

A SPANNING ACCOUNT OF DENOMINAL VERBS IN ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN



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Aim

-to provide a novel approach to denominal verbs (DVs) such as 'to dance', 'to corral (the horses)', 'to hammer (the metal)' a.o in English, and 'a dansa' (to dance), 'a adăposti' (to shelter) or 'a ciomăgi (un om)' (to club (a person)) in Romanian
- instead of an incorporation or conflation account (Hale & Keyser 2002), which considers denominals to be derived either via movement of noun roots into v (incorporation) or via merge (conflation), I will put forth a spanning approach according to which a single item can spell out a span, i. e. a complement sequence of heads in an extended projection (Svenonius 2012, 2014), and no movement is involved

Spanning

-according to spanning (Brody 2000, Adger 2010, Svenonius 2012, 2014, Ramchand 2014), lexical insertion targets spans rather than terminal heads (as Distributed Morphology does) or phrases (as nanosyntax does)

-a very important innovation is the elimination of redundant labels to the extent that XP bears the same label as its head, namely X (given that heads in fact select heads- heads select phrases, and phrases are projections of heads). This telescopes into the structure of phrases, allowing for linearization to be read off the structure.

-according to Brody's (2000) Mirror Theory:

(1) *Word Mirror*: The syntactic relation 'X complement of Y' is identical to an inverse-order morphological relation 'X specifier of Y' (where the latter gives rise to the morphological structure [X [Y] linearized from left to right)

-there is a direct linearization algorithm according to which specifiers are linearized to the left of their heads (*always go*), and heads are linearized to the left of their complements (*has gone*)=> one can simply specify where a morpheme spells out by means of diacritic @ rather than resort to syntactic movement (Brody 2000, Ramchand 2014)

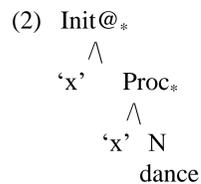
- in order to indicate that a head forms a mirror word with the head(s) it selects, one can use another diacritic * (Ramchand 2014). The exact placing of the diacritic is a language-specific issue

Analysis of English DVs

Proposal: Spanning can account for denominal verbs as well: a single item ('dance', 'shelve', 'hammer') spells out a span

-a single word lexicalizes a span, a complement sequence involving N, V and v <N, V, v>

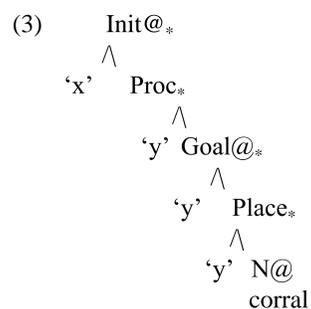
-starting from Ramchand's analysis of verbs (2008), in the case of the denominal verb *dance*, one can construct the following representation:



Linearized as $x [N \text{ Proc Init}]$

-at L-Match (Lexical Match, the first step of Spell Out in spanning, involving syntactic categories- the second is Insert and it involves phonological information), this structure gives rise to the item <dance -Ø-Ø>

-in the case of *corral*, one can assume the following spanning account: (using Pantcheva's analysis of prepositions (2011)):



Linearized as $x [Proc-Init^*-Place-Goal-N] y$

-at L-Match, the item that wins is $x [corral \emptyset \emptyset \emptyset] y$, where x can be lexicalized by *Mary*, and y can be lexicalized by *the horses*

-I will opt for a spanning version without silent items.

Problems

-postulating silent items has the advantage of making the representation semantically richer

BUT it presents certain disadvantages:

-a lot of additional lexical material

-the analysis would rely on a lot of diacritics

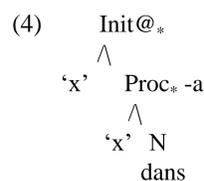
=> a no silent item account is preferable to a silent item account

-in addition, a silent item approach would imply storing both the noun and the verb in languages where the noun and the denominal verb have a different form

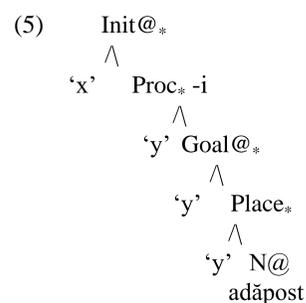
Analysis of Romanian DVs

-unlike English denominals, Romanian denominals have a different form from the noun

-there is an additional verbal affix indicating the declension (-a, -ea, -e, -i) -> I will assume it lexicalizes Proc (although another option would be to argue for another VAffix)



Linearized as $x [N \text{ Proc Init}]$



Linearized as $x [Proc-Init^*-Place-Goal-N] y$

-Romanian has to store the noun, the question is whether it should store the verb as well or only the verbal declension (one could postulate the lexicon contains a list of the elements/ nominal roots the verbal affix combines with)

Remarks

-a spanning approach can also account for instrumental verbs like 'hammer' or 'a ciomăgi (un om)' (club) -> (Init, Proc, P[+instrument]) ('hit with hammer')
-an alternative: Init, Proc, N ('use hammer')

-it can account for pseudo-agentive verbs (like 'spy', 'spiona) if one assumes it is not the case that the agentive noun is derived from the verb: (Init, Proc, P [+comparison]) ('act like spy')

Conclusion

-spanning offers an elegant account of denominals as it eliminates movement

- if one desires to create a more homogeneous analysis for denominals in English and Romanian, one can claim that there is only one item in the lexicon in both languages (a noun), and that the verb is generated syntactically

-if one wishes to create a contrast between languages, one can claim that English stores only the verb, while Romanian stores the thematic vowel and the noun, but does not store the verb, or both the noun and the verb.

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