A No-category Approach to Analysing P-based V-particles

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CRISSP, Brussels, 20 February 2017

This talk casts V-particles as a hybrid category providing one type of evidence for a non-primitive view of syntactic categories. P-based V-particles exhibit class-specific distribution, but always take the phonological form of adpositions and often retain their spatial meanings, suggesting they derive from the same lexical entries as their adpositional counterparts. The mechanism conditioning such systematic dual category membership, however, remains an open question. This talk draws support from systematic homophony in the Afrikaans P system for a non-primitive view of syntactic categories where *category effects* are an epiphenomenon of the formal features exponents lexicalise. It is argued that V-particles simultaneously lexicalise structure in the V and P domains of syntax (whence the hybridity), and that they are structurally defined by giving morphological expression to the lowest node of the lexical V domain – a resultant state-denoting head RES(ult). The analysis marries two traditional opposing views (the complex head (CH) approach and the small clause (SC) approach) and accounts for particle separability under V2 movement as well as the fact that some particle verbs are idiomatic whereas others are compositional.

Background: Arguments in the literature over the correct structural analysis of particle verbs have long been divided into two main camps: those stating that (i) verb and particle form a complex V^0 (1) (=*CH* approach – e.g. Booij 1990, Johnson 1991, Pesetsky 1996, Neeleman 1994); and (ii) the particle is a syntactic head (2) (=*SC* approach – e.g. Hoekstra 1988, Kayne 1985, Guéron 1990, Den Dikken 1996). Whereas the CH approach captures what appears to be particle incorporation (in the sense of Baker 1988) in base clause, and also that many particle verbs are idiomatic (3), it fails to account for obligatory separation of the verb and particle under V2 movement (4).

(1) $[_{VP} OBJ [_{V^0} V^0 [PRT^0]]]$
(2) $[_{VP} V [_{SC} PRTP DP]]$
(3)   (a)   Jan sê   jy   het   hom **uit**geskel.
                Jan says you have him   out-scolded
                "Jan says you scolded him."   IDIOMATIC/NON-COMPOSITIONAL MEANING
        (b)   Jan sal   die wasgoed **uit**hang.
                Jan will the washing out-hang
                "Jan will hang out the washing."   (VS. TRANSPARENT MEANING)
(4)   (a)   …dat mense wyn **aan**-dra
                  that people wine on-carry
                "…that people are bringing wine."   "INCORPORATION" IN OV-GERMANIC
        (b)   Mense {*aan-}dra   wyn {**aan**}.
                people on   carry wine on
                "People are bringing wine."   SEPARABILITY UNDER V2

Analysis: In line with Ramchand & Svenonius (2002) and Ramchand (2008), this talk argues that the tension between the HC and SC approaches resolves under a finer analytical grain where the particle lexicalises the lowest event structure subcomponent RES in a decomposed V domain [INIT(iation) [PROC(ess) [RES]]], where the verb lexicalises INIT-PROC, and the argument of each subevent is merged in its specifier (cf. diagram in (5)). Thus, the internal argument the particle verbs is typically merged in spec-RES. Pre-verbal particle placement is derived with roll-up of RESP to spec-INIT. Various types of evidence support the analysis.

First, the particle systematically renders the event telic, which is expected of elements lexicalising RES. Second, V-particles and Target State passive participles (T-states) pattern the same w.r.t. many diagnostics including modifiability by adverbs typically associated with gradable adjectives. This suggests structural equivalence, and the fact that T-states have been argued to lexicalise RES (Caha 2007; Lundquist 2009) supports the analysis.

Separability under V2 is accounted for with the fact that the particle never forms a complex head with the verb; after roll-up of RESP, the structure expressed by the verb namely INIT-PROC forms a constituent that excludes the particle and the particle verb's object. This means INIT-PROC (the verb) can be targeted by V2 movement, leaving RESP (the constituent containing the particle and its argument) behind.

Idiomaticity is argued to arise from the amount of structure that the particle is lexicalising. When it expresses only RES, none of the particle's spatial properties are activated and the particle verb is idiomatic. When the particle expresses RES in addition to the highest node of the P domain – DIR – then the particle's spatial properties are activated and the particle verb is compositional.

(5) …dat Jan die koekies opeet. (lit.: that Jan the cookies up-eats.)
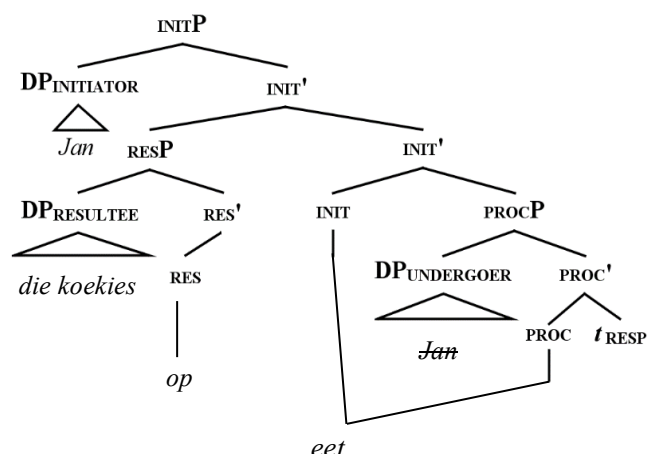
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