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Simultaneity vs Sequentiality: Serial Verb Constructions at the intersection. The case of Agents in Motion Predicates.

Introduction

2 claims:

The **simultaneity** incline:
Sign Languages can simultaneously encode a good amount of morphological information that would be impossible in most (sequentially-inclined) Spoken Languages.

The **sequentiality** incline:
Sign Languages use the morpho-syntactic device of Seriality (Supalla 1990, Benedicto-Cvejanov-Quer 2008, Lau 2012)) which linearizes verbal morpho-syntactic components sequentially.

Tension !!

=> These two trends may seem at odds with each other.

area of ***optionality*** simultaneity <-> sequentiality
-> syntactic patterns in the transitivization (=addition of an Agent) of (intransitive) motion predicates

We will **claim** that such ***optionality*** is the by-product of
[i] the specific morphemes selected in the Numeration
and
[ii] the particular subeventive structure underlying the predicate.

Goals

- to characterize the **syntactic strategies** used by ASL **to add an agent argument** onto an intransitive motion predicate (i.e., to transitivize it) ;
- to provide a principle-based account of the factors that underlie the tension between **simultaneity and sequentiality**, observed in the range of syntactic patterns obtained in the data collected

Data and Data Collection

Two types of Agents: (based on cross-linguistic contrasts (Hale-Keyser, 2001)

✓those in continuous contact with the Theme (*John took the child to the doctor*) and
✓those with only initial non-continuous contact (*John kicked the ball into the goal*).

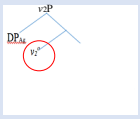
➢Data from 3 native ASL signers were collected.

➢**Stimuli** belong to a larger project on Motion Predicates containing (Benedicto, 2017/2019)

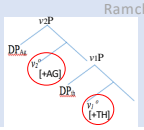
- 175 animated video-clips,
- with 87 related to transitivization:
  - 50 for initial non-continuous contact (*kick*-type),
  - 37 items for continuous contact (*take*-type) (1b/c)
  - each with a corresponding minimally contrastive intransitive pair (1a).
- Telic and atelic versions of the motion event are

Assumptions

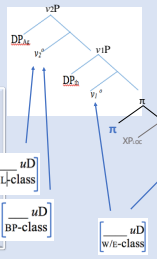
1. Agents are introduced by a dedicated functional head, *little v* (Kratzer 1996, Chomsky 1995)



2. a *v*-split (Borer1994, 2005; Benedicto-Brentari2004; Ramchand2008; Harvey2013)
   a. an **agentive** v_2 ($v_{2[+AG]}$),
   b. a **thematic** *v* ($v_{1[+TH]}$).

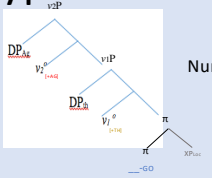


4. the analysis of CLASSIFIERS (Benedicto 2018)
   ⇒ CLASS feature (HDL, BP, WE, …)
   ⇒ with an additional *u*D feature
   ⇒ freely bundled up with contentful functional heads.



3. the syntactic decomposition of subeventive structure, (Benedicto-Branchini-Mantovan2015, for LIS)
   a. a PATH (π) substructure distinct from a
   b. a telic REACH (τ) substructure in Motion Predicates;

Hypothesis

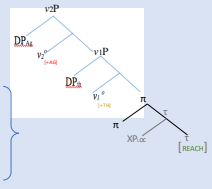


<= Atelic

Num = { ___-GO (π) ; ___ uD α-CLASS }

Telic =>

Num = { ___-GO (π) ; ___-REACH ; ___ uD α-CLASS }

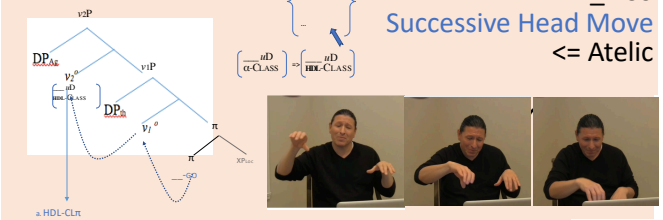


Continuous Contact:
HDL-CL
+GO Raising to v_2.
(π-PathSharing)

Non-Continuous Contact:
BP-CL
+GO not Raising to v_2.
(no π-PathSharing)

Type1-a:

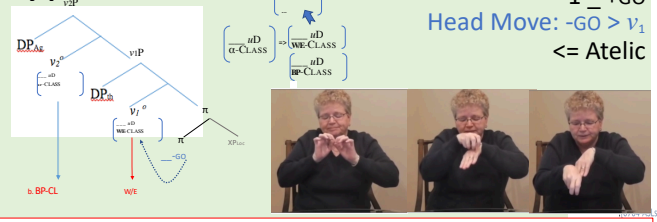
1 α-CL
1 _ +GO
Successive Head Move
<= Atelic



H1.		…	GIRL … TRAIN	$Cdwn_{HDL}$+GRAB.π$_b$
H2.	5dwn_{WE}+BE_AT.b T-U-N-N-E-L	…	TRAIN	5)dwn_{WE}+BE_AT.b

Type 2:

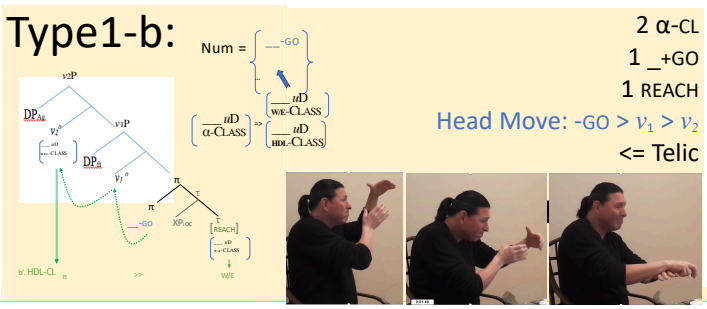
2 α-CL
1 _ +GO
Head Move: -GO > v_1
<= Atelic



H1.	… (MAN).a (CHILD).b V-bnt_{WE}.b+BE_AT	MAN	B_{BP}.a+PUSH.b	BOY.b V-bnt_{WE}.b SLIDE-DOWN.π
H2.	… (SLIDE).c	B.c+BE_AT	B_{BP}.a+PUSH.b	B.c+BE_AT.π

Type1-b:

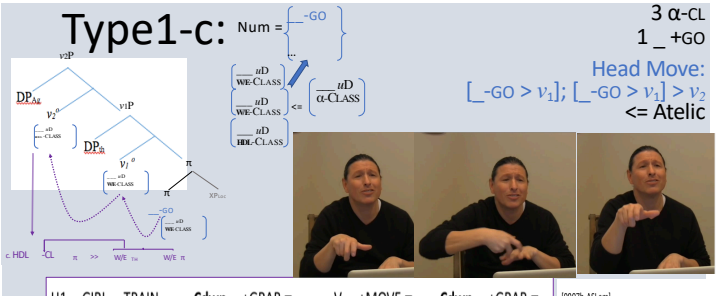
2 α-CL
1 _+GO
1 REACH
Head Move: -GO > v_1 > v_2
<= Telic



H1.	… (FATHER) (CHILD)	C-C_{HDL}+HOLD.π		V-bnt_{WE}+SLIDE-REACH.
H2.	…	C-C_{HDL}+HOLD.π	B-fl_{WE}+BE_AT	

Type1-c:

3 α-CL
1 _ +GO
Head Move: [_-GO > v_1]; [_-GO > v_1] > v_2
<= Atelic



H1.	GIRL … TRAIN …	$Cdwn_{HDL}$+GRAB.π	$V_{W/E}$+MOVE.π	$Cdwn_{HDL}$+GRAB.π$_b$
H2.	TRAIN		Bfl_{WE}+BE_AT.π	

[0907b-ASLem]