

Optativity and finiteness: *ojalá* + infinitive

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In this paper, we present evidence that optative sentences with the modal particle *ojalá* are possible with infinitival clauses. We examine sentences like (1) that have been ruled out in standard Spanish (Hernanz 1999; Alonso-Cortés 2011), but are found in the corpora and in Twitter Spanish (Benito Moreno 2021). Sentences in (1) are exclamative sentences that express an emotion ϵ on the part of the speaker and are not factual, non-descriptive, and provide felicity conditions on the use of a proposition p (see Grosz (2011), Sánchez López (2017), and Sánchez López (2020) for finite sentences). The truth value of the proposition expressed by p cannot be challenged, (2).

- (1) a. **Ojalá** ganarlo, para eso uno va a competir. (Chile, RAE: CORPES XXI, [21-01-2022])
ojala win.INF, for it one is.going to compete.INF
'I wish I could win, that's the reason for anyone to compete.'
- b. **Ojalá** aprender inglés tan rápido yo como tú espiar. (España, RAE: CORPES XXI, [21-01-2022])
ojala learn.INF English as fast I as you spy.INF
'I wish I could learn English as fast as you learn to spy.'
- (2) a. **Ojalá** encontrar un supermercado abierto. (where p = 'encontrar un supermercado abierto')
ojala find.INF a supermarket open
- b. #It is true/false that p

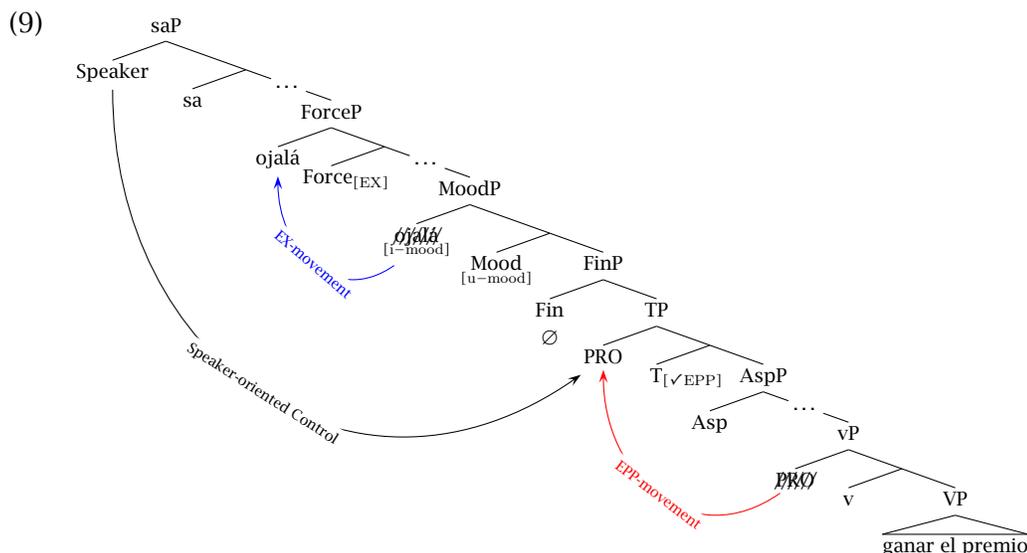
Syntactically, infinitival sentences with *ojalá* have a defective clause structure. They project a Force node to allocate the EXclamative operator but lack a Focus position. Assuming that polarity operators **no**, ("not"), and **sí**, ("yes"), are generated in the head of ΣP but only the latter has emphatic force and has to raise to the head of FocusP, the contrast in (3) shows that *ojalá* + infinitive sentences lack a Focus layer. They are incompatible with focus anteposition, (4), (Hernanz 2011). The defective clause structure of *ojalá* + infinitive is more populated than that of Root Infinitives, (RI), studied by Etxepare and Grohmann (2002). Sentences with *ojalá* + infinitive can project a hanging Topic position, (5a), or a left dislocated one, (5b). RI in Spanish only allow for left dislocated topics.

- (3) a. **Ojalá no** coger el coche más
ojala not take.INF the car anymore
- b. ***Ojalá sí** coger el coche más
ojala yes take.INF the car anymore
- (4) a. **Ojalá** hacer **eso mismo** bien.
ojala hacer.INF that itself
- b. ***Ojalá eso mismo** hacer bien.
ojala that itself do.INF
- (5) a. En cuanto a **su amiga Violeta**, **ojalá** ir con ella a la graduación.
in regard to her friend Violeta ojala go.INF with her to the graduation.ceremony
- b. **Ojalá, la fruta**, encontrarla fresca.
ojala the fruit encontrar.INF-them.FEM.SG fresh

The implicit subject of *ojalá* + infinitive is PRO and has the features [+author,+participant] (Harbour 2016). It is, therefore, bound to the speaker, and it is interpreted as first person. If it binds a reflexive pronoun, this pronoun must be first person, (6a), never second person, (6b). Verbs of appearance and existence like **suceder**, ("to happen"), and meteorological verbs, **llover**, ("to rain"), are ungrammatical in *ojalá* + infinitive, since PRO[+author,+participant] is incompatible with the expletive subject required by such verbs, (7). The first person interpretation of generic UNO, ("one"), studied by Moltmann (2006), is found when the generalization is obtained from first-hand desires, (8).

- (6) a. Ojalá PRO_i afeitarme_i sin sangrar.
 ojala PRO shave-SELF.1.SG without bleed.INF
- b. *Ojalá PRO_i afeitarte_i sin sangrar.
 ojala PRO shave-SELF.2.SG without bleed.INF
- (7) a. *Ojalá **suceder** desgracias.
 ojala happen-INF misfortune.FEM.PL
- b. *Ojalá **llover**.
 ojala rain.INF
- (8) Ojalá PRO_{gen} nacer, crecer y ser feliz.
 ojala PRO be.born-INF grow.INF and be.INF happy
 ‘One hopes to be born, grow and be happy all the way.’

Our proposal, (9), follows Haegeman and Hill (2013) where ForceP is selected by a Speech Act projection, (saP). The expression of desires is a speaker-directed speech act and need not project an addressee. In this configuration, the only available controller for PRO is the Speaker argument selected by the Speech Act head. Clauses with *ojalá* + infinitive are unspeakable sentences in the sense of Banfield (1982). Topic Phrases may precede or follow the ForceP as represented by ... branches. Following Sánchez López (2017), *ojalá* is selected by a Mood Phrase, checking the [u-mood] features of the Mood head. In this way, the optative meaning is obtained. Further movement of *ojalá* to the specifier of EX, EX-movement, would ensure the exclamative-emotive interpretation of the sentence.



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