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## Translating Pronominal Causative Constructions: *se faire* vs. *hacerse/fazer-se* + Inf

Sílvia Araújo\*, Ana Correia, Cristina Real

*Universidade do Minho, Campus de Gualtar – ILCH, Braga, 4715-057, Portugal*

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### Abstract

This paper presents a corpus-based study of pronominal causative constructions in a French-Spanish-Portuguese perspective. The combination of monolingual and multilingual corpus searches will help determine, at an initial phase, the conditions that underlie the functioning of *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se* in each language and, subsequently, the linguistic obstacles that hinder the literal translation of *se faire* into Spanish and Portuguese. Finally, a categorisation of the different translations of *se faire* will be offered. With this kind of study we aim to demonstrate the relevance of corpora as solid foundations for the creation of resources and methods for translation teaching and the training of translators.

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### 1. *Se faire*: theoretical framework

As mentioned by Blanche-Benveniste (2007), author of examples 1 and 2 below, the effects of activity or passivity achieved through the use of *se faire* have nothing to do with the syntax of *faire*, but rather depend entirely on the surrounding lexis and on the sociocultural context. It is, indeed, based on our knowledge of the world that we perceive as active sentence (1) *une de mes copines s'est fait percer la langue* (=voluntary act among the youth) and as passive sentence (2) *il s'est fait attribuer un carton jaune dès les premières minutes*. Any analysis of *se faire* must bear in consideration “the interaction between the syntactic, semantic [pragmatics] and discursive parameters when calculating the meaning of the sentence” (Novakova, 2009). As an attempt to systematise the different values *se faire* can take on in context, Kokutani (2005) puts forth the following typology:

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\* Corresponding author. Tel.: +351 253 601 641; fax.: +351 253 601 669.  
E-mail address: [saraujo@ilch.uminho.pt](mailto:saraujo@ilch.uminho.pt)

Table 1. *Se faire* + Inf – degree of agentivity of the subject (Kokutani, 2005)

Human subject	Dynamic	(3) Et j'ai eu envie de <i>me faire vomir</i> .
	Factive-beneficiary	(4) Je <i>me ferai représenter</i> à la réunion par mon secrétaire.
	Causative-unpleasant	(5) Jean <i>s'est fait licencier</i> pour faute grave.
	Passive-fatalistic	(6) En sortant de l'église, Marie-Chantal <i>se fait aborder</i> par un mendiant.
Inanimate subject	Spontaneous	(7) Les éclairs et le tonnerre <i>se sont fait voir</i> et entendre en différents temps.

*Se faire* is not sensitive to the [+/- intentionality] parameter: this is what allows for it to be used in contexts whose basic value oscillates between the active pole (dynamic and factive beneficiary role) and the passive pole (passive-fatalistic). The causative-unpleasant value and the spontaneous value are, as we see it, placed on an intermediate area of the continuum because the subject referent (animated for the first and inanimate for the latter) is somehow at the origin (though unintentionally) of the situation. With *se faire*, the subject is no longer fully an agent (Rivière, 2005; Novakova, 2009; Araújo, 2010) and it would appear that, depending on the context, we are before a progressive concealment of the subject's agentivity, which brings us to the connection between *se faire* and the passive diathesis (see Desclés & Guentchéva, 1993; Kupferman, 1995; Labelle, 2002). Similarly to the canonic *ser-passive*, the pronominalisation of *se faire* allows for the promotion of the patient argument. Thus, it is unsurprising that, with *se faire*, “the intention of the subject can be clearly stated [...] or disappear altogether, with the subject being regarded as a patient that undergoes the action without being able to do anything about it” (Blanche-Benveniste, 2007:164). In fact it seems difficult to understand the semantics of an example such as (6) based on the original meaning of *se faire*. Indeed, Marie-Chantal cannot be held as responsible for the process which affects her because this process is entirely unforeseen to her. In order to demonstrate that this type of example entails a tenuous implication of the subject in the process, Kokutani (2005) proposes the passive-fatalistic label. This value of *se faire* differs from that illustrated in example (5) where the subject suffers the consequences of a process that he/she triggered unintentionally due to his/her behaviour.

## 2. The problem: lack of full equivalence between *se faire* and *harcerse/fazer-se*

Linguists such as Blanche-Benveniste (1984), Kupferman (1995) and Labelle (2002), among others, are known to include *se faire* in the realm of constructions commonly associated with the passive “diathesis”. Let us consider the following examples:

- (8) Il a su *se faire entendre*.
- (9) Le froid *se fait sentir*.
- (10) Il *s'est fait construire* une maison.
- (11) Il *s'est fait voler* son ordinateur portable.
- (12) Il *s'est fait renverser* par un camion.
- (13) il *s'est fait expulser* du lycée.

From the examples above it becomes clear that the Spanish and Portuguese translations of *se faire* cannot always rely exclusively on the equivalent causative predicates, even though they do exist in Spanish (*hacerse*) and in Portuguese (*fazer-se*). Literal translation could be used in Spanish for the first three examples but not for the latter three. In Portuguese it would be unacceptable to translate *se faire* literally in examples (10)-(13) due to syntactic and semantic incompatibility. In order to translate sentences in which *se faire* collocates with verbs that promote indirect objects to subject, as well as sentences in which *se faire* is linked to patient-detrimental processes, translators must deploy alternative strategies, e.g. using causative constructions such as *hacer (con que)/fazer (com) que!*, *mandar + Inf, dejarse/ deixar-se + Inf* or passive constructions with *ser + PP*. This might entail a reduction of the verb valency, which could be mitigated by adding supplementary markers to the sentence.

### 3. Goals and methodology

The lack of a bidirectional correspondence between *se faire* and *hacerse/fazer-se* has led us to establish the following goals:

- to recognise the most favourable contexts to the emergence of these markers;
- to identify the linguistic obstacles that prevent *se faire* from being literally translated into Portuguese and Spanish.

For this purpose, we will consider the *Europarl* corpus (available at <http://opus.lingfil.uu.se/bin/opuscqp.pl?corpus=Europarl3>), which features the three languages under study, among several others. Corpus analysis will be divided into two steps, which correspond to a comparable and parallel approach, respectively:

1) we will begin by analysing the corpus in monolingual mode, i.e. we will perform an individual search for each language separately without alignment of the results. This will allow us to better understand the mechanism behind the pronominal causative predicates mentioned for the three languages.

2) subsequently we will carry out a simultaneous multilingual search across the three languages, which will give us the aligned results for *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se* with French as a source language due to its more varied use of the pronominal causative construction. This will help pinpoint the linguistic restrictions that preclude literal translation of *se faire* into Spanish and Portuguese.

In addition to the *Europarl* corpus, we will also use the monolingual corpora *Corpus de Referencia del Español Actual* (CREA - <http://corpus.rae.es/creanet.html>) and *CETEMPúblico* (<http://www.linguatca.pt/cetempublico/>) as sources of evidence originally produced in Spanish and Portuguese, respectively, to corroborate our conclusions concerning the use of *hacerse* and *fazer-se*.

### 4. Analysis of the corpora: *se faire* vs. *hacerse* / *fazer-se*

In the present section we will attempt to describe the areas of syntactic and semantic convergence between *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se* on the basis of a monolingual query. Below we present a comparative table that illustrates these intersection zones.

#### 4.1. Areas of convergence

Table 2 sums up the productivity of the ten verbs that most often collocate with *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se* in the *Europarl* corpus:

Table 2. List of the ten verbs most often selected by *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se* in the *Europarl* corpus

844 occurrences of <i>se faire</i>		265 occurrences of <i>hacerse</i>		992 occurrences of <i>fazer-se</i>	
SE FAIRE	No. Occ.	HACERSE	No. Occ.	FAZER-SE	No. Occ.
(res)sentir	200	esperar	52	sentir	567
entendre	144	oír	38	ouvir	143
attendre	81	Sentir	37	acompanhar	77
soigner	24	notar	32	esperar	74
passer	22	pasar	27	representar	56
représenter	16	valer	21	notar	34
rembourser	12	respetar	14	passar	11

tuer	10	escuchar	11	respeitar	8
(ré)élire	9	pagar	8	valer	7
respecter	8	comprender	7	compreender	4
526 occurrences		247 occurrences		981 occurrences	
62.3%		93.2%		98.8%	

According to these quantitative data, there is a clear preference across the three languages for perception verbs (*se faire entendre/ hacerse oír/fazer-se ouvir*, *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se sentir*, etc.):

(14a) La situation illégale dans laquelle se trouvent les victimes les empêchent souvent de *se faire entendre*.

(14b) Las víctimas no están en condiciones de *hacerse oír* por su situación frecuentemente ilegal.

(14c) Na situação ilegal em que muitas vezes se encontram, as vítimas não têm possibilidade de *se fazer ouvir*.

In these examples the perception verbs *entendre/oír/ouvir* take on a markedly agentive dimension that points to a factitive-beneficiary value of *se faire*. However, as mentioned by García-Miguel (2007) and Novakova (2009), this type of verb is often found in more or less lexicalised phrases preceded by inanimate subjects:

(15a) Les conséquences de ces politiques *se font sentir* sur la vie des gens, surtout parmi les plus pauvres et les plus exclus.

(15b) Las consecuencias de estas políticas *se están haciendo sentir* en la vida de las personas, especialmente de las más empobrecidas y excluidas.

(16a) Les conséquences de ces évolutions *se font sentir*, tant pour les entreprises en tant que telles que pour leur personnel.

(16b) As consequências destas evoluções *fazem-se sentir*, quer nas empresas como um todo, quer entre o respectivo pessoal.

Another common feature shared by the three languages concerns the dynamic value marked by intransitive verbs such as *passer/pasar/passar*, *valer*, *notar*:

(17a) Dans ces conditions, cette adhésion directe de la Communauté aurait pour tout mérite de la rapprocher un peu plus de cet objectif auquel elle vise depuis longtemps: *se faire passer* pour un État.

(17b) En estas condiciones, esta adhesión directa de la Comunidad tendría por todo mérito aproximarla un poco más al objetivo al cual tiende desde hace mucho tiempo: *hacerse pasar* por un Estado.

(17c) Nestas condições, a adesão directa da Comunidade teria o único mérito de aproximá-la um pouco mais do objetivo a que há muito tempo aspira: *fazer-se passar* por um Estado.

This dynamic value of *se faire* may be associated with acts of extreme violence that the subject deliberately brings upon him/herself (such as in this context of a terrorist attack):

(18a) Notre ville a vu des auteurs d'attentat-suicide, des gens prêts à *se faire sauter* eux-mêmes, à semer la destruction par des attentats terroristes.

(18b) Hemos tenido terroristas suicidas en nuestra ciudad, gente dispuesta a *hacerse volar* a sí misma, para destruir mediante actos terroristas.

(18c) Tivemos bombistas suicidas à solta na nossa cidade, gente pronta a *fazer-se ir pelos ares* e a espalhar a destruição com ataques terroristas.

Here it is possible to translate *se faire* with *hacerse/fazer-se* because we are dealing with a process which originates solely from the subject's volition.

It is interesting to notice that, in Portuguese and Spanish, the ten verbs listed in the table account for nearly all occurrences of *hacerse/fazer-se*. In French, in addition to these ten verbs, *se faire* can be found in association with 119 other verbs (*avoir, arrêter, berner, duper, etc.*), many of which could not co-occur with *hacerse/fazer-se* for semantic and syntactic reasons.

#### 4.2. Areas of divergence

In order to determine the areas of semantic and syntactic divergence between these three Romance languages, we performed a multilingual search using the same corpus. Based on the percentage of literal translation of *se faire* into *hacerse/fazer-se*, we were able to calculate the degree of equivalence between the French, Spanish and Portuguese forms:

Table 3. Degree of equivalence between *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se* in the *Europarl* corpus

	<i>se faire</i>	<i>hacerse</i>	<i>fazer-se</i>
No. of occurrences	706	58	123
% of literal translation (fr/es-pt)	-	8.2%	17.4%

The comparison of the 706 occurrences of *se faire* against the respective translations shows that only 17.4% of these occurrences are translated into *fazer-se*, and *hacerse* corresponds to *se faire* in merely 8.2% of all cases, which attests to a reduced degree of equivalence between *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se*.

This table further reveals a steep difference between Portuguese and Spanish regarding the productivity level of the pronominal causative predicates. Drawing back on the data of Table 2, we observed that whereas Portuguese recurrently uses *fazer-se* + Inf to express the spontaneous value, Spanish favours *dejar* (see García-Miguel, 2007). In the same corpus we found 94 occurrences of *dejar se sentir* vs. 37 of *hacerse sentir* and 567 of *fazer-se sentir*.

While this kind of multilingual search is necessary when dealing with three languages, there are other less time-consuming alternatives for studies with two languages. Corpora such as Per-Fide ([www.per-fide.ilch.uminho.pt/query/](http://www.per-fide.ilch.uminho.pt/query/)) allow the user to perform a simultaneous term search in two different languages. This search feature is particularly useful to determine the degree of equivalence between two terms in a fairly automatic manner.

This lack of equivalence between French and the other two languages can be attributed to several factors. The following are of note:

- contrary to its Portuguese and Spanish counterparts, *se faire* naturally co-occurs with verbs that describe “violent or unpleasant acts” (Spang-Hanssen, 1967; Gaatone, 1983) affecting the subject. These verbs often refer to some kind of physical aggression, reviling, or psychological/interpersonal abuse:

(19) Pourtant, nous regardons, impuissants, des victimes - femmes, enfants, innocents - *se faire massacrer*.

(20) Il n'est jamais très agréable de *se faire insulter* dans la rue ou sur internet.

(21) Cette question est aussi un peu personnelle car beaucoup d'entre nous connaissent ceux qui sont en train de *se faire expulser* ou l'ont déjà été, de ce pays.

As far as detrimental processes are concerned, the teleonomic dimension is automatically excluded. Nevertheless it should be noted that, in an appropriate context, a process generally regarded as negative may in fact be desired by the subject (see example (18a)).

- *Se faire* also has a preference for bitransitive verbs belonging to different semantic groups (verbs of donation: *se faire servir, se faire accorder...*; verbs of deprivation: *se faire voler, se faire extraire...*; verbs of communication: *se faire répéter, se faire expliquer...*; partitive dative: *se faire casser un bras, se faire sauter la cervelle...*; dative of interest: *se faire faire, se faire construire...*; verbal locutions: *se faire tirer l'oreille, se faire taper sur les*

*doigts...*). Portuguese does not permit this thematisation of the indirect object (IO), but the Spanish language does not seem to rule out this possibility in teleonomic contexts.

(22a) Ce rapport est intitulé "implants mammaires", mais il est également possible de *se faire placer* des implants au silicone dans d' autres parties du corps, où ils causent les mêmes dommages.

(22b) Este informe se titula «implantes mamarios», pero también es posible *hacerse colocar* implantes de silicona en otras partes del cuerpo, y causan el mismo daño.

(22c) Este relatório é respeitante aos implantes mamários, como se diz no título, mas também é possível *receber* implantes de silicone noutras partes do corpo, e provocam os mesmos efeitos nocivos.

This could be explained by the existence in Spanish of the dative personal pronoun *se* (e.g. *él se construyó una casa*), which cannot be found in Portuguese (*\*ele construiu-se uma casa*).

#### 4.3. Confirmation of data with monolingual corpora

As mentioned in section 3, we have also searched *CETEMPúblico* and *CREA*. The results corroborate the syntactic and semantic preferences of *hacerse* and *fazer-se* identified from the *Europarl* corpus analysis:

Table 4. List of the ten verbs most often selected by *hacerse/fazer-se* in monolingual corpora

728 occurrences of <i>fazer-se</i>		506 occurrences of <i>hacerse</i>	
CETEMPúblico		CREA	
Verbs	No. Occ.	Verbs	No. Occ.
sentir	255	pasar	116
ouvir	109	notar	94
representar	79	oír	65
acompanhar	46	entender	51
passar (por)	41	perdonar	33
notar	33	respetar	31
entender	19	valer	21
substituir	16	querer	10
esperar	14	representar	10
(re)eleger	14	escuchar	9
626 occurrences		440 occurrences	
85.9%		86.9%	

These data confirm that *hacerse* and *fazer-se* predominantly select perception verbs with animate and inanimate subjects. In Spanish the verb *sentir* does not belong to this list of the ten most frequent verbs, instead it co-occurs with *dejarse*, as opposed to Portuguese where *sentir* is at the top of the list. The remaining verbs that account for the occurrences of *hacerse/fazer-se* describe positive actions (*aceptar/aceitar*, *querer/amar*, *pagar*, etc.) desired by the syntactic subject (i.e. factitive-beneficiary value). Unlike Portuguese, in Spanish *hacerse* may co-occur with verbs that thematise the indirect object (*perdonar*, *construir*, *examinar*, *traer*, etc) in teleonomic contexts.

#### 5. Translations of *se faire* + Inf

According to the corpora the translations of *se faire* are distributed among four contexts:

- i) promotion of the DO (direct object) and teleonomy (factitive-beneficiary);
- ii) promotion of the DO with inanimate subject (spontaneous);
- iii) promotion of the DO and antiteleonomy (causative-unpleasant or passive-fatalistic);
- iv) promotion of the IO to the subject position.

As we mentioned above, literal translation can be used in contexts i) (see example (23a)) and ii) (see example (24a)) for Spanish and Portuguese:

(23a) Et ce alors que la classe politique se démène jour après jour devant les caméras pour *se faire respecter* des électeurs, mais aussi pour *s'en faire aimer*.

(23b) Por ello la clase política se desvive día a día ante las cámaras para ganarse el respeto de los electores y también para *hacerse querer*.

(23c) E isto quando a classe política se desunha, dia após dia, perante as câmaras de televisão, para *se fazer respeitar e amar* pelos eleitores.

(24a) Les progrès et l'espoir d'une amélioration *se font attendre*.

(24b) Los progresos y la esperanza de una mejora *se hacen esperar*.

(24c) Os progressos e a esperança de uma melhoria *fazem-se esperar*.

It is worth noticing, however, that literal translation is not always employed in such cases, even though its use would be grammatically justified:

(25a) [...] mais je crois aussi que les effets doivent *se faire sentir* rapidement si la Chine entend nous convaincre de ne pas prendre la moindre des mesures que nous pourrions envisager.

(25b) [...] pero también creo que los efectos deben *notarse* pronto para evitar que tomemos las medidas que estamos pensando adoptar.

(25c) [...] mas também acredito que os efeitos terão de *ser sentidos* rapidamente, para que possam suster alguma medida que possamos estar a ponderar.

In (25b) the Spanish translator opts for a clitic passive (*notarse*), whereas in (25c) the Portuguese translator chooses a prototypical *ser*-passive (*ser sentidos*) to render that same spontaneous value of *se faire*.

Literal translation cannot be used in type-iii contexts because neither *hacerse* nor *fazer-se* have developed a non-agentive value:

(26a) Mais il est déjà un peu moins facile de se soucier du sort de nos proches parents, par exemples des vieilles personnes qui *se font martyriser* pour leurs petites économies, des transporteurs de fonds mal payés qui *se font flinguer* par des gangsters sans scrupules, des enfants qui *se font violer et assassiner*.

(26b) Pero ya resulta algo más difícil preocuparse por la suerte de las víctimas. Pienso por ejemplo en los ancianos *torturados* hasta la muerte para que entreguen sus ahorros, los transportistas de fondos y valores mal pagados que *son matados* de un tiro por los gangsters y los niños *violados y asesinados*.

(26c) Já é um pouco mais difícil, contudo, preocuparmo-nos com o destino dos familiares, por exemplo, dos idosos que *são torturados* até à morte pelas suas parcas economias, pelo destino de transportadores de valores mal remunerados que, sem quaisquer escrúpulos, *são abatidos* por gangsters, pelo destino das crianças que *são violadas e assassinadas*.

Hence it comes as no surprise that Spanish and Portuguese translators often rely on the passive diathesis to convey the meaning of *se faire*. As a consequence of this transition into the canonical passive, the responsibility of the subject of *se faire* in the process is often lost:

(27a) Mais si elles décident de regagner leur pays, elles *se font répudier*.

(27b) No obstante, si estas mujeres volvieran a su país, *serían repudiadas*.

(27c) Mas se uma dessas mulheres regressasse ao seu país, *seria rejeitada*.

The question remains why *hacerse/fazer-se*, which are incompatible with human subjects in non-intentional contexts (see type iii), associate with inanimate subjects (see type ii). According to Veacock (2008: 14-15), we attribute to certain natural phenomena such as the wind or an earthquake a kind of autonomy of action, which lends to the spontaneous value of *se faire* a quasi-teleonomic dimension.

In Portuguese, literal translation cannot be used in type-iv contexts. Therefore the translator is forced to find alternative solutions which, as much as possible, abide by the following criteria:

- 1) to maintain the thematic continuity of the text, keeping the syntactic subject in that same position;
- 2) to recover the role of the beneficiary marked in the source text by the pronoun *se*. This could be done explicitly or implicitly by means of co-textual elements.

The translation of (28a), below, complies with both criteria. Here we draw the reader's attention to the beneficiary compensation mechanism achieved through the addition of the personal pronoun *lhe* to the complete sentence in (28b):

(28a) Une ministre allemande qui *se fait voler* sa Mercedes de fonction en Espagne pendant ses vacances, ça fait désordre.

(28b) O facto de uma ministra alemã ter deixado que *lhe roubassem* o Mercedes blindado de serviço, durante as férias em Espanha, causou alvoroço.

In (29b), the relative pronoun *a quem* is used to preserve the indirect structure in an active construction:

(29a) Nos jeunes qui étudient dans des universités russes ne se voient pas automatiquement délivrer un visa d'un an et toute personne qui *se fait voler* son visa se retrouve prise dans un manège bureaucratique extrêmement coûteux.

(29b) Os nossos estudantes nas universidades russas não recebem automaticamente um visto anual, e alguém *a quem tenham roubado* o visto acaba às voltas num carrossel de burocracia anormalmente caro.

(30a) [...] plusieurs centaines de collègues [...] *se sont fait offrir* aux frais du gouvernement turc un voyage politico-touristique, juste avant le vote sur l'union douanière avec la Turquie.

(30b) [...] duas centenas de colegas consentiram que o Governo turco *lhes oferecesse* viagens político-turísticas, precisamente antes da votação relativa à união aduaneira com a Turquia.

In (31b) the beneficiary is not explicitly marked but it is easily retrievable because, in using a semantically symmetrical infinitive (*se faire attribuer* --> *obter*), the translator is left with an active construction in which the beneficiary remains as the syntactic subject:

(31a) [...] l'agent a utilisé son poste officiel pour *se faire attribuer* une activité rémunérée [...]

(31b) [...] o funcionário usou sua posição oficial para *obter* a oportunidade comercial externa remunerada [...]

It is also common for the Spanish translator to use such converse verbs in order to translate dative-derived instances of *se faire*:

(32a) Ajoutons que la mendicité était punie par la loi et que les jeunes *se faisaient offrir* par l'Etat un emploi et un toit dès la fin de leurs études.

(32b) A esto hay que añadir que la mendicidad estaba castigada por las leyes o que los jóvenes *recibían* un empleo y las llaves de un apartamento cuando finalizaban sus estudios.



However, as we can see from these examples taken from CREA, *hacerse*, like *se faire*, can be found in constructions where the dative is promoted to the position of syntactic subject:

(33) Tenemos un Gobierno que *se hace perdonar* su falta de disposición europea por una especie de docilidad ante las peticiones de los otros.

(34) En contra de lo que cabía esperar, se limitó a anunciar su inminente llegada para *hacerse examinar* la rodilla por un traumatólogo.

(35) "Ibargoyen" *se hizo traer* asimismo una libra de sal de cocina y un puñado de pasas grande.

(36) En el Palacio de la Cancillería, el cardenal Ottoboni *se hizo construir* un pequeño teatro para marionetas [...].

## 6. Conclusions

The table below provides a visual summary of the conclusions reached:

Table 5. Areas of semantic and syntactic intersection between *se faire/hacerse/fazer-se*

		French	Spanish	Portuguese
Factive-beneficiary	OD	<i>se faire</i> + inf (représenter, comprendre)	<i>hacerse</i> + inf (representar, escuchar)	<i>fazer-se</i> + inf (representar, entender)
	OI	<i>se faire</i> + inf (livrer, teindre OD)	<i>hacerse</i> + inf (construir, extraer OD)	* <i>fazer-se</i> + inf (entregar, pintar OD)
Causative-unpleasant / Passive-fatalistic	OD	<i>se faire</i> + inf (violer, renverser)	* <i>hacerse</i> + inf (violar, amenazar)	* <i>fazer-se</i> + inf (violar, atropelar)
	OI	<i>se faire</i> + inf (voler, confisquer OD)	* <i>hacerse</i> + inf (robar, confiscar OD)	* <i>fazer-se</i> + inf (roubar, confiscar OD)
Spontaneous	OD	<i>se faire</i> + inf (entendre, sentir)	<i>hacerse</i> + inf (oír, sentir)	<i>fazer-se</i> + inf (ouvir, sentir)

The grey colour highlights the cases that allow for literal translation of *se faire* with *hacerse/fazer-se*, i.e. when the subject acts as a voluntary instigator of the action provoked by him/herself and/or in the presence of inanimate subjects. The remaining cases demonstrate the constraints of the Portuguese and Spanish languages. On the one hand, in Spanish and Portuguese the use of *hacerse/fazer-se* with non-agentive meaning is inexistent. On the other hand, *fazer-se* is incompatible with verbs that promote the indirect object to subject, whereas *hacerse* seems to accept such verbs in teleonomic contexts, albeit much less often than French. These constraints force translators to find alternative solutions, which can only be accurately systematised with recourse to corpus analysis.

To sum up, this corpus-based analysis has yielded evidence that the French pronominal causative construction *se faire* + Inf is remarkably flexible in terms of syntax and semantics, as opposed to its Spanish and Portuguese counterparts, i.e. *hacerse* and *fazer-se*. The combined use of multilingual and monolingual corpora proved a sustained means of ensuring more reliable results. This complementarity speaks strongly to the relevance of corpus analysis in contrastive studies.

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