On Serialized Verbs in Japanese and Korean

Synopsis: This paper discusses serialized verbs (SVs) in Japanese and Korean and argues that so-called "lexical" serialized verbs (LSVs) as well as syntactic serialized verbs (SSVs) are formed in the syntax under the view of Distributed Morphology ([4], [5], a.o.), and proposed arguments for the lexicalist approach to LSVs lose ground. I also claim that the effect of [1]'s Principle of Transitivity Harmony in LSVs (as well as that of [3]'s Matching Condition on Verb Serialization) can be deducible. Furthermore, I suggest that while J employs "internal" morphology productively, K employs "outer" morphology more frequently.

Data: Both Japanese and Korean are replete with SVs (i.e. V1+V2), and it has been widely held that J & K distinguish between LSVs and SSVs ([1], [2], a.o.).

(1) a. kiri-otos,   naki-sakeb,   kuzure-oti, ...   (LSVs in J)
         cut-fell   cry-scream   crumble-fall

     b. kiri-owar,   naki-tuzuke,   kuzure-hazime, ...   (SSVs in J)
         cut-finish(intr)   cry-continue(tr) crumble-begin(tr)

(2) a. palpa-cwuki, capa-mek, ttwie-nem, ...   (LSVs in K)
         stomp.on-kill catch-eat   jump-go.over

     b. palpa-peli,   capa-cwu,   ttwie-po, ...   (SSVs in K)
         stomp.on-finish catch-give   jump-try

In J, one argument that the two types of SVs are distinct comes from the fact that only LSVs are subject to the Principle of Transitivity Harmony (PTH) in (3), proposed by [1].

(3) V1 and V2 must be in harmony with each other in terms of transitivity.

Obviously, while the LSVs in (1a) abide by the PTH, the SSVs in (1b) do not. In K, one argument that LSVs are distinct from SSVs comes from the "lexical integrity" of the former (cf. [2]), shown in (4).

(4) a. [SSV [SSV [LSV palpa-cwukye]-belye]-cwu](-ess-ta)

     b. [SSV [SSV [LSV palpa-cwukye]-cwue] bely](-ess-ta)

     c. *[SSV [LSV palpa-<u>belye</u>-cwukye]-cwu](-ess-ta)

     d. *[SSV [LSV palpa-<u>cwue</u>-cwukye]-bely](-ess-ta)

Although the order of V2's of SSVs is relatively free (cf. 4a, b), V2 of SSVs may not intervene between V1 and V2 of LSVs (cf. 4c, d).

Assumptions: Following [4], [5] a.o., I will assume that (i) roots are acategorial before they are merged with the first category-determining functional head (e.g. n, v, a), and (ii) the structure of vP is layered as shown in (5), where v demarcates the border between "inner" and "outer" morphology.

(5) [vP(=VoiceP) ... [Voice [... [(Asp/Appl) [... [(Caus) [... **v** [(**X**) [√**P**]]]]]]]]]

                  "outer mophology" | "inner" morphology

Discussions: Under the current view, the effect of the PTH in (3) can be deduced from a natural hypothesis that two roots are merged in LSVs in J before they are merged with the first v.

(6)　　[vP [√2P　√1 + √2] + v]　　　　　　　　(LSVs in Japanese)

(7)　　a.　{(√KIR + √OT) + v.trans}　　　　<—>　　kiri(tr)-otos(tr) / *kiri(tr)-oti(intr)

　　　　b.　{(√NAK + √SAKEB) +v.unerg} <—>　　naki(unerg)-sakeb(unerg)

　　　　c.　{√KUZ + √OT) + v.unacc}　　　<—>　　kuzure(unacc)-oti(unacc)

Since two roots are merged before they are merged with the first v in LSVs in J, the transitivity property of v spreads to √1 as well as √2. As a result, V1 and V2 harmonize with each other morphologically, as shown in (7). This is further evidenced by the attested transitive counterpart of (7c), i.e., kiri(tr)-otos(tr), where v is that of transitive, instead of unaccusative. Simultaneously, the fact in (4) ceases to be an argument for a lexicalist approach. This is because V2's of SSVs like beli 'finish' and cwu 'give' are Aspect and Applicative heads, respectively, within the layered vP system in (5), which take a verbal complement larger than the smallest vP while LSVs are formed by merger of two vP's as suggested by [3]. Thus, while LSVs in J are formed in "inner" morphology, those in K are created in "outer" morphology (compare (6) and (8)).

(8)　　[vP [vP2 [vP1 √1 + v1] + [vP2 √2 + v2]] + v]　　(LSVs in Korean)

Consequences: One immediate consequence of the current proposal is the fact that while LSVs in J do not allow particle insertion (note that even su-support 'do-support' does not help), LSVs in K do.

(9)　　a.　*kiri-<u>wa</u>(-**si**)-otos,　*naki-<u>wa</u>(-**si**)-sakeb,　*kuzure-<u>wa</u>(-**si**)-oti,　　　　　(LSVs in J)

　　　　　　cut-top-do-drop　cry-top/also-do-shout　crumble-top/also-do-fall

　　　　b.　√palpa-<u>nun</u>-cwuki, √capa-<u>nun</u>-mek,　√kkwulhe-<u>nun</u>-anchi,　　　　(LSVs in K)

　　　　　　stomp.on-top-kill　catch-top-eat　　kneel-top-sit.caus

Furthermore, the absence of V1 as an independent lexical item in cases like (9) ceases to be an argument for a lexicalist approach to LSVs in K.

(10)　a.　thaye-na (be.born): V1=*thay, V2=na (get out)

　　　　b.　tuna-tul (go in and out): V1=*tuna, V2=tul (go in)

(11)　a.　{√THAY + v}　<—>　　no corresponding vocabulary item (VI)

　　　　b.　{(√THAY + v) + (√NA + v) + v} <—> thaye-na

The V1's in (10) are not attested as independent VIs. This fact has often been taken for an argument that LSVs in K are created in the lexicon. However, under the current approach, it simply happens that the root of V1 in (10a) √THAY, if merged with v, does not have a corresponding VI; instead, the VI thaye-na can be inserted to the whole LSV as shown in (10b).

Selected References:

[1] Kageyama, T. (1993) Bunpoo to Gokeisei (Grammar and Word Formation). Hituzi. [2] Kim, B.K. (1993) The structure and the argument-linking convention of V-V compounds in Korean, HSIKL V. [3] Ko, H.J. & D.Y. Sohn (2011) Decomposing complex serialization: the role of v, ms., SNU. [4] Marantz, A. (1997) No escape from syntax, UPenn WPL. [5] Marantz, A. (2001) Words. ms., MIT.