Change of State Verb and Syntax of Serial Verb Constructions in Korean: An HPSG Account

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It is generally assumed that serial verb constructions (SVCs) share at least one argument, and has an overall argument structure that is not more complex than that of one of its component verbs (Baker 1989, Collin 1993, Aikhenvald 2006, Kim 2010, among others), as illustrated in (1a) where the object is shared by V1 and V2. Interestingly, however, the prototypical SVC in (1b) that is usually cited for the support of object sharing (similar example of Ewe in Collins 1993 and Chinese example in Müller and Lipenkova 2009, *inter alia*) can be changed to a non-canonical SVC in (1c) that goes against the object sharing and argument saturation. In (1c), the object 'raw fish' can not be shared by the component verbs semantically: *what Chelswu ate is the baked fish, not the raw fish*. Because of the missing of one semantic argument for V2, (1c) is predicted to be ill-formed in the literature. However, it is a well-formed SVC in Korean. I believe this problem can possibly extend to SVCs in other languages.

In this paper, I present an analysis of the Korean resultative SVCs like (1c), which has, surprisingly, never been noted and discussed before although the study of SVCs has been a key component in investigations of complex predicates:

(1) a. Chelswu-ka cwul-ul cap-a tangki-ess-ta
   Chelswu-Nom rope-Acc draw-Comp pull-Past-Dec
   'Chelswu pulled the rope, drawing it.'

   Chelswu-Nom fish-Acc bake-Comp eat-Past-Dec
   'Chelswu baked and ate the fish.'

   Chelswu-Nom raw fish-Acc bake-Comp eat-Past-Dec
   'Chelswu baked the raw fish, and he ate it (the baked fish).'

Specifically, I argue that the Korean resultative SVCs like (1b,c) have bi-clausal complementation structure where V2 takes V1-headed clause as its syntactic complement (contrary to the general assumption of mono-clausal SVCs in Chung 1993, Aikhenvald 2006, Kim 2010, *inter alia*) and that other non-resultative SVCs are mono-clausal and their component verbs constitute complex predicate. Also, I discuss that in resultative SVCs, the result state related with V1 functions as a salient semantic boundary between the subevents of V1 and V2 and thus somewhat prevents the conceptualization of SVC as a single event.

Then, I show that the Korean resultative SVCs are different from coordination/subordination and compound verbs in terms of subject sharing and negation marking and scope. These related constructions can make a hierarchy according to the conceptualization degree of component subevents (informally represented in Aikhenvald 2006: 12). In this hierarchy, I claim that the Korean resultative SVC is an intermediate type between subordination/coordination and mono-clausal SVC: that is, Subordination/Coordination < **Resultative bi-clausal SVC** < Non-resultative mono-clausal SVC < Compound verb.

A prediction of the conceptualization hierarchy is that negated resultative SVCs (whether the negation scope be narrow or wide: *Chelswu-ka nal sayngsen-ul an[Neg] kwu-e mek-ess-ta. 'Chelswu did not bake the raw fish, and ate the raw fish',' Chelswu did not bake the raw fish and did not eat the raw fish') should be non-resultative mono-clausal SVC since no result state is involved in between the relevant subevents. I
show that this prediction is confirmed by syntactic properties of the SVCs: the reflexive pronoun subject or adverbs can be inserted between V1 and V2 only in resultative SVCs (Chelswu-ka nal sayngsen-ul ppali[fast] kwu-e [chenchenhi][slowly]/[caki-ka][self-Nom]) mek-ess-ta. vs. Chelswu-ka nal sayngsen-ul an[Neg] kwu-e (*[chenchenhi][slowly]/*[caki-ka][self-Nom]) mek-ess-ta).

For the resultative bi-clausal SVCs, I provide a lexicalist analysis within the Head-Driven Phrase Structure Grammar (Sag et al. 2003). In particular, the resultative lexical rule (Wechsler and Noh 2001) is adopted and adapted to generate the change of state V1, as in (2a). I propose a new lexical rule for V2 like (2b) that requires as its syntactic complement the V1-headed clause:

(2) a. Lexical sign for the V1 kwu-e 'bake'
   PHON <kwu-e> 'bake'  HEAD [FORM-e]
   SUBJ <NPi>  COMPS <NPj>
   ARG-ST <NPi, NPj>  CONTENT relation BAKER i 
                      BECOME baked-rel

   b. Lexical sign for the V2 mek-ta 'eat'
   PHON <mek-ta> 'eat'  HEAD [FORM-e]
   SUBJ <NPi[reflexive-pronoun]>
   COMPS <S>
   ARG-ST <NPi, NPj>  CONTENT relation EATER i
                      THEME j

In conclusion, 1) Korean SVCs fall into two broad classes: resultative bi-clausal SVCs and non-resultative mono-clausal SVCs, 2) the resultative SVCs are placed in between subordination/coordination and non-resultative SVCs in the event conceptualization hierarchy, and 3) the change of state and syntax of the resultative SVCs can be accounted for by extending the analysis of Korean resultatives (Wechsler and Noh 2001) to the SVCs.

References