

Participial relatives and the lexemic index

Andrew Spencer

University of Essex

Workshop on Morphology and LFG, Waseda University

21 June 2015

Participles are deverbal transpositions with the morphology and external syntax of an adjective but preserving various verb properties (TAM, voice, argument structure, ...), but without altering the lexical semantics of the base verb as such.

In many language groups they are the canonical relative clause type (PTCP-RCs). In Indo-European languages (e.g. Sanskrit Lowe, 2012) PTCP-RCs are usually restricted to relativizing on the SUBJ [*the* [___ *writing a letter*] *girl*]. However, in other language groups it's common for PTCP-RCs to relativize on other GFs, e.g. Turkic (see Lewis, 1967 for Turkish), Kiranti (van Driem, 1987 on Limbu) and so on.

PTCP-RCs raise two important analytical questions: (i) how to represent PTCP-RCs syntactically as simultaneously AdjP and VP (ii) how to treat them morphologically as forms of a verb lexeme when they inflect like adjectives.

Ackerman and Nikolaeva (2013) discuss PTCP-RCs in Tundra Nenets which reference the RCs SUBJ argument by means of POSS agreement on the head (*my_i-book which (I_i) bought you*), providing an HPSG-Construction Grammar analysis. This addresses problem (i) but since they just label the participle as 'mixed category' they don't address problem (ii). Lowe (2012) provides a detailed LFG analysis of R̥gvedic participles, treating them as reduced RCs, hence as VPs in c-structure. Participles agree with the head noun exactly like a canonical adjective but Lowe treats this as feature matching with a (necessarily empty) RELPRON attribute in the RC's f-structure, thus losing the parallel with true adjectives. He, too, just labels the participles as [VFORM participle], thus failing to address question (ii).

I provide a general solution to problems (i, ii) framed in LFG. Categorical 'mixing' is defined by the morphology over lexical representations. Participles are the 'adjectival representation' of V, hence a member of the paradigm of the V base lexeme. I assume Haspelmath's (1996) morphosyntactic 'supercategory' REPR(ESSENTATION), where participle = [REPR:V2A]. The [V2A] form of a verb lexeme retains the verb's event-related f-structure and arg-structure but also inherits the agreement morphosyntax of adjectives. Hence, the f-str correspondent of a c-str node headed by a participle includes the base verb lexeme's GF structure, but is also specified for Adj-N agreement features: [_{NP} *the* [_{V2A-P} [_{V2A} *writing.F.SG.NOM*] *a letter*] *girl*[F].SG.NOM]. The analysis carries over to the possessive RCs of Nenets and Turkic, as well as Limbu-type PTCP-RCs.

Participles are closely related to other types of deverbal adjective which constitute distinct lexemes from the base V. In general, such derived lexemes have additional semantics, but this isn't sufficient to distinguish transpositions from derivation proper. Selkup has three distinct adjectival representations of nouns ('relational adjectives'), two which have an additional semantic predicate (locational/similitudinal), while many languages

have denominal adjectives which are ‘transpositional lexemes’, that is, distinct lexical items (hence, a type of derivational morphology) but with the same lexical content (e.g. *prepositional* \simeq *preposition*). I therefore follow Spencer (1999, 2013) in defining transpositions as category-changing morphology which preserves lexemic identity, as reflected in a constant ‘Lexemic Index’ (LI). I adopt Spencer’s (1999, 2013) treatment of syntactic categories as ‘semantic function’ (sf) roles ‘R’ (for nouns), ‘E’ (for verbs) and ‘A*’ (for attributive adjectives). Transpositions have composite sf roles, thus an action nominalization has the role $\langle R \langle E \langle \dots \rangle \rangle \rangle$, while participles have the role $\langle A^* \langle E \langle \dots \rangle \rangle \rangle$. I briefly compare this treatment with the treatment of subject nominals in Gīkūyū of Bresnan and Mugane (2006) and show that, properly interpreted, their analysis is a specific case of that of Spencer (1999). On the assumption that the function of the LI is subserved by the PRED attribute, it is then possible to provide a satisfactory analysis of the participial transpositions (cf Spencer, talk at LFG15 main session).

References

- Ackerman, F. and Nikolaeva, I. A. (2013). *Descriptive Typology and Linguistic Theory. A Study in the Morphosyntax of Relative Clauses*. CSLI Publications, Stanford.
- Bresnan, J. and Mugane, J. (2006). Agentive nominalizations in Gīkūyū and the theory of mixed categories. In Butt, M., Dalrymple, M., and King, T. H., editors, *Intelligent Linguistic Architectures: Variations on Themes by Ronald M. Kaplan*, page 201–234. CSLI Publications, Stanford, CA.
- Haspelmath, M. (1996). Word-class changing inflection and morphological theory. In Booij, G. and van Marle, J., editors, *Yearbook of Morphology 1995*, page 43–66. Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Lewis, G. L. (1967). *Turkish Grammar*. The Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Lowe, J. (2012). *The Syntax and Semantics of Tense-Aspect Stem Participles in Early R̥gvedic Sanskrit*. PhD thesis, University of Oxford, Oxford.
- Spencer, A. (1999). Transpositions and argument structure. In Booij, G. and van Marle, J., editors, *Yearbook of Morphology 1998*, page 73–102. Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht.
- Spencer, A. (2013). *Lexical Relatedness: A Paradigm-based Model*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- van Driem, G. (1987). *A Grammar of Limbu*. Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin.