

Morphosyntax/semantics interface in Sicilian *DICs*

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1. This paper focuses on the Sicilian *Doubly Inflected Construction* (hereafter, *DIC*; Cruschina 2013), illustrated by (1):

- (1) *Vaju a mmangiu*
go.1SG PREP eat.1SG
'I go eat.'

In *DIC*, a motion verb V1 (from a class including *vènniri* 'come', *passari* 'pass', and *mannari* 'send') is followed by an action verb V2, with the two verbs being inflected for the same person and tense features (Feature-Matching). Based on syntactic and semantic evidence, it has been argued that *DIC* is a monoclausal construction where V1 and V2 form a complex predicate referring to a single event. In particular, Cardinaletti and Giusti (2001) claim that only V2 has lexical content and interpreted inflectional features, while V1 is partially desemantized and inherits its features from V2.

2. We focus on western varieties of Sicilian and consider previously neglected *DICs* with *mannari*, which turn out to be problematic for this analysis:

- (2) *Ti mannu a ddicu na cosa*
To-you send.1SG PREP say.1SG DET thing
'I send someone say something to you.'

By Feature-Matching, the person feature on *mannu* is the same as the one on *ddicu* (that is, 1SG). However, this feature is interpreted only on *mannu*: indeed, the agent of *ddicu* is not the speaker but some other person *x* such that the speaker sends *x* so that *x* says something to the hearer. This is most clear in (3):

- (3) *Un ti lu mannu a ddicu, ti lu ricu¹ iu*
NEG to-you CL.3SG send.1SG PREP say.1SG to-you CL.3SG say.1SG me
'I don't send anyone say it to you, I say it to you myself.'

¹ Notice that the difference between *ddicu* and *ricu* is motivated by syntactic doubling.

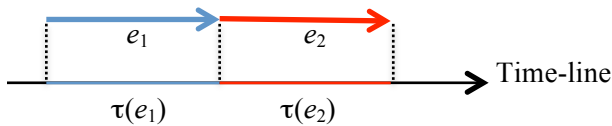
If the agent of *ddicu* were the speaker, (3) would be contradictory, as it would imply both that I don't say it to you and that I say it to you. But (3) is a perfectly consistent discourse.

3. We propose that V1 and V2 in *DIC* are both lexical verbs which combine to form a complex predicate true of “concatenated-events”. The assumption that V1 is a lexical motion verb accounts for the observation that V2 cannot be stative—semantically similar coordinated structures are unacceptable with a stative conjunct (cf. *I go and I eat* vs. **I go and I am sick*). Only V1 has interpreted features: the features on V2 are mandated by a construction-specific mechanism, inaccessible to the semantic component, which requires identity between the inflectional marks on V1 and those on V2. Thus, the agent of *ddicu* in (2)-(3) is no longer predicted to be the speaker. More specifically, we assume an event-semantics in the style of Parsons (1990), where verb predicates denote relations between events and event-participants (selected by thematic (θ) roles). For example, in (1), *vaju* denotes a relation which holds between a certain event of going, say, the event of my going by car to a restaurant today at noon, and the individual who goes, namely me, and *mangiu* denotes a relation holding between a certain event of eating, say, the event of my having lunch today at 1 PM, and the eater, namely me. These denotations can be represented formally as follows:

- (4) a. $[[[\text{VP iri}]]] = \lambda e_1. \lambda x. \text{GO}(e_1) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(e_1) = x$
 b. $[[[\text{VP mangiari}]]] = \lambda e_1. \lambda x. \text{EAT}(e_1) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(e_1) = x$

The semantics of the complex predicate $[\text{VP V1 a V2}]$ is based on the operation of event concatenation defined in (5):

- (5) Let e_1 and e_2 be consecutive events. Their concatenation $(e_1 \bullet e_2)$ is an event whose temporal trace $\tau(e_1 \bullet e_2)$ is the convex interval obtained by summing the temporal traces of e_1 and e_2 .



Notice that the concatenated event $(e_1 \bullet e_2)$ is a single (complex) event, not a set of two single events. As such, it can enter into more complex concatenations, e.g. $((e_1 \bullet e_2) \bullet e_3) \bullet \dots$.

The semantic value of $[\text{VP V1 a V2}]$ is computed according to the construction-specific rule (R):

- (R) The semantic value of V1:
 $[[[\text{VP V1}]]] = \lambda e_1. \lambda x. \{ \lambda y. \} \text{V1}(e_1) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(e_1) = x \ \{ \& \ \text{THEME}(e_1) = y \}$
 is combined with the semantic value of V2:
 $[[[\text{VP V2}]]] = \lambda e_2. \lambda x. \{ \lambda u \dots \lambda z. \} \text{V2}(e_2) \ \& \ \text{AGENT}(e_2) = x \ \{ \& \ \theta_u(e_2) = u \dots \theta_z(e_2) = z \}$
 so as to obtain:

$$[[[_{VP} V1 \text{ a } V2]]] = \lambda e_3. \lambda x. \{ \lambda u. \dots \lambda z. \} \exists e_1 \exists e_2 [e_3 = (e_1 \bullet e_2) \& V1(e_1) \& V2(e_2) \& AGENT(e_3) = AGENT(e_1) = x \& \forall \theta \neq AGENT \theta(e_3) = \theta(e_2) \{ \& THEME(e_1) = AGENT(e_2) \& \theta_u(e_3) = u \dots \theta_z(e_3) = z \}]^2$$

4. Rule (R) provides for argument-sharing between V1 and V2: for V1 = *iri/vèniri/passari* the shared argument has the same θ -role in V1 and V2, namely the agent, (see (1)), while for V1 = *mannari* it is the theme of V1 which coincides with the agent of V2 (see (2)-(3)). Moreover, (R) determines how the θ -grid of [_{VP} V1 a V2] is computed from the θ -grids of V1 and V2—the former is predicted not to contain more roles than either one of the latter. Interestingly, we observe that *DICs* with *mannari* don't project V1's theme:

(6) *Ti la mannu a ddicu sta cosa*
 To-you CL.3SG.FEM send.1SG PREP say.1SG this thing(FEM)

The feminine clitic *la* obligatorily refers to the feminine object (theme) of *ddicu*, it cannot refer to the theme of *mannu*. Hence, the only possible reading of (6) is 'I send *someone* say this thing to you'.³ The theme of V1 is nevertheless present at the semantic level, as an existentially bound variable (*someone*). We conclude that there is a mismatch between the semantic level and the morphosyntactic level of *DICs*.

5. Our analysis contributes to the study of complex event descriptions both at the level of morphosyntax and semantics and sheds light on new data.

References. Cardinaletti, A. & G. Giusti 2001. "Semi-lexical' motion verbs in Romance and Germanic", in N. Corver & H. van Riemsdijk (eds.), *Semi-lexical Categories: the function of content words and the content of function words*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 371-414. Cruschina, S. 2013. "Beyond the stem and inflectional morphology: An irregular pattern at the level of periphrasis", in S. Cruschina, M. Maiden & J. C. Smith (eds.), *The Boundaries of Pure Morphology: Diachronic and Synchronic Perspectives*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 262-283. Parsons, T. 1990. *Events in the Semantics of English: A Study in Subatomic Semantics*, Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

² Parts in curly brackets correspond to possible thematic roles and conditions on them. For V1 = *mannari*, λy is instantiated as the THEME, and the theme of the *mannari*-event is identified with the agent of the V2-event.

³ Cf. **Ti lu_(MASC) mannu a ddicu sta cosa* – this sentence is out and cannot mean 'I send *him* to say this thing to you'.