

Finding Arguments for Pseudo-Resultative Predicates

The Puzzle: Sentences such as those in (1) pose a puzzle for compositionality - there is a sentence-final adjective which does not modify any DP in the sentence. As in resultatives such as (2), the adjective seems to pertain to a result. However, the examples in (1) are crucially different from resultatives in that the secondary predicate does not modify the object of the verb. In (1a), Mary's hair does not become tight as a result of her braiding it. I call such modifiers *pseudo-resultatives*. Pseudo-resultatives also pattern differently from resultatives cross-linguistically. Washio (1997) and Mateu Fontanals (2000) argue that similar examples are not resultatives, considering their availability in languages, such as French, which don't appear to have other 'canonical' cases of resultatives.

Previous Work: The compositionality problem that these sentences pose has not been addressed in the literature. Some have argued that certain apparent resultative predicates similar to those under consideration are 'adverbial', and thus should be treated separately from resultatives (Washio 1997, Mateu Fontanals 2000, Kratzer to appear). However, such a treatment would not solve the compositionality problem. Geuder (2000) shows that even 'resultative adverbs' (which are semantically similar, but as I show, not identical to, pseudo-resultatives) cannot be treated as simple manner adverbs. I further show that Geuder's analysis of these adverbs cannot be extended directly to the adjective cases.

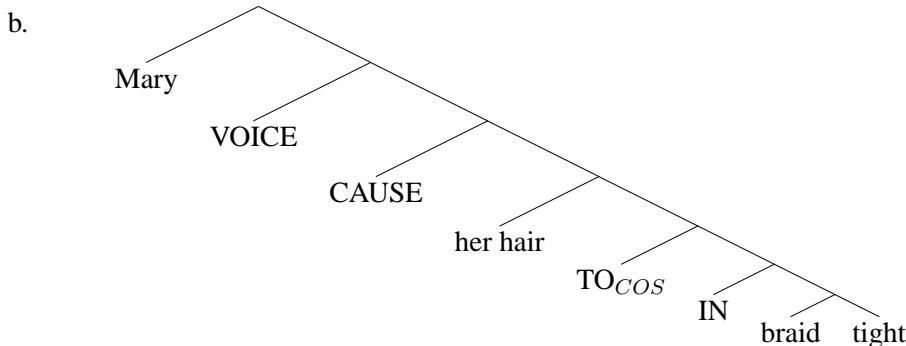
Semantic Proposal: Pseudo-resultatives are available only with a limited range of verbs which are all creation verbs of a sort, where the object does not express the created object but the source. I propose that a sufficiently fine-grained semantic analysis of such verbs can account for the availability of pseudo-resultatives. The adjective seems to modify an object denoted by the root of the verb. That is, in (1a), what is tight is a braid. I argue that the adjective has access to modify this root before it is embedded in a VP, where an adverb modifier would be required. I propose that the class of verbs which surface with such predicates is restricted because particular elements, which I call IN and TO_{COS} ('change of state TO'), in combination with syntactic incorporation to build the verb, are necessary to result in this surface configuration. I derive a syntactic structure from cross-linguistic evidence and provide a compositional semantics for that structure.

The Composition: The structure I propose is motivated primarily by evidence from English and Finnish, also drawing data from Norwegian and Hungarian. Finnish provides morphological evidence for other structures we would want to align pseudo-resultatives with, as seen in (3). These Finnish examples have illative case marking on the pseudo-resultative adjective. This is morphologically distinct from the translative marker found on resultative adjectives. The illative is also found in (4), which is semantically similar to (3). I take this case parallelism to be indicative of shared structure between (3) and (4), and similarly between the equivalent sentences in English. That is, (4) is a less obscured spell-out of a structure essentially equivalent to that of pseudo-resultatives (1) & (3). Rather than spelling out with a separate verb such as *put* or *make* and a DP argument like *a braid*, in a pseudo-resultative construction the created object merged as a root never forms a DP, but rather comes to 'name' the verb. Thus the verb *braid* could be represented informally as 'put-IN-TO-braid', or 'put-ILL-braid', where ILL stands for the head responsible for illative case marking in Finnish, which corresponds semantically to the heads IN and TO_{COS} proposed. The basic outline of the structure I propose for the syntactic decomposition of creation causatives and the attachment of the pseudo-resultative adjective is as in (5b). This analysis predicts a close structural relationship between sentences like (1a) and (4), which seems to be borne out, as illustrated in (6)-(9).

Conclusion: In this paper, I show with cross-linguistic evidence that pseudo-resultatives are distinct from true resultatives, and also from 'resultative adverbs'. I further argue that syntactic lexical decomposition of this class of verbs can provide a means for accounting compositionally for the availability of pseudo-resultative adjectives which seemed to pose a problem for the syntax-semantics interface. In doing so, I also draw parallels between the decomposition of these verbs and other structures which are found in overt syntax in English and Finnish. Further, this analysis, relying crucially on the presence of roots in the syntax, supports the proposals in this vein such as Hale and Keyser (1993, 2002) and Marantz (1997, 2005).

Examples

- (1) a. Mary braided her hair **tight**.
 b. She tied her shoelaces **tight**.
 c. Mary piled the cushions **high**.
 d. She chopped the parsley **fine**.
 e. She sliced the bread **thin**.
 f. He closed the door **tight**.
- (2) Susan hammered the metal **flat**.
- (3) a. Mari sito kengännauhansa tiukka-an.
 Mari tied shoelaces.ACC.POSS tight-ILL
 ‘Mari tied her shoelaces tight.’
 b. Mari leti-tt-i hiuksensa tiukka-an.
 Mari braid-caus-past hair.ACC.POSS tight-ILL
 ‘Mari braided her hair tight.’
- (4) Mari pisti hiukse-nsa tiukka-an letti-in.
 Mari put hair-3SG.POSS tight-ILL braid-ILL
 ‘Mari put her hair into a tight braid.’
- (5) a. Mary braided her hair tight.



- (6) Passivization of Source
 - a. The string was braided by Mary.
 - b. The string was put/made into a braid by Mary.
- (7) Unavailability of Low Applicatives
 - a. * I braided Mary the string.
 - b. * I put/made Mary the string into a braid.
- (8) Depictive Modification Possibilities
 - a. I braided her hair_i (tight) wet_i.
 - b. I put her hair_i into a braid wet_i.
- (9) Obligatory Argument
 - a. I braided *(her hair).
 - b. I put/made *(her hair) into a braid.