

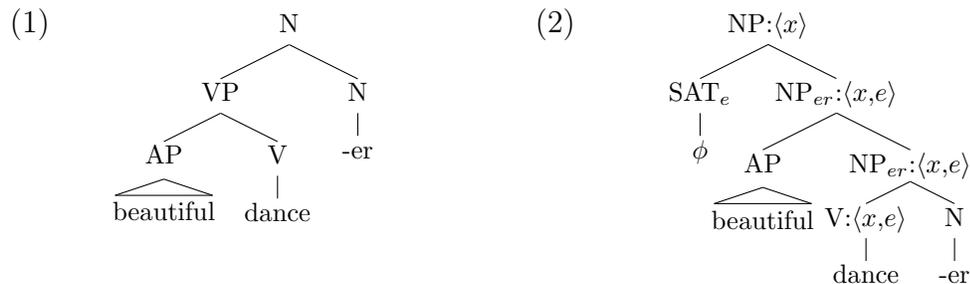
Adjectival Manner Modification: The Source of the Modified Event

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1. The origin of the event The analyses of manner adjectives as predicates of events commonly presuppose that the relevant event comes from the semantic structure of modified nouns (e.g., Larson, 1998; Egg, 2008; Winter & Zwarts, 2012). For this reason, it is mainly deverbal *-er* nouns that have been discussed in these analyses, as it seems to be easier to justify the presence of an event in their semantic structure in view of their deverbal nature.

In fact, however, the event argument of the base verbs of *-er* nouns is not accessible to manner adjectives on standard syntactic and semantic assumptions, being embedded under the suffix *-er*. Hence, in order to make it accessible to manner adjectives, it has to be uncanonically assumed either that manner adjectives can adjoin to V(P) inside *-er* nouns (as discussed in Egg (2008), cf. (1)), or that the suffix *-er* does not close off the event argument (as suggested by Winter & Zwarts (2012), cf. (2), and alluded to by Larson (1998)). While the former analysis violates the syntactic selectional restrictions of adjectives as noun modifiers, the latter one is ad hoc, since there is no independent motivation for postulating two separate heads in *-er* nominals: one for the category change (*-er*) and one for the saturation of the event argument (ϕ). Moreover, it is not clear to which extent such solutions are necessary at all, as they do not explain anyhow where the event variable comes from when manner adjectives modify non-deverbal nouns (e.g., *just king*, *fast horse*).



Instead, following Croft (1984), we assume that the source of the event are prepositional gerunds, like the ones in (3), rather than the modified nouns, which implies that such gerunds are syntactically present in the underlying structure even in cases when they are deleted in the surface syntax.¹ This analysis does not face the problems of the analyses outlined above, since the presence of an event variable in gerunds and its accessibility follow from their being *verbal* constructs, as will be shown in the next section. Furthermore, **non-deverbal nouns**, **contextual interpretations**, and the **predicative use** of manner adjectives do not present a problem for this analysis either, since it does not derive the relevant event from the semantics of the modified nouns.

- (3) a. a skillful dancer \Leftarrow a skillful ~~at dancing~~ dancer/a skillful ~~at playing chess~~ dancer/...
 b. a fast horse \Leftarrow a fast ~~at running~~ horse/a fast ~~at working~~ horse/...

2. The structure of *at*-gerunds and compositional semantics Prepositional *at*-gerunds subcategorized by manner adjectives are *defective* in the sense of Wurmbrand (1998), Pires (2001): they don't contain functional projections above VoiceP. The absence of **CP** is a general property of gerunds, as they don't take complementizers and don't form indirect

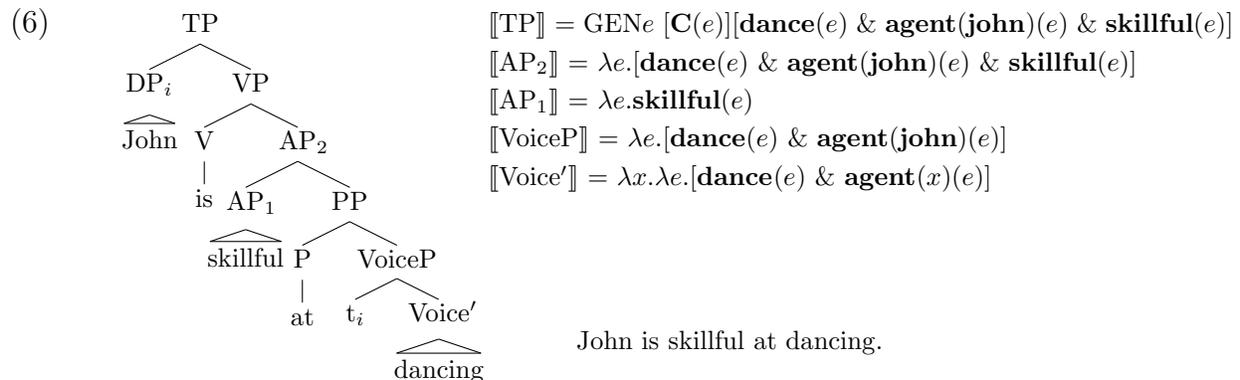
¹This analysis of *at*-gerunds with manner adjectives as syntactically present implicit arguments is thus similar to the analysis of *for*-PPs introducing the comparison class with gradable adjectives (e.g., Solt, 2011).

questions, which imply short *wh*-movement to [Spec,CP] (Stowell, 1982). The absence of **TP** in *at*-gerunds is suggested by their inability to take overt subjects (4a), which occupy [Spec,TP], and sentential adverbs (4b), which adjoin to TP. The absence of **AspP/PerfP** follows from their inability to take aspectual auxiliaries (5).

- (4) a. *John is skillful at [(for) Bill teaching math].
 b. *John is skillful at [probably/fortunately teaching math].
 (5) *John was careful at [{having parked/being parking} his car].

By contrast, **VoiceP** must be present in the structure of *at*-gerunds, as their direct objects are able to check accusative Case (assuming that complements are assigned Case by Voice, see Kratzer (1996)). Therefore, according to Burzio’s generalization, also the external argument must be present in [Spec,VoiceP]. It cannot check Case in the embedded [Spec,TP] though, since the embedded TP is absent as argued above, and thus needs to raise to some other Case-assigning position, viz., to the available matrix subject position. Thus, we assume that subjects of predicative manner adjectives are generated as subjects of the corresponding gerunds, but undergo A-movement to the matrix [Spec,TP] position for reasons of Case, cf. (6). This explains how manner adjectives as properties of events combine semantically with their subjects (they do not combine directly), and accounts for the fact that the implicit external argument of *at*-gerunds is subject to obligatory control.

A sample semantic derivation is given below: *John* is interpreted for simplicity in its unmoved position; *at* and *be* are semantically empty; AP₁ combines with PP by PM; T (or some other head between TP and VP, e.g., Asp) introduces the event quantifier, e.g., GEN.



Finally, attributive manner adjectives are analyzed as originating in the *predicative* position inside *reduced* relative clauses, following Cinque’s (2010) arguments to analyze in this way post-nominal adjectives with complements/adjuncts. The reduced RC will be *pre-nominal* when the *at*-gerund is *implicit*, as the Head-Final Constraint (Escribano, 2004) is lifted in this case:

- (7) a skillful dancer \leftrightarrow [DP a [NP [CP *Op*₁ skillful ~~at~~ t₁ dancing] [NP dancer]]]

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