snippets

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Raise is *rise+v* (rather than *rise+*Voice)

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Alexiadou, Gehrke, and Schäfer (2014), hereafter AGS, argue that the stem alternation in unaccusative-transitive (in their terms, anticausative-causative) pairs like English *rise-raise* and German *versinken-versenken* ('sink^intrans-sink^trans') is triggered by the incorporation of Voice. Assuming that transitives and unaccusatives are both bi-eventive, involving a verbal event *v* and a result state, they observe that transitives differ from unaccusatives only in the presence of the external argument. Following Kratzer (1996) in assuming that external arguments are introduced by VoiceP, AGS correlate the formal change to the addition of Voice as well.

In note 10, they consider the idea (cf. Embick 2010) that unaccusatives involve one layer ("*v*-BECOME"), while transitives involve two more: one more verbal layer ("*v*-CAUSE") and VoiceP; see (1) (their (i) in n. 10):

(1) a. [Voice [*v*-CAUSE [*v*-BECOME [STATE]]]] (transitive)
     b.   [*v*-BECOME [STATE]] (unaccusative)

Under this view, they state, the stem alternation could be triggered by *v*-CAUSE rather than Voice. They conclude, however, that in terms of event complexity, "there are no empirical arguments for an additional verbal layer in causatives".

However, event complexity aside, empirical arguments for (1a) can be developed, if we consider a third form, the middle, which, as is well known, does have causative-transitive semantics (some external force is involved), while being unable to express the external argument overtly (it is syntactically inactive), and if we adopt the view on *v*-CAUSE and Voice from Harley 2013, 2017 and Pylkkänen 2008. Under that view, *v* primarily does a semantics job: it introduces the causative-transitive semantics, but not the external argument (Harley 2013:35). Voice is complementary to *v* by introducing the external argument with the syntax necessary to express it overtly (Harley 2013:34-35; Pylkkänen 2008:88). Middles — with a transitive semantics, but lacking the external argument syntactically — can then be argued to constitute the missing link between (1a) and (1b):

(2) [*v*-CAUSE [*v*-BECOME [STATE]]] (middle)

Den Dikken and Sybesma (1998) observe that some verbs realize unaccusative, middle, and transitive using one single form (*grow*, *break*), while others use two suppletive forms to cover the paradigm: unaccusative *go*, *come*, and *die* pair up with *take*, *bring*, and *kill* respectively (cf. Haspelmath 1993). Importantly, it is the transitive form that is also used for the middle: {*kill/bring/ take*} *easily*. Per (1) and (2), there is a correlation between form and incorporation of *v*-CAUSE.

Returning to the stem alternation in *rise-raise* and *versinken-versenken*, we observe that, here too, the transitive (3c)-(4c) and the middle (3b)-(4b) are formally identical and different from the unaccusative (3a)-(4a):

(3)   a. The sun **rises** every day.

       b. Such money **raises** easily.

       c. **Raise** your hand.

(4)   a. Das Schiff **versinkt**.
          the ship   sinks
          'The ship is sinking.'   (AGS's (16c))

       b. Das Schiff **versenkt** sich leicht.
          the ship   sinks   self easily
          'The ship sinks easily.'   (AGS's (i), n. 17)

       c. Hans **versenkt** das Schiff.
          Hans sinks   the ship
          'Hans is sinking the ship.'   (AGS's (16a))

These facts constitute empirical support for (1) and (2). They also show that, if we assume that the layered structure is built bottom-up, the change in form coincides with the incorporation of causative-transitive semantics, i.e., of *v*.

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