	Obj2
Peter	gives	a book	to Mary

TRANSFER

Lambrecht (2000) on modern French

The “presentative relative construction”:

(7) Je vois la jeune fille qui arrive.
I see.PRS.1SG DET young girl REL arrive.PRS.3SG
'I see that the young girl is arriving'

(8) Il y avait une jeune fille qui fumait.
he there be.IMPF.3SG DET young girl REL smoke.IMPF.3SG
'There was a young girl who smoked'

(9) Voilà la jeune fille qui arrive.
here is DET young girl REL arrive.PRS.3SG
'Behold! The young girl is arriving'

My hypothesis

1/ In Latin, the structure [V_{PERC} + NP_{ACC} + PRS.PART_{ACC}] qualifies as a construction:

Viderunt Nazarium ambulatentem.

Form: [V NP_{ACC} PRS.PART_{ACC}]

Function: [presentative S progressive event]



The “presentative progressive construction”

My hypothesis

2/ The construction with *ecce* is a structural variant of the construction with a verb of perception:

Viderunt Nazarium ambulantem.

Ecce Nazarium ambulantem.

Ecce Nazarius ambulans.

Form: [PRED NP PRS.PART]

Function: [presentative S progressive event]



The “allostruction hypothesis” (cf. Cappelle 2006)

Corpus and data

Late Latin (BL2LAT & PALAFRALAT-V2-0 [BFM]):

Period	# instances	Corpus size (# tokens)
Imperial Latin (4th-5th c.)	12	31 787
Merovingian Latin (6th-7th c.)	118	300 249
Early medieval Latin (8th-10th c.)	79	211 742
	209	543 778

1/ What are the formal and functional properties of the structure [PRED + NP + PRS.PART]?

Functional properties:

The presentative function of PRED

The progressive function of PRS.PART.

Formal properties:

The morphosyntactic variation of PRED

The case marking of S and PRS.PART.

1/ What are the formal and functional properties of the structure [PRED + NP + PRS.PART]?

Functional properties:

The presentative function of PRED

The progressive function of PRS.PART.

Formal properties:

The morphosyntactic variation of PRED

The case marking of S and PRS.PART.

The presentative function of PRED

Two major options:

1/ Introduction of an entirely new referent in the discourse:

(10) Cumque pervenisset Gamappio vico, ingrediens ilico basilicam, invenit quendam pauperem claudum pro foribus iacentem.

‘When he arrived in the quarter of Gamappio, he found, upon entering the the local basilica, some poor, cripple man lying in front of the entrance’

(Vita Eligii 685)

(11) Cum ibidem prestolaretur adversarii adventum, ecce veniens quidam ex ministris Betheleni [...].

‘When he was waiting there for the arrival of the enemies, behold, one of the servants of Bethelenus came’ *(Vita Austrigisili 194)*

The presentative function of PRED

Two major options:

2/ Re-activation of a more or less prominent referent that has already been mentioned in the preceding discourse:

(12) [...] invenerunt [...] Vitum circa fluvium dominum exorantem.

‘They found Vitus praying to the Lord near the river’ (*Passio Viti* 1.11.6)

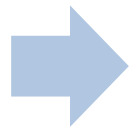
(no examples for ecce)

The presentative function of PRED

The presentative function of PRED does not oust it from its sensory value:

(13) [...] invenit quendam pauperem claudum pro foribus iacentem.

‘He found some poor, cripple man lying before the entrance’ (*Vita Eligii* 685)



But the sensory value is backgrounded.

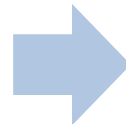
The presentative function of PRED

Nor does it exclude the evidential value of PRED:

(14) [...] invenit quendam pauperem claudum pro foribus iacentem.

‘He found some poor, cripple man lying before the entrance’ (*Vita Eligii* 685)

 But it is also backgrounded.

 There is co-existence of different semantic and pragmatic values, some being more foregrounded than others depending on contextual phenomena (cf. Hopper 1991, Heine 2002, Diewald 2002).

The progressive function of the PRS.PART.

The PRS.PART. expresses new information about the referent that is introduced or reactivated by PRED.

This information takes the form of a progressive state of affairs: the referent of the NP is presented as being in the middle of performing some event at the time of the act of sensory perception denoted by PRED (Maraldi 1980, Greco 2013):

(15) [...] invenerunt [...] Vitum circa fluvium dominum exorantem.

‘They found Vitus near the river praying to the Lord’ (*Passio Viti* 1.11.6)

1/ What are the formal and functional properties of the structure [PRED + NP + PRS.PART]?

Functional properties:

The presentative function of PRED

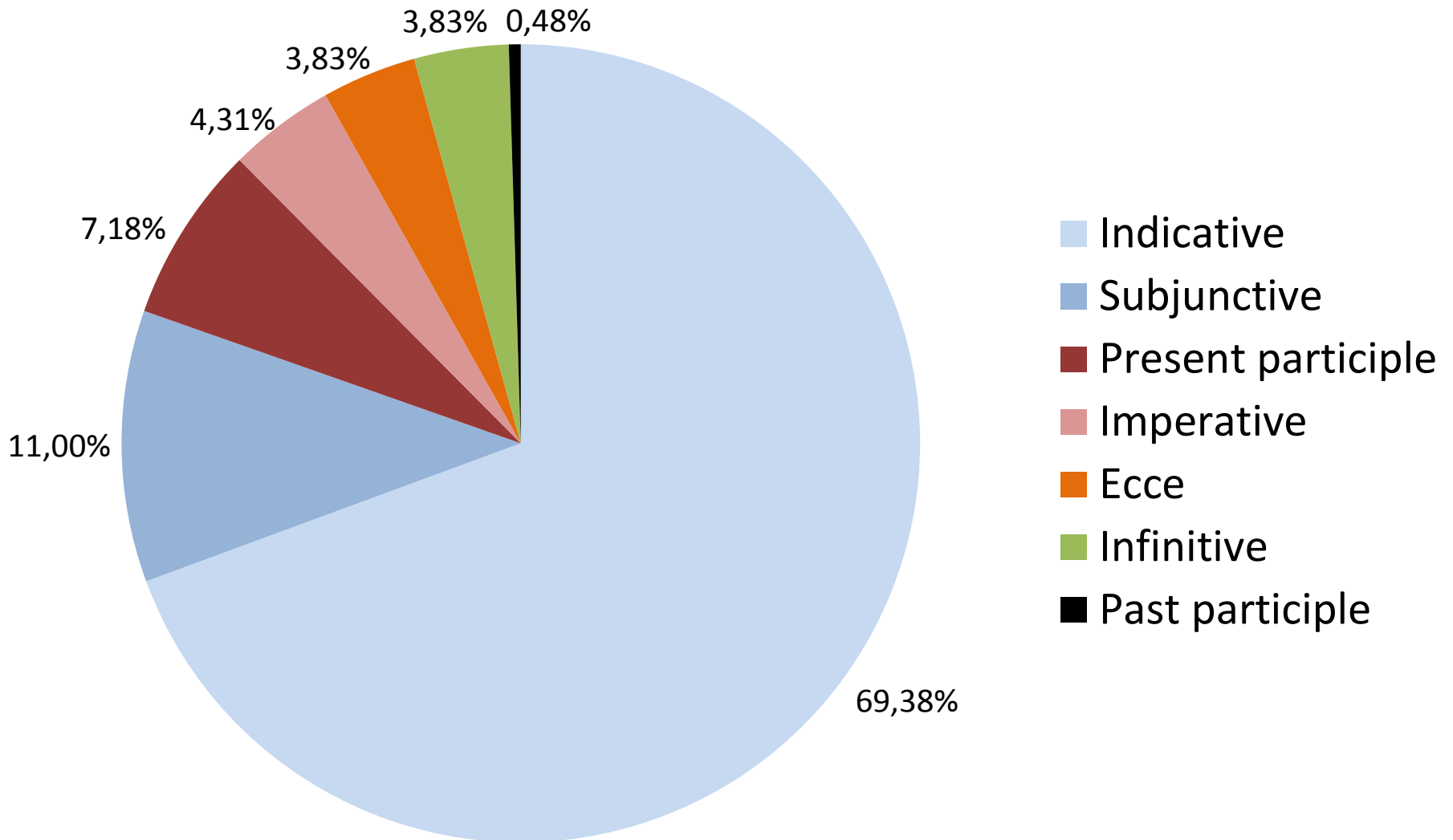
The progressive function of PRS.PART.

Formal properties:

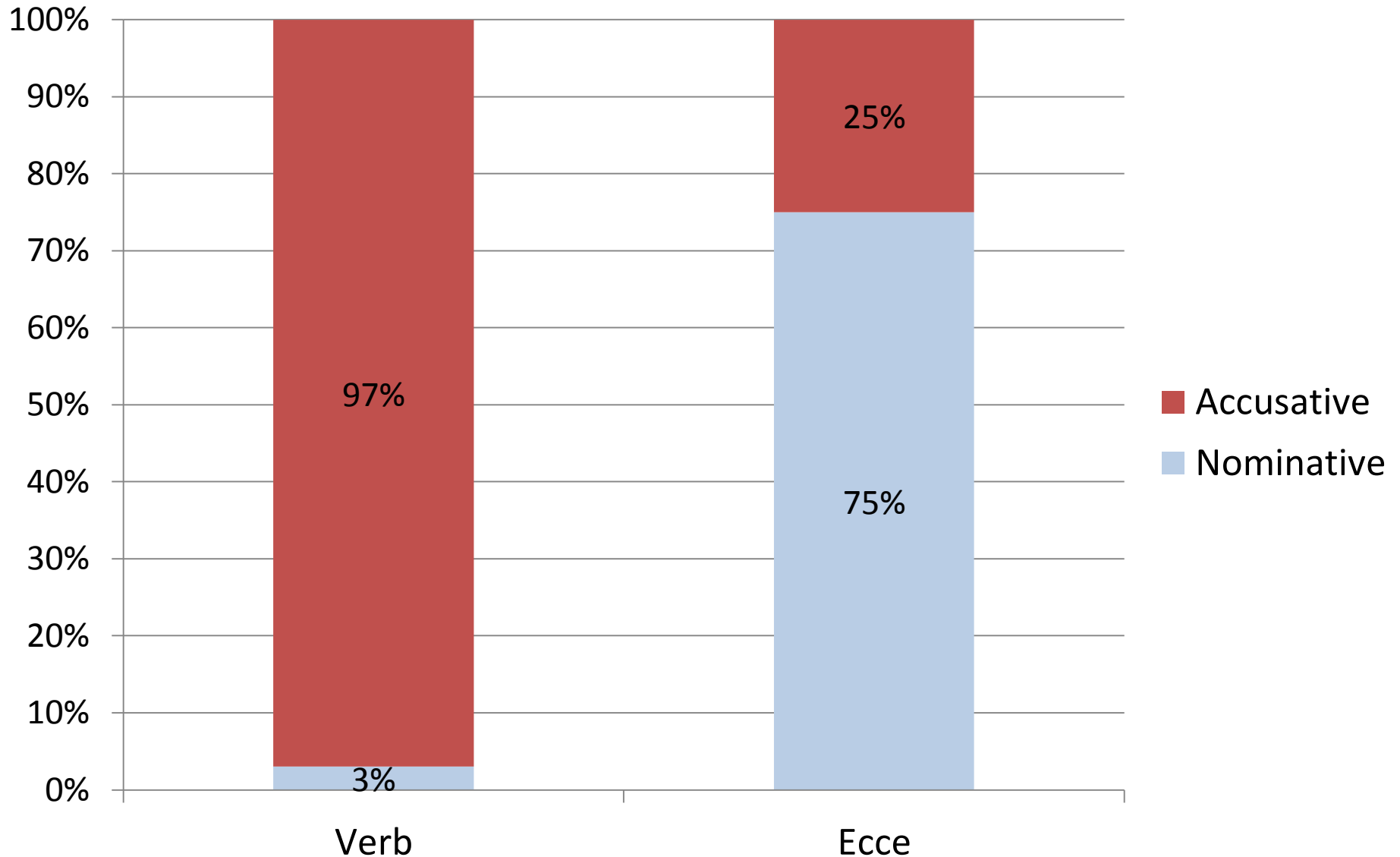
The morphosyntactic variation of PRED

The case marking of S and PRS.PART.

The morphosyntactic variation of PRED



The case form of NP (and PRS.PART)



2/ The allostruction hypothesis

There is a well-known link between a presentative function and the imperative form of a verb of perception:

In French, the presentatives *voici* and *voilà* are grammaticalized devices that combine the imperative singular form of *voir* and the proximal deictic morpheme *-ci* or the distal one *-là* (Oppermann-Marsaux 2006):

(16) *Ve* *ci* *saint Père, qui des anemes est* *garde.*
see.IMP here saint Peter REL of.DET souls.PL be.PRS.3SG guardian
'Behold St. Peter, who is the guardian of souls' (*Couronnement de Louis*, v. 388)

2/ The allostruction hypothesis

The diachronic distribution of PRED=imperative and PRED=*ecce*:

	4th c.	5th c.	6th c.	7th c.	8th c.	9th c.	10th c.
Imperative (n=9)			8	1			
<i>Ecce</i> (n=8)				1	6	1	

Given the functional and formal analogies between *ecce* and the imperative form of verbs of perception, the emergence of constructions with PRED = imperative verb in the 6th c. has probably paved the way for the emergence of constructions with PRED = *ecce* one century later, the form *ecce* being the presentative marker *par excellence*.

Conclusions

The structure [PRED + NP + PRS.PART] qualifies as a construction:

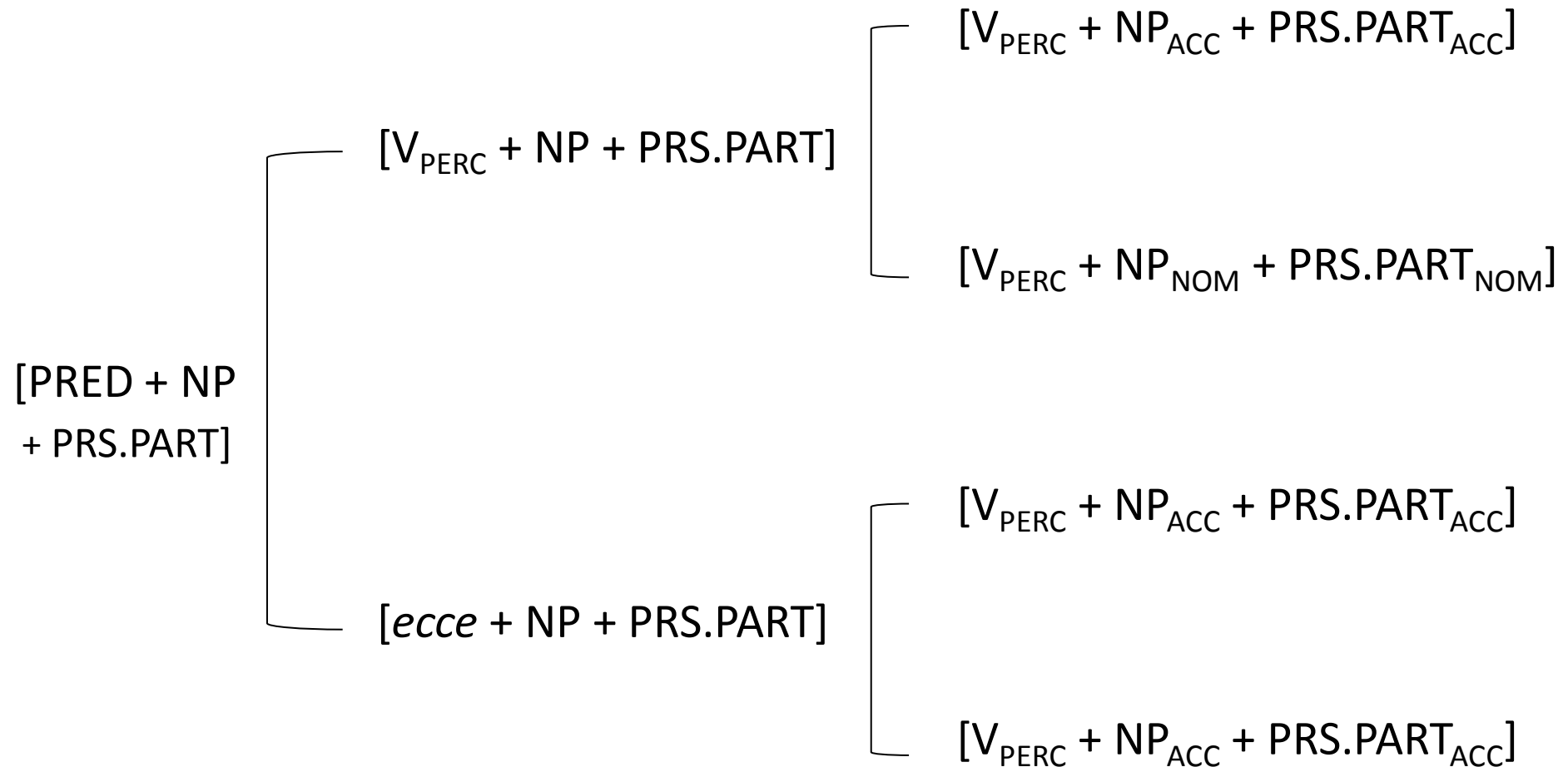
PRED: a predicate reanalyzed as a presentative marker (but with an underlying sensory and, possibly, evidential value)

NP: the subject (with usually a quirky case marking as a result of syntactic reanalysis [Langacker 1977])

PRS.PART: the main verb expressing new information about the subject in the form of a progressive event

Conclusions

Constructional network (Traugott & Trousdale 2013):



Conclusions

7th c.: emergence of a third allostruction, with PRED being a form of the verb *habere* used in an impersonal way:

(17) Habebat autem pendentem collo capsellam [...].

‘But there was a small box hanging on his neck’ (lit. ‘he has a small box hanging on his neck’) (*Vita Galli Walahfrido* 293)

Compare:

(18) Habebat [...] de eo loco ad montem Dei forsitan quattuor milia.

‘From this place to the mountain of God there were perhaps 4 miles’ (*Itin.* 1.1)

Thank you for your attention!

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