Event encoding in a crosslinguistic perspective I:
Setting the stage

1 Laying the foundations

1.1 Identifying events

- Our experience of the world is to quote Whorf “a kaleidoscopic flux of impressions” (1956: 213): events (and states), unlike many physical objects, do not necessarily come perceptually individuated (e.g., Clark 1978, Croft 1991, Gentner 1981, 1982).

- However, linguistic expressions give us a way to talk about the happenings in the world: we use language to pick out events and participants that we want to talk about from a continuous and complex stream of happenings.

- The facets of a chain of happenings in the world that count as events are those potentially nameable by verbs and expressible by verbs and their arguments in some natural language (Croft 1998: 46).

- Languages agree to a considerable extent on which chains of happenings are construable as events.

EXAMPLE: Chains of happenings in which one typically animate participant exerts a force on a second typically inanimate participant, causing it to undergo a change of state, are construable as single events across languages.

— This is demonstrated by the existence of the English verbs *cut*, *destroy*, and *kill*, which name such events, as well as by the existence of comparable verbs across languages.

— Croft (1991, 1994, 1998) argues that such events are linguistically and cognitively privileged as they are perhaps the most easily individuated from the larger chain of happenings.

- Not only do speakers of various languages agree on what constitutes an event, but they often also agree on the “encoding” of particular events—the ways in which their linguistic representations get realized via the morphosyntactic and lexical resources of particular languages.

EXAMPLE: Across languages, the chains of happenings named by English *cut*, *destroy*, or *kill* are expressed by sentences with transitive verbs, with the event participants as subject and object.

(1) The vandals destroyed the car.

1.2 An important notion: Lexicalized meaning

- The meaning of a verb can be viewed as a collection of attributes, and these attributes must be shared by those happenings which the verb can refer to.
It is in this sense that a verb is a predicate of events, and so may be used to select a chunk of a chain of happenings, according to the status of an EVENT (or state) referenced by the verb.

- When we choose a verb to describe an event, we are making a comment on certain attributes present in the chain of happenings in the world being referred to by that verb.
- Since a verb lexicalizes only a small number of the attributes of the happening it is used to describe, a single verb can be applied to quite different happenings.

(2)  

a. The teakettle whistled. (sound emission event)  
b. A bullet whistled past him. (directed motion event)

- The attributes that are shared across all uses of a verb are those that constitute its meaning: they are LEXICALIZED by the verb.

(3) LEXICALIZED MEANING: Those meaning components entailed in—and, thus, constant across—all uses of a verb, regardless of context.

- As shown in the whistle sentences, a verb’s lexicalized meaning must be distinguished from what can be inferred from a use of that verb in context, that is, the properties of the happening in the world referred to by the predication consisting of the verb and its arguments.

1.3 Differences in event encoding

The crosslinguistic agreement in event encoding does not extend to all types of events: speakers of different languages express certain chains of happenings in the world quite differently.

1.3.1 The encoding of hitting events

- Most speakers of English would encode a hitting event as in (4).

(4) The boy hit/tapped/whacked the window (with a stick).

—— The verb lexicalizes the fact of hitting and type of hitting, e.g., kind of force or instrument used.
—— Other major components of the hitting event include the actor, expressed as the subject; the surface, expressed as the object; and the instrument, which is optional, expressed as an oblique.

- However, Caucasian languages have a strikingly different way of encoding hitting events.

(5) “verbs of contact . . . take a nominative object where Indo-European would have an instrument and a dative corresponding to the Indo-European direct object [i.e. surface].” (Nichols 1982:447)
(6) Cuo mashienaa ghadzh tiexar.
3s.ERG car-DAT stick-NOM strike
ACTOR SURFACE INSTRUMENT VERB
‘He hit the car with a stick.’ (Ingush; Nichols 2011:340, (47))

• That is, this “pan-Caucasian valence pattern” (Nichols 1984:188) involves an apparent reversal in the expression of the surface and instrument arguments as object and oblique (Catford 1975, Polinsky 2015).

• Such a pattern is attested in English, but may not always be considered the default pattern.

(7) The boy hit/tapped/whacked a stick against the window.
ACTOR MANNER INSTRUMENT SURFACE

1.3.2 The encoding of directed motion events: The parade example

• The hitting event encodings bear some resemblance to the attested options found across languages for encoding directed motion events.

• Germanic and Romance languages contrast dramatically in their default descriptions of events of motion in some manner along a path (potentially including a goal) (Malblanc 1968; Slobin 1996, 1997, 2000; Talmy 1975, 1985, 2000; Vinay & Darbelnet 1958).

• These and other languages differ as to whether they prefer to “lexicalize” the path inside or outside the verb and, concomitantly, to express the manner of motion outside or inside the verb.

— English and other Germanic languages (so-called S(atellite)-framed languages): use a manner of motion verb plus a prepositional phrase (“satellite”) expressing the path.

(8) Blériot flew across the Channel.
THEME MANNER PATH

— French and other Romance languages (so-called V(erb)-framed languages): use a directed motion verb plus an optional prepositional phrase or adverbial clause specifying the manner of motion.

(9) Blériot traversa la Manche en avion.
Blériot crossed the Channel in a plane
THEME PATH MANNER
Blériot crossed the Channel by plane. (French; Vinay & Darbelnet 1958:105)

• Languages of both types recognize that directed motion events have certain components: the fact of motion, the entity that moves (the theme), the path of motion (here the goal of motion), and the manner of motion (Talmy 1975, 1985, 2000).

• The attested patterns involve an apparent reversal in the locus of expression of the manner and path components of the event: as a verb vs. a prepositional phrase or adverbial clause.
• In fact, work on comparative stylistics calls this phenomenon a “chassé-croisé” or criss-cross (Vinay & Darbelnet 1958:105).

• A QUESTION: Is an appropriate way to characterize the difference in terms of which facet of the event the verb lexicalizes—the manner or the path—with this then influencing how the other event components are expressed?

1.4 The big questions

• This class explores the nature and sources of crosslinguistic similarities and dissimilarities in the linguistic encoding of events, with the goal of shedding light on divergences among languages.

• Several case studies will be discussed in order to address the following questions:

— Are there generalizations about the types of divergences that are attested across languages?

— Are (some of) the divergences “superficial”, that is, traceable to differences in the morphosyntactic and lexical resources available to a language for realizing a certain set of meaning components?

— As there is latitude in the way certain chains of happenings can be “construed” as events and such differences could result in different event encodings, are (some of) the divergences a consequence of differences in how languages construe certain types of chains of happenings as an event?

— Relatedly, to what extent do general argument realization principles apply across languages? To what extent do they differ, and, if so, are these differences constrained in some way?

• The case studies: hitting events, motion events, weather events.

• Ultimate goals of this research program:

— identifying which kinds of chains of happenings in the world may be construed as events, and if so, whether they are open to more than one construal;

— developing an appropriate linguistic representation of the various event types and the way their components are structured, i.e. a theory of event structure;

— uncovering the range of morphosyntactic and lexical resources relevant to encoding events of a particular type crosslinguistically;

— identifying the typological traits that might favor particular morphosyntactic and lexical encoding of a particular type of event.

2 Issues in verb meaning and event encoding

Addressing these questions requires investigating the relations among a verb’s lexicalized meaning, event structure, and the morphosyntactic expression of arguments across languages.
2.1 Event construal and verb meaning

- In order to investigate differences in event encoding, it is necessary to appreciate that the relationship of a verb to the world is not straightforward.

- Since a verb lexicalizes only a small number of the attributes of a chain of happenings it is used to describe, when we choose a verb to use in the description of an event, we are commenting on certain attributes present in the chain of happenings in the world being referred to by that verb.

- Thus, a single verb can be used to describe two quite different happenings, as *whistle* may.

- A pair of verbs could refer to the same segment of a chain of happenings, but because they lexicalize distinct, at best partially overlapping sets of attributes, they may “construe” it as an event in distinct ways.

**EXAMPLE:** Consider what happens when a person blushes: this physiological reaction is manifested in a change in the color of a person’s face (McClure 1990).

— The Dutch verb *blozen* ‘blush’: lexicalizes the physiological reaction.

— The Italian morphologically complex verb *arrossire*: lexicalizes the accompanying state change.

(10)  *arrossire* ‘blush’ = *a* + *rosso* ‘red’ + *ire*, literally ‘become red’

— Here two languages are taking different perspectives on a particular happening that play off the multiple cooccurring attributes of this happening, giving it different construals.

— Evidence for the distinct construals comes from auxiliary selection in Italian and Dutch:

(11)  **Auxiliary Selection:**

- Activity/process verbs take the auxiliary ‘have’.
- State and change of state verbs take the auxiliary ‘be’.

Like activity verbs, *blozen* selects ‘have’, while like change of state verbs, *arrossire* selects ‘be’.

— When such sets of attributes cooccur naturally and repeatedly, the verbs naming them might be taken to be (near-)synonyms or translation equivalents, although such an assumption is incorrect.

2.2 The components of the event encoding problem

- **(VERB’S) ROOT:** a sound/meaning pairing, representing a verb’s core lexicalized meaning
  — characterized by an **ontological type**, chosen from a fixed set of options including result and manner (see section 2.3);
  — the set of roots is in principle open-ended.
  (e.g., Grimshaw 2005, Lieber 2006, Pesetsky 1995, RH&L 1998; see also Harley 2014)

(12)  √*WHISTLE*: ‘a high piercing sound’
● EVENT SCHEMA: a structured instantiation of an event type
   — often defined via (syntacticized) primitive predicates, forming a predicate decomposition;
   — drawn from a limited inventory encompassing the event types encodable in language.
   (e.g., Borer 2005, Goldberg 1995, Grimshaw 2005, Hale & Keyser 2002, Jackendoff 1990,

(13)  a. ACTIVITY: ‘x acts in a manner w’
       b. DIRECTED MOTION: ‘x moves in a manner w along a path y’
       c. CAUSED CHANGE OF STATE: ‘[x acts on y in manner w] cause [y become z]’

An important distinction among event schemas: simple, consisting of one subevent, (13a) or (13b),
vs. complex, consisting of two subevents—a causing subevent and a result subevent, (13c).

● MORPHOSYNTACTIC FRAME(S)—or syntactic configuration(s)—that realize(s) these event types:

(14)  a. Intransitive verb: NP V (e.g., The tea kettle whistled.)
       b. Intransitive verb plus PP: NP V PP (e.g., A bullet whistled past him.)
       c. Transitive construction: NP V NP (e.g., Smith destroyed the document.)

THE PARTS OF THE EVENT ENCODING PROBLEM:
   — association of a root and event schema
     – includes determining which meaning component in the schema the root is associated with,
       which will be governed by the root’s ontological type;
     – the association could be viewed in lexical, syntactic, or constructional terms.
   — association of event schema and morphosyntactic frame
     – will reflect argument realization principles, which are sensitive to the schema’s components;
     – may be sensitive to the way a root attaches to an event schema.

● What we might informally think of as a “full” verb meaning is the association of a root with that
   event schema that most closely “reflects” the root’s ontological type (e.g., The tea kettle whistled.).

2.3 The manner vs. result root (and verb) distinction

● An ontological distinction among roots (and, hence, verbs), relevant to morphosyntactic behavior,
   including argument realization options.

● The distinction was first attributed to verbs and later to their roots, thus presupposing that roots
   have an ontological type, a position that not all accept (Acedo-Matellán & Mateu 2014).

2.3.1 Introducing the dichotomy: Hitting and breaking

● Certain chains of happenings in the world can be described by either the verb hit or the verb break,
   yet the choice of one verb or the other has significance.

EXAMPLE: A vandal throws a rock at a store window and the window breaks.
This event could be described with either verb, though each describes a different facet of the event:

(15)  a. The vandal broke the window with a rock.
     b. The vandal hit the window with a rock.

(a) asserts that the window is no longer intact, but is silent about how it happened: the window could have been hit, kicked, punched, or pounded and a variety of instruments could have been used: rocks, hammers, fists, sticks, balls, etc.

→ This is because *break* is a change of state verb.

(b) asserts that something forcefully came into contact with the window, but is silent as to whether this contact had any effect on the window. The verb does not entail that the window broke, though it may have, as it describes an action that often results in this change of state.

(16) The rock that the vandal threw hit the window, but luckily it wasn’t damaged.

→ This is because *hit* is a surface contact verb.

• Generalizing, verbs describing events in which physical objects are damaged fall into two classes:
  — verbs like *hit* that describe making surface contact with an object via forceful impact;
    these *MANNER* verbs describe ways of potentially damaging objects;
    e.g., *hit, kick, punch, slap, whack*.
  — verbs like *break* that describe changes in an object’s “material integrity” (Hale & Keyser 1987);
    these *RESULT* verbs describe specific types of damage that often result from forceful impact;
    e.g., *break, crack, shatter, splinter, split*.

2.3.2 Beyond hitting and breaking: The pervasiveness of the dichotomy


• A comparable dichotomy is found in the motion domain, as reflected in Talmy’s classification of motion verbs in terms of “conflation” of meaning components (1975, 1985, 2000):
  — Path (=directed motion) verbs: e.g., *arrive, ascend, descend, enter*
    e.g., *ascend* specifies a direction of motion, but not the manner in which the motion is effected.
  — Manner of motion verbs: e.g., *amble, fly, jog, plod, run, saunter, swim, walk*
    e.g., *jog* specifies a manner of motion, but is neutral as to the specific direction of motion.

• Other apparently “semantically coherent” verb classes of English can be similarly subdivided, giving rise to semantic domains with two subclasses of verbs:
  — Manner verbs: specify manner of carrying out an action
  — Result verbs: specify result of an action
The notions “manner” and “result” apply to verbs that do not easily fit into larger semantic “domains” spanning the manner and result verb classes.

(17)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manner verbs</th>
<th>Result verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>smear</td>
<td>cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pour</td>
<td>fill</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>shovel</td>
<td>empty</td>
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<tr>
<td>shake</td>
<td>combine</td>
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<tr>
<td>stab</td>
<td>kill</td>
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<tr>
<td>shout</td>
<td>say</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run</td>
<td>come</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The verb class defined by the Manner column is grammatically relevant despite the perceived semantic diversity of its members; the same holds of the Result column (see section 2.3.3).

However, the “semantic classes” in the leftmost column are not grammatically relevant; they may be perceived as semantic classes since certain manner verbs and certain result verbs can sometimes describe the same events, just as break and hit do.

The source of this intuition most likely lies in the observation that:

— Many result verbs lexicalize results that are conventionally associated with particular manners.
  e.g., clean and clear lexicalize states that may result from removing stuff from a surface in a prototypical manner.

— Many manner verbs lexicalize manners that are conventionally associated with particular results.
  e.g., wipe and scrub lexicalize actions involving surface contact and motion, which are often used to remove stuff from a surface.

However, such result verbs don’t entail the manners, nor do such manner verbs entail the results. That is, their lexicalized meaning is distinct from what may be inferred in a particular use in context.

(18)  

<p>| | |</p>
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| a. I just wiped the table, but it’s still dirty/sticky/covered in crumbs. | b. I cleaned the dress by soaking it in vinegar/pouring bleach on it/saying “abracadabra”.

While presented here in terms of verbs, the distinction is actually in the ontological type of roots, which in turn is reflected in verbs.

A proposal concerning the reason for the dichotomy: it arises from a lexicalization constraint.

(19) MANNER/RESULT COMPLEMENTARITY: Manner and result meaning components are in complementary distribution: a monomorphemic verb, stem, or affix lexicalizes only one. (L&RH 1991, RH&L 2010)

2.3.3 The grammatical relevance of the manner vs. result dichotomy

Not only do verbs with manner and result roots differ systematically in meaning, but they differ in their argument realization options (RH&L 1998, 2005). (See Levin 1999, 2006, RH&L 1998 for a theory of event structure that accounts for these differences in behavior.)

• Result verbs may show the causative alternation, but manner verbs never do.

(20) a. Kim broke the window./The window broke.

b. Kim wiped the window./*The window wiped.

• More generally, manner verbs show considerably more and different argument realization options than result verbs. (RH&L 1998).

(21) a. Terry wiped. (activity)

b. Terry wiped the table. (activity)

c. Terry wiped the crumbs off the table. (removing)

d. Terry wiped the crumbs into the sink. (putting)

e. Terry wiped the slate clean. (change of state)

f. Terry wiped the crumbs into a pile. (creation)

(likewise many surface contact verbs)

(22) a. The dishes broke.

b. Kelly broke the dishes.

c. *Kelly broke again tonight when she did the dishes.

d. *The clumsy child broke his knuckles raw.

e. *Kelly broke the dishes off the table.

(meaning: Kelly removed the dishes from the table by breaking the table; cf. Kelly wiped the crumbs off the table.)

f. *Kelly broke the dishes off the table.

(meaning: Kelly broke the dishes and as a result they went off the table; cf. Kelly shoved the dishes off the table.)

(likewise many change of state verbs)

• The most significant differences between manner and result verbs involve objects, including object types and object alternations.

— Manner verbs, but not result verbs are found with unspecified objects without recourse to generic or repetitive contexts (RH&L 1998, Wright & Levin 2000, notwithstanding questions raised by Goldberg 2001, 2005, Mittwoch 2005).
(23)  a. Leslie swept/scrubbed (the floor) this morning.
    b. *Kelly broke again tonight when she did the dishes.

— Manner verbs, but not result verbs are found with nonselected objects.

(24)  a. The child rubbed the tiredness out of his eyes.
    Cinderella scrubs her hands raw.
    b. *The clumsy child broke the beauty out of the vase.
    *The clumsy child broke his knuckles raw.

— Many well-known object alternations are found with manner, but not result verbs (Levin 2006); see next section.

OBJECT ALTERNATIONS: Argument alternations involve an apparently triadic verb, which maintains the same association of an argument with subject, but can express either of its other two arguments as its object, with the third usually expressed as an oblique.

3 Prelude to the hitting case study: Hitting and breaking events in English

Fillmore (1970) focuses on hit and break as representatives of two larger classes of verbs, whose members share elements of meaning and patterns of behavior.

(25)  a. HITTING VERBS: bash, beat, hit, kick, pound, punch, slap, smack, tap, whack, . . .
    Subtype of surface contact verbs: involve (often forceful) contact with an entity, without entailing a change in its state.
    b. BREAKING VERBS: bend, break, crack, fold, shatter, splinter, split, snap, . . .
    Subtype of change of state verbs: involve a change of state in an entity.

Verbs of both types allow transitive uses, optionally accompanied by an instrumental with phrase:

(26)  a. The boy hit the window [SURFACE] (with a ball [INSTRUMENT]).
    b. The boy broke the window [PATIENT] (with a ball [INSTRUMENT]).

But hitting and breaking verbs show considerable divergences in their argument realization options:

(27)  Availability of the conative alternation:
    a. Carla hit the door./Carla hit at the door.
    b. Janet broke the vase/*Janet broke at the vase.

(28)  Availability of the with/against alternation (Fillmore 1977:74–78):
    a. Perry hit the fence with the stick. = Perry hit the stick against the fence.
    b. Perry broke the fence with the stick. ≠ Perry broke the stick against the fence.
Availability of possessor raising ("external possession")
(Fillmore 1970:126, (23)–(26)):

a. I hit his leg./I hit him on the leg.
b. I broke his leg./*I broke him on the leg.

Availability of the causative alternation (V-transitive = ‘cause to V-intransitive’):

a. The boy hit the window./*The window hit.
b. The boy broke the window./The window broke.

Generalizations about argument realization in English across transitive uses:
— The patient must be the object of a breaking verb.
— The surface may but need not be the object of a hitting verb.

Further support for the distinction: The members of these two classes have distinct behavioral patterns in other languages, including Berber, Warlpiri, and Winnebago (Guerssel et al. 1985), Kimaragang Dusun (Kroeger 2010), and Lhasa Tibetan (DeLancey 1995, 2000).

The behavioral patterns often parallel those of their English counterparts (e.g., the causative alternation), but the relevant morphosyntactic phenomena may vary somewhat across languages, depending on their morphosyntactic resources.

Examples: The conative alternation is not manifested in many languages (Bohnemeyer 2007), while body-part possessor ascension (or “external possession”) takes different forms across languages (e.g., Gerdt 1993, König & Haspelmath 1998).

3.1 The generalization underlying the argument realization of manner and result verbs

Some terms: Patient refers to the argument of a result verb which the result is predicated of (that is, the argument that undergoes the scalar change), while force recipient refers to the ‘passive’ argument of a manner verb.

• Generalizing over English manner and result verbs, L&RH (2011) posit an argument realization property of result—i.e. scalar change—verbs (see also RH&L 1998, 2005):

(31) The patient MUST be realized and CAN ONLY be realized as a direct object.

As this property captures, the argument realization options of result verbs are severely constrained.

• Manner verbs, however, are not restricted by (31): they show more argument realization options, with flexibility in realizing the force recipient.

• A patient must be realized, but a force recipient need not be: manner verbs are found with unspecified or nonselected objects.

(32) Unspecified objects: The horse kicked./*Pat broke.
(33) **Nonselected objects:**

a. *The puppy broke his way out of the china shop.*
b. She kicked her way through the leaves that had fallen on the path.

- A patient must be realized as the object, but a force recipient need not be: manner, but not result verbs participate in object alternations (Levin 2006).

(34) **Conative alternation:**

a. Alex broke the vase./*Alex broke at the vase.
b. Kim hit the mosquito./Kim hit at the mosquito.

(35) **With/against alternation:**

a. Sam broke the fence with the stick./Sam broke the stick against the fence.
b. Sam hit the fence with a stick./Sam hit a stick against the fence. (Fillmore 1977:75)

(36) **Possessor raising:**

a. Pat broke the mug’s handle/*Pat broke the mug on the handle.
b. Kelly hit my arm./Kelly hit me on the arm.

- Manner, but not result verbs allow another argument to be the direct object when it has an entailment (e.g., change of location) associated with objecthood.

(37) a. Sam broke the fence with the stick. (fence breaks; stick moves)
b. Sam broke the stick against the fence. (stick breaks; stick moves)

(38) a. Sam hit the fence with a stick. (fence and stick in contact; stick moves)
b. Sam hit a stick against the fence. (fence and stick in contact; stick moves)

4 **Some attested types of hitting event descriptions**

- Across languages variation is observed in the realization of the argument denoting the surface, with the attested options going beyond what English might suggest.

- Further, some languages may express some part of the predicative content of the hitting event description—typically, a tool or body part—outside the verb.

4.0.1 Ulwa (Koontz-Garboden p.c.)

- The surface, whether animate or inanimate, is expressed in a PP headed by locative kau with baunaka, which is used to describe a variety of hitting events, including those falling under English hit, kick and beat, as well as with tisnaka ‘slap’.

(39) M raudi L *(kau) bau-t-ida.
M SUBJ L at hit-TA-3SING
'M hit L.' (Koontz-Garboden field notes:0405-1024)

(40) Andrew raudi Ulwa uuka *(kau) bau-t-i tung ka.
Andrew SUBJ Ulwa house at hit-TA-PROG walk SENT-KA
‘Andrew’s walking around hitting the Ulwa house.’ (Koontz-Garboden field notes:0405-1025)

- Hitting verbs consist of a precategorial root (e.g., bau–) and a transitive class marker (pa, ta), but cannot take an intransitive class marker (da, wa), and, thus, lack the causative alternation.

(41) bauTAnaka (transitive); *bauWAnaka/*bauDAnaka (intransitive)

4.1 Swedish (Lundquist & Ramchand 2012)

- The surface must be expressed in a PP when inanimate, but may be an object when animate (Lundquist & Ramchand 2012, Viberg 2004:337–338).

(42) a. Jag sparkade *(på) bordet (flera gånger).
I kicked (on) table.DEF (many times)
‘I kicked (on) the table many times.’ (Lundquist & Ramchand 2012:224, (2a))

b. Jag sparkade (på) honom (flera gånger).
I kicked (on) him (many times)
‘I kicked him many times.’ (Lundquist & Ramchand 2012:224, (1a))


- An inanimate object is possible only if a resultative phrase is predicated of it or if it is understood as being set in motion due to the force imparted as part of the action denoted by the hitting verb. (This observation extends to at least some other languages whose inanimates aren’t usually objects.)

(44) Jag sparkade bollen i må.
I kicked ball.DEF in goal
‘I kicked the ball into the goal.’ (Lundquist & Ramchand 2012:229, (15))

- Swedish shows something like the English against construction, with the instrument as object.

(45) Jag högg kniven i bordet.
I stuck knife.DEF in table.DEF
‘I stuck the knife into the table.’ (Lundquist & Ramchand 2012:229, (16))
4.2 Ingush (Nichols 1982, 1984, 2011)

- The surface, whether animate or inanimate, is expressed with an oblique case—the dative—and the instrument with the nominative (i.e. absolutive) (Nichols 1984:188, 2011:467–470, 746).

(46) Cuo mashienaa ghazh tiexar.
3s.ERG car-DAT stick-NOM strike
‘He hit the car with a stick.’ (Nichols 2011:340, (47))

(47) Da:s woťa: bi: bi-ett.
father-ERG son-DAT fist-NOM beats
‘(The) father beats (his) son.’ (Nichols 1984:188, (8))


- This case-marking pattern is common across Caucasian (Nichols 1984:188), with languages varying as to whether the oblique case is dative or locative.

- Certain concepts lexicalized by hitting verbs in English are expressed via verb-noun (V-N) combinations (Nichols 1982:447, 1984:188).
  — The verb is fairly unspecific and the noun, typically an instrument or body part, specifies the type of hitting event (cf. English give a kick).


(50) as phagalna tuop quüssira.
I-ERG rabbit-DAT rifle-NOM threw
‘I shot at the rabbit with a rifle.’ (Jakovlev, 1940:43; cited in Nichols 1984:189, (12c)

— The surface is again expressed with an oblique case and the instrument with the nominative case.

4.3 Portuguese (Amaral p.c., Baptista 2004)

- While there are some hitting verbs (e.g., bater ‘hit’), the events described by many English hitting verbs are only expressible via V-N combinations.
  — Portuguese uses the light verb dar ‘give’ rather than a general hitting verb.
  — The object of the light verb is typically a “predicative violent action noun” formed by adding –ada to a concrete noun denoting an instrument or body part that can be used to hit or hurt.

(51) O João deu uma bengalada ao Pedro.
the John give.PERFPST3s a caning to.the Peter
‘John gave a cane-ada, i.e. a caning, to Peter.’ (Baptista 2004:36, (18c))

Baptista lists over 40 violent action nouns in –ada, and notes that such nouns are productively formed (e.g., the nonce sapatada ‘shoe-ada’, cadeirada ‘chair-ada’).

— A few simple nouns (pontapé ‘kick’, murro ‘punch’) can enter into these V-N combinations.

— The surface, if inanimate or a body part, is expressed in a PP headed by the locative preposition em or, if animate, with the dative.

(53) O João deu uma bengalada no carro.
the John give.PERFPST3s a caning in.the car
‘John hit the car.’

(54) a. O João deu [um pontapé] [na perna do Pedro].
the John give.PERFPST3s a kick in.the leg of.the Peter
‘John gave a kick in the leg of Peter.’ (Baptista 2004:32, (2a))

b. O João deu [um pontapé] [ao Pedro] [na perna].
the John give.PERFPST3s a kick to.the Peter in.the leg
‘John gave a kick to Peter in the leg.’ (Baptista 2004:32, (2b))

4.4 Emai (Schaefer & Egbokhare 2004)

Class I verbs: so ‘smack, collide with’, hian ‘strike’—found in the construction ‘V NP1 NP2’.

(55) òhí só ójé èkpà.
Ohi smack Oje fist
‘Ohi punched Oje./Ohi smacked his fist against Oje.’ (Schaefer & Egbokhare 2004:309, (1a))

— NP1, the surface, must be human; other animates or inanimates are not possible.

— NP2 further specifies the hitting action and is chosen from a limited number of body parts; it cannot be modified or pronominalized.


Class II verbs: fi ‘hit’—found in various constructions.

• ‘V NP1 NP2’: NP1 is an animate surface; NP2 is an instrument.
(NP1 may have a locative body part predicated of it in an external possession relationship.)

(57) òhí fi ójé ükpóràn.
Ohi hit Oje stick
‘Ohi hit Oje with a stick.’ (Schaefer & Egbokhare 2004:313, (12a))
— The instrument allows certain determiners and demonstratives, but cannot be pronominalized.

— The instrument may be the subject, but the animate surface cannot occur alone.

(58) úkpóran fì ójé vbì òòkhò.
stick hit Oje LOC back
‘A stick hit Oje on the back.’ (Schaefer & Egbohkhare 2004:314, (12d))

(59) * òhí/ úkpóran fì ójé.
Ohi/ stick hit Oje
‘Ohi/A stick hit Oje.’ (Schaefer & Egbohkhare 2004:314, (13a))

• ‘V NP1 Ploc NP2’: NP2 is an inanimate surface; resembles the English against construction.

(60) òhí fì úkpóran vbì òtòì.
Ohi hit stick LOC ground
‘Ohi hit a stick on the ground.’ (Schaefer & Egbohkhare 2004:314, (12c))

5 Overview of the lectures

Acknowledgements: I thank Patrícia Amaral (Portuguese), Roey Gafter and Malka Rappaport Hovav (Hebrew), Andrew Koontz-Garboden (Ulwa), Paul Kroeger (Kimaragang Dusun), Chigusa Kuru- mada (Japanese), Francesca Masini (Italian), and Tanya Nikitina (Russian) for discussion of hitting and breaking in the languages that they are expert in.

References


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