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The Plot

In previous work on Pseudo-Relative (PR) constructions, we show that they are headed by a null determiner. Because of this, PRs denote individual situations and so can complement direct perception verbs.

In general, the tense of the PR must Match the matrix. Present tense only allows under perfect tense (imperfective) under past (simple past)

(7) a. Gianni vide Maria che ballava. past...past
   G. saw S.P. that dance.IMPF.
   b. Gianni vide Maria che balla. past...pres
   G. saw S.P. that dance.PRES.

However, when the matrix clause is Present Perfect, Mismatch is possible, allowing present PRs

In that case, only generic spatial/temporal modifiers are allowed (giving rise to subkinds).

(8) a. Ho visto Maria che balla. (al parco giovedi scorso)
   S.M. I have seen S.P. that dance.PRES.at the park. Thursday last.
   b. Ho visto Maria che balla (al parco giovedi scorso) Match
   S.M. I have seen S.P. that dance.IMPF.at the park. Thursday last.
   c. I have seen S.P. that dance. at the park. Thursday last.

(6a) and (6b) both report a past direct perception of one event of Mary dancing but (6a) additionally implies a habitual interpretation of the embedded clause.

But this is no ordinary embedded habitual: These PRs are also divisible.

(9) Ciò che ho visto è [pr visto questo tipo di] e [pr Maria che balla]
    What I have seen is this kind of event and [pr Maria that dance].

(10) Max non ha mai visto Maria che balla il tango. ~*pr visto~
   G. Max has never seen S.P. that dance.
   M. S.P. has never S.L. that dance.PRES.the tango.
   M. S.P. never saw S.L. dance the tango. dancing the tango.

4. Kind PRs

Many kind-taking predicates also take present PRs:

(13) [Maria che balla] è piuttosto comune.

M. That dance is rather common. ‘Mary dancing is rather common.’

2 ingredients:

   - Habituals (e.g. the CP in (6a) denote pluralities of events
   - Episodics (e.g. the CP in (6b)) denote singular events

(14) For any property P, P ~ w P in lookup

(15) [w Maria che balla habitual] ~ the kind associated with an event of Maria dancing

(8c) and (8b) both report a past direct perception of one event of Mary dancing but (8a) additionally implies an habitual interpretation of the embedded clause.

5. Explaining the Scope Difference with DKP

When token-taking verbs meet kind-denoting objects (16), the verb shifts by DKP

(16) [pointing at a picture of a lion in a zoology book] I saw that in the zoo

(17) Derived Kind Predication (DKP):

(18) kind = pr visto [3] = [kind] & [verb]o)

(9a) [pr Maria che balla] [S P Se] & [verb]

Low scope in (10) is just a reflection of the existential incorporated by DKP.

[10] ~ [pr Maria che balla] [S P Se] & [verb]

Other differences (see table) between Match PRs and Mismatch PRs follow. E.g. temporal modifiers are out (8a) because they attach to a habitual sentence—the token is only derived by DKP.

Ambiguity: Even Match PRs can involve a kind PR, but that meaning appears to be less available than the episodic PR.

6. Conclusion: So what’s surprising?

Habituals can be used in direct perception complements, via DKP.

- Do select classes and return the expected descriptions of situations (expected on Kratzer 1989, 2007 etc.)

- The range of Ds is constrained by Aspect (episodic/habitual) in a manner expected by Firenze 2005.

- Role of D and verbal inflection can be separated (cf. Firenze 2005) as both exist in PRs.

- What other Ds combine with CPs? Why not plural definitions?

References


