

snippets

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Locality in allomorphy and presyntactic bundling: A case of tense and aspect

Amy Rose Deal · University of California, Berkeley

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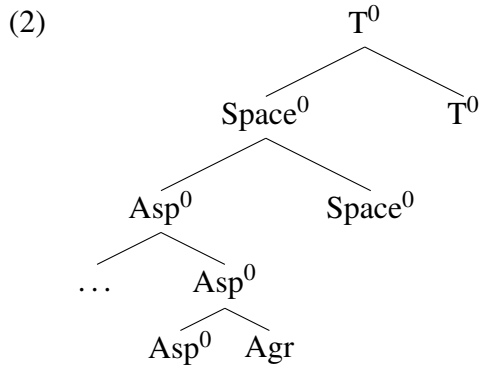
Connections between the realization of tense information and viewpoint aspect information may arise in two ways. One is allomorphy: T and Asp are projected separately and the realization of one depends on the other. Another is presyntactic bundling: meaning associated with tense and with aspect is packaged together into a single syntactic atom (e.g. Lin 2006). Current theorizing about allomorphy posits locality conditions in terms of linear (Embick 2010) or structural (Bobaljik 2012) adjacency. While conditions on bundling have received less attention, a locality condition is plausible here too: only information associated with heads that would be structurally adjacent in a functional sequence may be bundled into a single morpheme (e.g. Voice and v_{caus} , Pylkkänen 2002; T and Agr, Bobaljik and Thráinsson 1998).

Evidence from Nez Perce suggests that the two locality conditions cannot be jointly maintained. In this language, Asp and T may be separated by (number) agreement and by a ‘space marker’ (translocative or cislocative). This is shown for the imperfective aspect in (1).

(1) Suffix order: Aspect - Agr - Space - Tense

- a. hi- wehye -[c] -i -nki -[ke]
3SUBJ- go -IMPERF -S.PL -TRANSLOC -REM.PAST
‘They were going away.’ (Aoki and Walker 1989:292)
- b. ’inahna -[c] -a -m -[qa]
carry -IMPERF -S.SG -CISLOC -REC.PAST
‘You were bringing (something).’ (Aoki and Walker 1989:586)
- c. hi- kuu -te -[c] -e -m -[∅]
3SUBJ- water -go.away -IMPERF -S.SG -CISLOC -PRES
‘She is coming for water.’ (Aoki and Walker 1989:263)

While agreement could be analyzed as a dissociated morpheme on Asp, Space⁰ behaves like a head in the functional sequence between Asp and T. Space markers select for particular aspects, appear in only one location in the clause, and, like tense, are closed-class, inflectional morphemes with a basic meaning of locating events deictically in spacetime (Deal 2009). Asp and T are clearly not linearly adjacent in (1); these considerations suggest that they are not structurally adjacent either. Rather, in the head-adjunction structure for the inflected verb, T combines with a projection of Space, and Space combines with a projection of Asp:



This structure frames a puzzle that arises in the habitual aspect, where the form of the aspect marker is affected by tense information (as well as agreement). Like in the imperfective, habitual aspect is followed by agreement, then space, then tense. The combined forms of habitual Asp and Agr are given in (5); space marking does not affect these forms.

(3) hi- weqi -tee -tu -m -∅
 3SUBJ- rain -HAB -S.SG -CISLOC -PRES
 ‘It rains here.’

(4) hi- waqi -qa -m -qa
 3SUBJ- rain -HAB.SG -CISLOC -REC.PAST
 ‘It used to rain here (recently).’ (Deal 2010)

(5) Forms of habitual aspect + agr

	SG	PL
PRES	tee-tu	tee-’nix
PAST	qa-∅	e-’niix

Observe that *tee* appears only in present tense and *qa/e* only in past tense (both recent and remote). Why? We return to our two types of analyses from above. If Asp⁰ contains only aspectual information (relating Event Time to Topic Time, Klein 1994), this is allomorphy; however, the conditioning environment (i.e. T) is neither linearly nor structurally local. If Asp⁰ contains both aspectual and tense information (relating Event Time (to Topic Time) to Utterance Time; cf. Cable 2013), this is presyntactic bundling; deictic tense meaning is carried both by Asp⁰ and T⁰. The same challenge now arises for locality conditions imposed on this phenomenon. Findings about the locality conditions on allomorphy thus have the potential to directly impact claims about restrictions on syntactic atoms in natural language.

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Amy Rose Deal
ardeal@berkeley.edu
Department of Linguistics
University of California, Berkeley
1223 Dwinelle Hall
Berkeley, CA 94720
USA