

**A Summary of Lasnik's (1995) Semantics for Pluractionals, and Some Outstanding Challenges**

(1) **A Summary of Lasnik's (1995) Semantics for Pluractionals**

a. Choose one element from each set to obtain a possible denotation for PA:

$$[\lambda P_{\langle e, t \rangle} : [\lambda e : |e| > n . \forall e' . e' \leq e \ \& \ \text{atom}(e') \rightarrow P(e')]$$

$$\& \forall e', e'' . e', e'' \leq e \ \& \ \text{atom}(e') \ \& \ \text{atom}(e'') \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \neg T(e') \circ T(e'') \\ \neg K(e') \circ K(e'') \\ \neg \theta(e') \circ \theta(e'') \end{array} \right\}$$

$$\& \{ \neg, \emptyset \} \exists t . \left[ \begin{array}{l} \text{between}(t, T(e'), T(e'')) \\ \text{between}(t, K(e'), K(e'')) \end{array} \right] \ \& \ \neg \exists e''' . P(e''') \ \& \ t = \left[ \begin{array}{l} T(e''') \\ K(e''') \end{array} \right] ] ]$$

Connectedness Parameter

Distributivity Parameter

b. PA-marked verbs with a 'phase-level' / 'repetitive' interpretation are cases of lexicalized morphology.

- The presence of the PA-marker, though, requires the resulting lexicalized meaning to denote events composed of multiple subevents of a particular type.

(2) **Some Technical Questions / Challenges**

a. What is the mechanism for 'setting the parameters of interpretation' (i.e., choosing from these sets).

- Is there lexical ambiguity, with each 'setting' a separate lexical entry for PA?
- Is there some kind of context-dependent meaning of PA, with context determining the 'settings'? How?

b. There seem to be various linguistic and extra-linguistic factors that affect which of these 'parameters' is chosen (Yu 2003; Haji-Abdolhosseini 2002). How can we capture or model such sensitivity in this set up?



c. Do we really have good evidence for ‘phase-level’ / ‘repetitive’ interpretations of PA-marked verbs?

- Such descriptions make crucial, undefended assumptions about the lexical semantics of the verbal bases.
- For example, we could view *barrar* ‘to flutter’ (Saho) as a case of a ‘event-level / repeated’ interpretation, if the semantics of its base *barar* ‘to fly’ were as follows.

*barar*: to soar in a continuous arc

*barrar*: to fly in multiple arcs



d. Do we really have good evidence for a ‘participant distribution’ reading?

- As long as we confine ourselves to eventive verbs, any event where its subevents have different participants will also be one where its subevents have different times and/or locations.

e. Do we really have good evidence for a ‘spatial distribution’ reading?

- In almost all alleged examples, the subevents in question also differ in terms of their *temporal* location.