

## Levantine Arabic Resultatives and Agreement

Tova Rapoport and Aya Zarka

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and McMaster University  
 tovarap@bgu.ac.il; ayaza@post.bgu.ac.il, zarkaa@mcmaster.ca

**Introduction.** Arabic dialects in general do not allow resultatives. This paper introduces novel data that demonstrate that Levantine Arabic (L.Arabic) does in fact have a subtype of resultatives: FALSE RESULTATIVES (Rapoport 1999, Mateu 2000). Unlike true resultative secondary predicates, which add a result to an activity predicate, false resultative predicates (RPreds) add a specification/emphasis of the final result that is inherent in the verb of an accomplishment predicate (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995, Rapoport 2019, a.o.):

(1) *True resultative:* Sam wiped the table clean.      *False resultative:* Sam sliced the bread thin.

**L.Arabic.** L.Arabic does not allow true resultatives (2), but does allow false resultatives (3-4):

(2) \*mssaH-at                      Sāra      ṭ-ṭawl-e                      nḏīf-e  
 sweep-3F.SG.PST      Sara      the-table-F.SG      clean-F.SG

'Sara wiped the table clean.'

(3) bana                                      Ahmad      ṭ-ṭawl-e/-āt                      ṭābt-e / \*ṭābet  
 build.3M.SG.PST      Ahmad      the-table-F.SG/-F.PL      stable-F.SG / stable.M.SG

'Ahmad built the table(s) strong.'

(4) qattaṣ-at                      Sāra      al-jazar-a/-āt                      rfiṣ / \*rfiṣ-a  
 slice-3F.SG.PST      Sara      the-carrot-F.SG/-F.PL      thin.M.SG / thin-F.SG

'Sara sliced the carrot(s) thin.'

These data raise the question: Why does the RPred agree with the direct object in type (3) false resultatives but not in apparently-identical type 4? We show that this distinction derives from the element modified, as dictated by the distinct structures merged by the different verb types.

L.Arabic resultatives are mostly found in creation verb structures, of which we distinguish here two types: EXPLICIT CREATION (EC) and IMPLICIT CREATION (IC) (Geuder 2000; Levinson 2010):

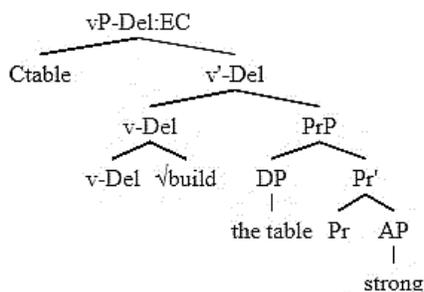
(5) *Explicit creation (EC):* Sam built a table.      *Implicit creation (IC):* Sam sliced a carrot.

With EC verbs, the entity created is overtly expressed by the direct object, e.g. *the table* in (3).

IC verbs, in contrast, entail the creation of an entity that is left implicit, e.g. the slices of (4).

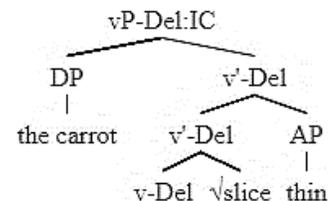
In (3), the RPred modifies the EC verb's overt object: the table is strong. Not so in (4): there is no result of a thin carrot. Rather, the RPred modifies an entity denoted by the lexical root of the verb (Levinson 2010), the implicit slices.

**The analysis. Structures:** We adapt Piñón 2008's analysis of EC: the representation contains both a mental concept and the EFFECTED entity instantiating it. The (partial) resultative EC structure represents the verb *build* as causing the (unpronounced) table-Concept (in spec of Ritter & Rosen 1998's Delimiting Phrase) to be transformed into an actual table. The RPred



*strong* directly modifies this effected entity. In the IC structure, in contrast, it is the verb's root that is modified by the RPred *thin*.

**Agreement:** In EC, the RPred modifies the overt DP, exhibiting in L.Arabic the same agreement with it as that found in main predication structures. The RPred and DP thus form a small clause that represents the event's result. In IC, the RPred



shows no agreement: it modifies the verb root to which it is adjoined and roots have no syntactic features (Borer 2005) with which the RPred can agree. RPred is thus marked with default m.sg. **Conclusion.** The structures proposed account for the grammatical distinction between EC and IC verbs, as demonstrated by the agreement in EC, but not IC, false resultatives in L.Arabic.

## References

- Borer, Hagit. 2005. *Structuring Sense. Volume I: In name only*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Geuder, Wilhelm. 2000. *Oriented Adverbs: Issues in the Lexical Semantics of Event Adverbs*. PhD dissertation. Universität Konstanz.
- Levin, Beth, and Malka Rappaport Hovav. 1995. *Unaccusativity: At the syntax-lexical semantics interface*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.
- Levinson, Lisa. 2010. Arguments for pseudo-resultative predicates. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 28: 135-182.
- Mateu, Jaume. 2000. Why can't we wipe the slate clean? A lexical-syntactic approach to resultative constructions. *Catalan Working Papers in Linguistics* 8: 71–95.
- Piñón, Christopher. 2008. Verbs of creation. *Event structures in linguistic form and interpretation*. 493-521.
- Rapoport, Tova. 1999. Structure, Aspect and the Predicate. *Language* 75: 653–676.
- Rapoport, Tova. 2019. Secondary Predication. In Robert Truswell (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Event Structure*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Ritter, Elizabeth, and Sara Thomas Rosen. 1998. Delimiting events in syntax. In Butt, Miriam and Wilhelm Geuder (eds.), *The Projection of Arguments: Lexical and compositional factors*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.