

# Where does the event in adjectival manner modification come from?

Sascha Alexeyenko  
olalyeks@uos.de

Computational Linguistics Group  
Institute of Cognitive Science  
University of Osnabrück

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# Manner adjectives as event predicates

Olga is a beautiful dancer

(Larson 1998)

- a.  $Qe$  [dancing( $e$ , olga) ... beautiful(olga, C)]
- b.  $Qe$  [dancing( $e$ , olga) ... beautiful( $e$ , C)]

Arguments:

- unified analysis with manner adverbs
- modification of event nouns
- substitution failure

Question: Where does the relevant event come from?

# Noun semantics as source of event

## Larson (1998):

- nouns have an additional **event argument**
- straightforward case: **-er nouns**

## Bracketing paradox

(Williams 2003)

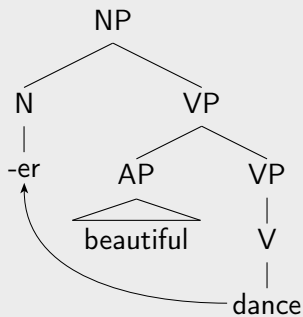
- |                                |                               |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| a. [[ beautiful dance ] -er ]  | semantic composition          |
| b. [ beautiful [ dance -er ] ] | (morpho)syntactic composition |

⇒ this event is inaccessible, given standard assumptions:

- adjectives are nominal, not verbal, modifiers
- only the individual argument is open at NP level

What if we abandon (one of) these assumptions?

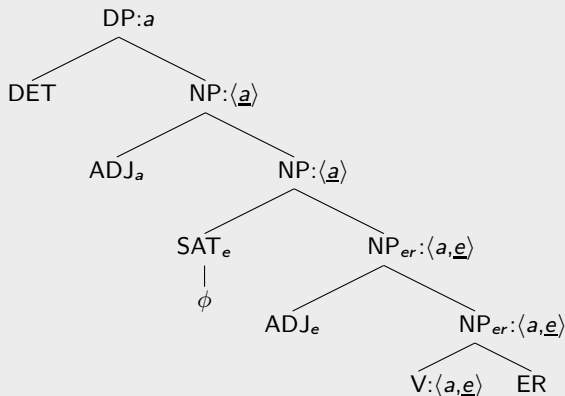
## -er nouns: AP-adjunction to VP



(cf. Egg 2008)

→ radical change in APs' syntactic selectional restrictions;  
massive overgeneration elsewhere

## -er nouns: additional null head



(Winter & Zwarts 2012; cf. Larson 1998)

- no independent evidence for 2 separate heads:  
ER for the category change +  $\phi$  for event saturation

# Taking stock

A solution to this bracketing paradox would be insufficient anyhow:

- **non-deverbal nouns** (cf. Vendler 1968)  
*just king, fast horse, careful scientist, good father*
- **contextual interpretations** (cf. Beesley 1982)  
*a skillful dancer*: 'a dancer skillful at playing chess'
- **predicative use** (nominal deletion would be required)

## Type shift

$$\lambda e.\text{skillful}(e) \rightsquigarrow \lambda x.\exists e [\text{skillful}(e) \wedge E(e) \wedge \Theta(x)(e)]$$

i.e., no syntactic correlate for the source of the event

→ the description/explanation ratio?

# Semantics of *at/in*-gerunds as source of event

*at/in*-gerunds

(cf. Croft 1984)

*John is skillful at teaching*

*This is a fast ~~at-running~~ horse*

Arguments:

- the problems with the other analyses are avoided
- no contextual variability with overt *at/in*-gerunds
- *at/in*-gerunds don't occur in the context of event nouns

John is skillful (at engaging students).

John's teaching is skillful (\*at engaging students).

# Structure of *at/in*-gerunds: projections absent

- 1 no CP (gerunds in general, Stowell 1982)
  - do not take complementizers  
John is skillful at [(*\*for* Bill/*\*that*) teaching math].
  - do not form indirect questions (short *wh*-movement)  
*\*John* isn't skillful at [what<sub>*i*</sub> teaching t<sub>*i*</sub>].
- 2 no TP
  - do not allow overt subjects  
*\*John* is skillful at [(for) Bill teaching math].
  - do not take sentential adverbs  
*\*John* is skillful at [probably/fortunately teaching math].
  - do not license their own temporal adverbials (cf. Pires 2006)  
*\*John* was skillful today at [parking his car tomorrow].
- 3 no AspP/PerfP
  - do not allow aspectual auxiliaries  
*\*John* was careful at [{having parked/being parking} his car].



# Structure of *at/in*-gerunds: projections present

- 1 **VoiceP** (active Voice head)
  - assign accusative Case to their direct objects  
John is skillful at [teaching math].
- 2 **VP**
  - take VP-adverbs  
John is skillful at [teaching math effectively].

Consequences:

- ⇒ the event argument is open and accessible to manner adjectives
- ⇒ the external argument is licensed in [Spec,VoiceP] (Burzio's g.)

But the external argument can't receive Case inside the gerund...

# Structure of *at/in*-gerunds: external argument

Possible Case-assigning positions:

- none available to the external argument inside the gerund
- only the matrix subject position available outside the gerund

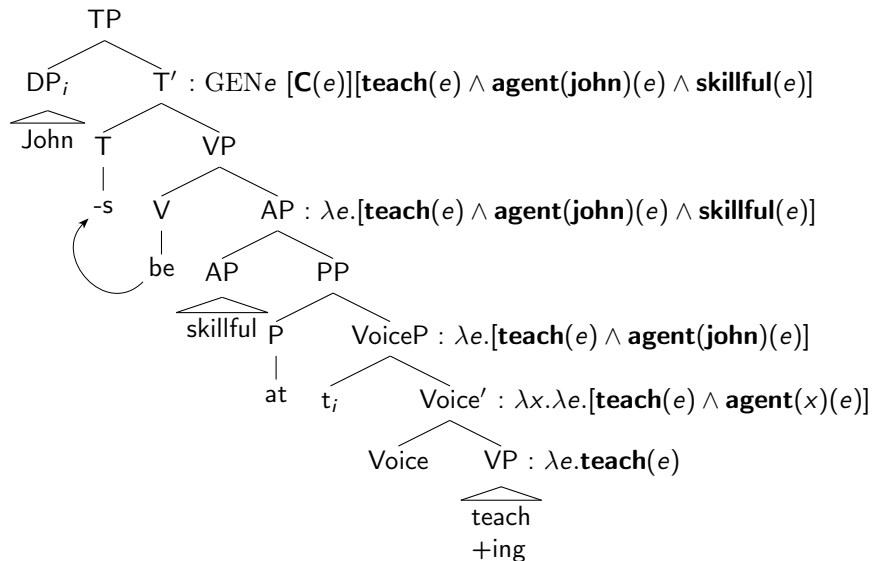
## Manner adjectives as raising predicates

The subjects of manner adjectives are generated in [Spec, VoiceP] of *at/in*-gerunds, but A-move to matrix [Spec, TP] for reasons of Case.

This accords with the following facts:

- 1 the implicit external argument of *at/in*-gerunds is subject to **obligatory control** (cf. control as movement, Hornstein 1999)
- 2 manner adjectives as predicates of events cannot enter into a **semantic composition** with their subjects

# Predicative position



Manner APs used attributively:

- contain **non-head-final** structure
  - ⇒ post-nominal with overt gerunds: *a horse fast at running*
  - ⇒ pre-nominal with covert gerunds: *a fast ~~at running~~ horse*  
(Head-Final Constraint: Emonds 1976, Williams 1982, Escibano 2004)
- are of type  $\langle v, t \rangle$ 
  - ⇒ **cannot be AP-adjuncts to NP**

# Post-nominal adjectives

## Cinque (2010)

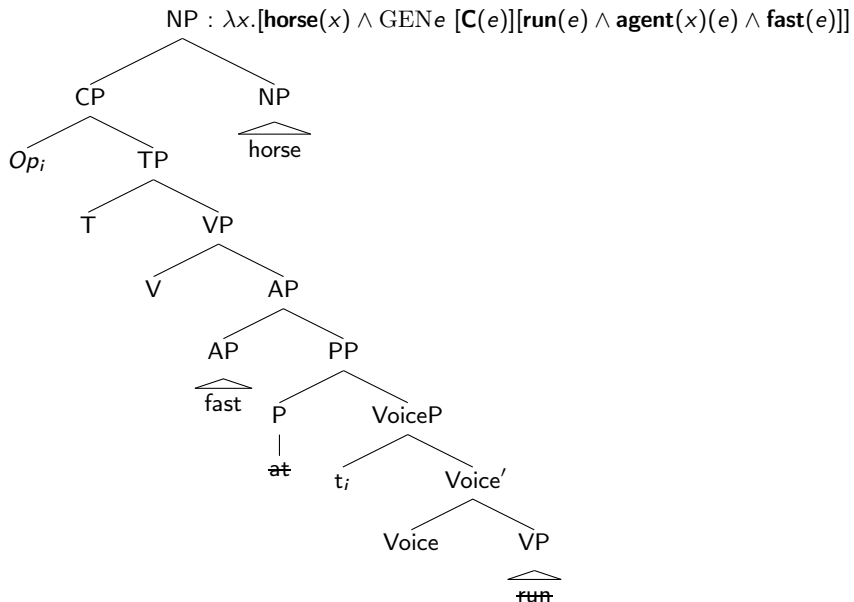
Post-nominal adjectives with complements or adjuncts are **reduced RCs** with the AP in the **predicative** position:

- ① felicitous post-nominally only if felicitous predicatively
  - \*He is a drinker heavier than his father. [attributive-only adjs]
  - \*What is their reason main in importance?
  - \*The winner sure from every possible viewpoint is John.
- ② interpreted like their predicative, not pre-nominal, counterparts
  - The alleged murderer was deported.
  - The murderer alleged to have killed his own parents was deported. ["intersective" wrt the noun]

⇒ pre-nominal manner APs with covert *at/in*-gerunds are **preposed reduced RCs**:

- a very much respected scholar/debated issue/appreciated service, the much talked about new show (Cinque 2010)

# Structure and interpretation



## Type shift

$$\lambda e.\text{skillful}(e) \rightsquigarrow \lambda x.\exists e [\text{skillful}(e) \wedge E(e) \wedge \Theta(x)(e)]$$

Advantages of this analysis compared to the type shift analysis:

- 1 the desired logical form is derived **compositionally**  
(type shift: how to integrate *at/in*-gerunds into semantics?)
- 2 certain interpretative properties follow from the syntax:
  - various **event quantifiers** introduced by T (multiple type shifts!)
  - $\Theta$  can only be **agent** (a stipulation if hard-wired in type shift)
- 3 infelicity of **manner+regular AP conjunctions** is accounted for
  - attributive position: coordination of unlike categories, CP+AP  
\*She is a blonde and slow dancer. (Vendler 1968)
  - predicative position: CSC-violation & type clash,  $\langle v, t \rangle + \langle e, t \rangle$   
\*This dancer is blonde and slow.

Thank you!