

The Syntactic Structure of Palauan Resultatives

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I Resultatives

- There's this dichotomy in some languages: *verbal passives* vs. *adjectival passives* (or *resultatives*), shown in (1a) and (1b), respectively.

(1) a. During my visit, that door was quickly *taken off* by the tenant.
John's requests are getting *satisfied*.

b. At my arrival, that door was already completely *taken off*.
John now seems very *(un)satisfied*. (Emonds 2006: 18, ex. 2)

- Wasow (1977): adjectival passives (resultatives) are formed in the lexicon (see, *i.a.*, Siegel 1973, Anderson 1977, Wasow 1980, Bresnan 1982, Levin and Rappaport 1986).
- Embick (2004) has recently challenged this view and proposed a syntactic analysis.
- I enrich the debate by examining the structure of resultatives in Palauan.

Palauan is a Western Austronesian language with about 15,000 speakers in Micronesia (majority in the Republic of Palau, and sizeable communities in the Federated States of Micronesia, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands).

- Palauan resultatives described in the literature as *resulting state verbs* (RSVs).
 - “Derived by taking the verb stem ... and inserting the infix *-l-* or *-el-* after the stem-initial consonant” (Josephs 1997: 273); exemplified in (2b).¹

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¹The *-(e)l-* infix can assimilate to *-(e)r-*. In the data, infixes are *italicized* and then glossed in *ITALIC SMALL CAPITALS*. All uncited data was elicited from native Palauan speakers in Koror, Palau.

(2) a. A sensei a meluches er a babier.
 D teacher TOP write.IMPFV ACC D letter
 “The teacher is writing the letter.”

b. A babier a luches.
 D letter TOP RES.write
 “The letter is written.”

(Josephs 1997: 273, ex. 17)

- Below, I present evidence for a compositional syntactic analysis of Palauan resultatives, based on facts suggesting that resultative predicates have an internally complex structure.

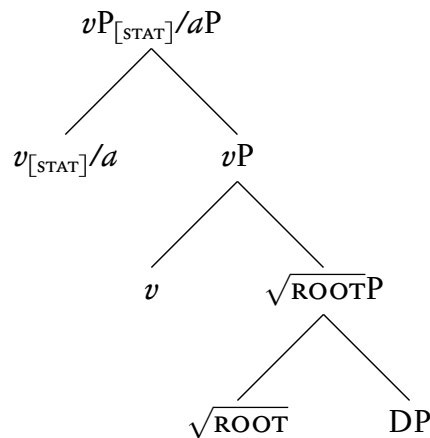


Figure 1: Proposed structure for Palauan resultatives

- Palauan has notoriously ridiculous morphophonology; a relevant key is given in Table 1 for easy reference — we’ll be focusing primarily on the resultative infix $-(e)l-$, which, as an infix, is relatively easy to spot.

		$\sqrt{\text{BOK}}$ “open”	$\sqrt{\text{DUL}}$ “roast”	$\sqrt{\text{DEU}}$ “happy”
TRANSITIVE	<i>meN-</i> , <i>oN</i> ⁻²	<i>omok</i> “open sthg.”	<i>melul</i> “roast sthg.”	—
STATIVE	\emptyset , <i>me-</i> , <i>-m-</i>	—	—	<i>dmeu</i> “happy”
CAUSATIVE	<i>omek-</i> , <i>ol-</i>	—	—	<i>olden</i> “please sb.”
PASSIVE	<i>me-</i> , <i>o-</i>	<i>obok</i> “be opened”	<i>medul</i> “be roasted”	<i>moden</i> “be pleased”
RESULTATIVE	$-(e)l-$, $-(e)r-$	<i>blok</i> “opened”	<i>delul</i> “roasted”	<i>ulden</i> “pleased”

Table 1: Some relevant Palauan verb morphology

²The transitive prefixes *meN-* and *oN-* trigger nasal substitution; see Wilson 1972 and Flora 1974 for discussion of nasal substitution in Palauan. See also Blust 2004 for a recent survey of Austronesian nasal substitution.

- ROADMAP:

- §2: Reasons to think resultatives have an eventive (non-stative) component.
- §3: Ways in which resultative predicates share the syntactic distribution of statives and have a stative semantic component.
- §4: Syntactic and semantic analysis.

2 Evidence for verbal structure inside of resultative predicates

2.1 Resultatives allow internalized external arguments

- The external argument of a transitive active sentence may be expressed obliquely in passives, but also in resultatives.
 - The “internalized external argument” can be an agent, as in (3), but it need not be, as in (4) or (5).

(3) A lluich el ngikel a mle **b/urech** a bdel-ul (er a dachelbai el chad
 D 20 L fish TOP PAST RES.spear.PF D head-3PLP (P D skillful L man
 er a chei).
 P D sea)
 “20 fish were speared in the head (by the skillful fisherman).” RESULTATIVE

(4) A redart el kelebus a **selers** (er a bli-l a kelebus).
 D 100 L prisoners TOP RES.enclose (P D building-AGR.POSS D prison)
 “100 prisoners are held (by the prison).” RESULTATIVE

(5) Ng mle **u/-siich** a reng-uk (er kau).
 3SG= PAST CAUS.RES-tight D heart-my (P you)
 “I was proud (of you).” (*lit.* “My heart was tightened (by you).”) RESULTATIVE

- The grammaticality of the examples in (3) through (5) suggest that resultatives are formed from transitive verbs.
 - Further evidence: simple statives do not permit “internalized external arguments” because there are no external arguments to internalize.

(6) Ak me-saul (*er a rengelek-ek).
 1SG= VBLZ-tired (*P D children-my)
 “I am tired (*by my children).” STATIVE

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: Resultatives describe resulting states, but they may be formed from transitive verbs that denote events.

2.2 Resultatives have a complex event structure

2.2.1 Manner adverbials

- We just saw evidence for implicit arguments (of the events that induce resulting states) in resultatives.
- If resultatives can be derived from transitive verbs with implicit agents, we might expect agent-oriented adverbials to be licensed in resultatives, just as they are in passives — see (7).
 - This is indeed what we find in (8).
 - We’ll be looking at the manner adverbials *omekedelad* “carefully” and “terrekakl” “sloppily.”
 - Resultatives pattern with (eventive) passives, rather than with simple statives as in (9).

- (7) a. A blai a **omekedelad** el muk-beches.
 D house TOP careful L PASS.CAUS-new
 “The house is being renovated carefully.” PASSIVE
- b. A siasing a **terrekakl** el me-luches.
 D picture TOP sloppy L PASS-draw
 “The picture is being drawn sloppily.” PASSIVE
- (8) a. A blai a mera el **omekedelad** el ulek-beches.
 D house TOP really L careful L RES.CAUS-new
 “The house is really carefully renovated.” RESULTATIVE
- b. A siasing a mera el **terrekakl** el l/luches.
 D picture TOP really L sloppy L RES.-draw
 “The picture is really sloppily drawn.” RESULTATIVE
- (9) a. *A blai a **omekedelad** el beches.
 D house TOP careful L new
 “The house is carefully new.” STATIVE
- b. *A siasing a **terrekakl** el mengelengalek.
 D picture TOP sloppy L ugly
 “The picture is sloppily ugly.” STATIVE

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: Distribution of manner adverbials offers evidence that resultatives have more complex event structures than simple statives.

2.2.2 Aspectual modifiers targeting telic endpoints

- Resultatives also permit an aspectual adverbials that target telic endpoints of events (*cf. in an hour* in English; see *i.a.*, Tenny 1987, 1994; Jackendoff 1975; 1997; Arad 1998; Krifka 1998; Torrego 1998; van Hout and Roeper 1998; Kearns 2000; Rothstein 2004).
- Resultatives appear to have internal bounded event structure, and [*er a chesel a* + <LENGTH OF TIME>] is compatible with (at least some) resultatives, just as they are in passives like in (IO).

- This is indeed what we find in (II).
- Resultatives pattern with (eventive) passives, and not simple statives as in (I2).

(IO) a. A blai a **m/uk-beches** er a chels-el a ta el buil.
 D house TOP *PAST.PASS.CAUS-new* P D space.inside-3SGP D one L month
 “The house was renovated in a month.” PASSIVE

b. A siasing a **mi/luches** er a chels-el a eim el bung.
 D picture TOP *PAST.PASS-draw* P D space.inside-3PLP D five L minutes
 “The picture was drawn in five minutes.” PASSIVE

(II) a. A blai a mle **ulek-beches** er a chels-el a ta el buil.
 D house TOP *PAST RES.CAUS-new* P D space.inside-3SGP D one L month
 “The house was renovated in a month.” RESULTATIVE

b. A siasing a mle **luches** er a chels-el a eim el bung.
 D picture TOP *PAST RES.-draw* P D space.inside-3PLP D five L minutes
 “The picture was drawn in five minutes.” RESULTATIVE

(I2) a. <ER A CHELSEL A TA EL BUIL/BUNG> is bad with statives:

*A blai a mle **beches** er a chesel a ta el buil.
 D house TOP *PAST new* P D space.inside-3SGP D one L month
 (“The house was new in a month.”) STATIVE

b. *A siasing a mle **klebokel** er a chels-el a eim el bung.
 D picture TOP *PAST pretty* P D space.inside-3PLP D five L minutes
 (“The picture was pretty in five minutes.”) STATIVE

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: The contrast between (II) and (I2) suggests that resultatives have more complex event structures than (simple) statives and pattern, in many ways, like verbal passives.

3 Similarities between resultatives and statives

- Still, resultative predicates differ from verbal predicates in several respects.

3.1 Truth conditions of resultatives

- Resultatives differ semantically from passives.
 - Passives describe events, and resultatives seem to describe stative eventualities that arise as a result of a particular event's completion.
 - This contrast between passives and resultatives comes out very clearly under negation; consider (13).

- (13) a. A blai a dirkak **le-me-ruul**.
 D house TOP not.yet 3SG.IRR-PASS-make
 "The house is not built yet." PASSIVE
- b. A blai a dirkak **le-rruul**.
 D house TOP not.yet 3SG.IRR-RES.make
 "The house is not built yet." RESULTATIVE

- (13a) is compatible with a scenario in which no house exists because the building hasn't begun.
- (13b) is not compatible with this scenario — it describes an unfinished house.

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: In addition to an eventive component, resultatives have a stative component that must have some duration (possibly persisting to the present).

3.2 Auxiliary selection: *m̄la*

3.2.1 Basic facts about *m̄la*

- Basically, *m̄la* only selects eventive predicates (*i.e.*, processes, accomplishments, and achievements).
 - What *m̄la* contributes is that the event is complete (or has at least ended).

- (14) a. Ke ko el **m̄la m̄rael** er a ulol-el a ngoaol?
 2SG= just L AUX walk P D floor-3SGP D deep.sea
 "Have you walked on the floor of the ocean?" PROCESS
(*Chedaol Biblia*, Job 38:16)
- b. A rechad er a Benjamin a **m̄la mek-od-eterir** a re-30 el chad er a
 D people P D Benjamin TOP AUX CAUS.PFV-die-3PL D PL-30 L people P D
 Israel.
 Israel
 "The Benjaminites had already killed the thirty Israelites." ACCOMPLISHMENT
(*Chedaol Biblia*, Judges 20:39)

- c. Tirka el chad a mla remenges el kmo kau, e Rubak, a
 these L people TOP AUX PFV.hear that you VOC Lord TOP
 obeng-kemam.
 accompany-IPL.EXCL
 “These people have already heard that you, Lord, are with us.” ACHIEVEMENT
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, Numbers 14:14)

- However, *mla* cannot select stative predicates, like *mesisiich* “strong” or *beches* “new.”

- (15) a. *Ak mla mesisiich.
 ISG= AUX strong
 (“I have been strong.”) STATIVE
- b. *Ng mla beches a mlai.
 Ak mla mesisiich.
 (“The car has been new.”) STATIVE

3.2.2 Repair strategy with statives: Evidence from translation

- *Mla* is often translated into English as “already.”
 - But when English [*already* + STATE] is translated into Palauan, the verb *mo* “become” or a different verb is usually inserted, as in (16).
 - Crucially, the state is transformed into a event describing a change of state.

- (16) a. Kom mla mo meteet?
 2PL= AUX become rich
 “Are you already rich?” (*lit.* “Have you become rich?”)
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, 1 Corinthians 4:8)
- b. A recherrou-ed a mla me er a Dan.
 D enemy-IPL.INCLP TOP AUX arrive P D Dan
 “Our enemies are already in the city of Dan.” (*lit.* “Our enemies have already arrived in Dan.”)
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, Jeremiah 8:16)
- c. Ke di mo mereched el obes aike el le-bla bo
 2SG= just AUX.FUT fast L forget those L IRR.3SG-AUX IRR.become
 mo-dengei.
 IRR.2SG-know
 “You will soon neglect what you already know.” (*lit.* “You will be fast to forget those (things) which have become what you know.”)
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, Proverbs 19:27)

d. Ng mla mo kebesengei.
 3SG= AUX become evening
 “It is already very late.” (*lit.* “It has become evening.”)
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, Matthew 14:15)

e. Ngak a mla mo 80 a rek-ik.
 I TOP AUX become 80 D age-1SGP
 “I am already eighty years old.” (*lit.* “My age has become 80.”)
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, 1 Samuel 19:35)

- So, *mla* can combine with statives, but only if they undergo “fientivization” or some other possibly less-horribly named process that transforms them into *change of state* events.

3.2.3 *Mla* cannot select resultative predicates directly

- (17) shows us that *mla* can select (at least some) passive *v*Ps, as in (17a).
- However, *mla* cannot select resultatives, as in (17b), unless a verb occurs between *mla* and the resultative, like *mo* “become” in (17c).

(17) a. A Moses a ule-ker el kir-el a kaming el tenget er a
 D Moses TOP PAST.IMPFV-ask L status-3SGP D goat L offering P D
 klengit, e m/o medengei el kmo ng mla me-dul.
 sin and PAST.become know that 3SG= AUX PASS-burn
 “Moses asked about the goat for the sin offering and learned that it had already
 been burned.”
 PASSIVE
 (*Chedaol Biblia*, Leviticus 10:16)

b. *...ng mla de/ul.
 ...3SG= AUX RES.burn
 (“...it had been burned.”) RESULTATIVE

c. ...ng mla mo de/ul.
 ...3SG= AUX become RES.burn
 “...it has become burned (*i.e.*, it is visibly roasted).” *mo* + RESULTATIVE

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: If resultative predicates denote ongoing (resulting) states, then the fact that *mla* cannot select resultatives receives a natural explanation — *mla* simply cannot select stative predicates.

3.3 Resultatives have non-verbal past tense morphology

- Past tense morphology takes different forms depending on whether the predicate is stative or eventive.
 - Past tense forms of eventive verbs are formed with an infix *-il-*, as in (18).

– Past tense is expressed with an auxiliary verb *mle* with stative predicates, as in (19).³

(18) Ak **ki/l-i** a beras.
 ISG= PAST-eat.PFV-3SG D rice
 “I ate the rice.” EVENTIVE

(19) A Toki a **mle** medenge a tekoi er a Siabal.
 D Toki TOP PAST know D language P D Japan
 “Toki used to know Japanese.” STATIVE
(Josephs 1990: 146)

- We have already seen data (repeated below) showing that *mle* expresses past tense in resultatives.

(3) A lluich el ngikel a **mle b/urech** a bdel-ul (er a dachelbai el chad
 D 20 L fish TOP PAST RES.spear.PF D head-3PLP (P D skillful L man
 er a chei).
 P D sea)
 “20 fish were speared in the head (by the skillful fisherman).” RESULTATIVE

(5) Ng **mle u/-siich** a reng-uk (er kau).
 3SG= PAST CAUS.RES-tight D heart-my (P you)
 “I was proud of you.” (*lit.* “My heart was tightened (by you).”) RESULTATIVE

(11) a. A blai a **mle ulek-beches** er a chels-el a ta el buil.
 D house TOP PAST RES.CAUS-new P D space.inside-3SGP D one L month
 “The house was renovated in a month.” RESULTATIVE

b. A siasing a **mle l/uches** er a chels-el a eim el bung.
 D picture TOP PAST RES.-draw P D space.inside-3PLP D five L minutes
 “The picture was drawn in five minutes.” RESULTATIVE

- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: Whatever the relevant property is that drives the differing past tense morphology on eventive and stative verbs, resultatives pattern with stative verbs rather than eventive verbs.

³The auxiliary *mle* also forms the past tense of some eventive verbs borrowed from other languages, such as *harau* “pay” (cf. Japanese *harau*).

4 Analysis

4.1 (Morpho)syntax and semantics

- The emerging generalization is that Palauan resultatives appear to:
 1. have the internal structure of eventive v Ps (w.r.t. internalized external argument PPs, licensing of manner adverbials, and aspectual modification).
 2. behave syntactically as stative predicates (w.r.t. aspectual auxiliary selection and past tense formation).
 3. have a complex event structure in which a completed event has brought about an ongoing resulting state (suggested by the aspectual modification facts in §2.2.2 and the truth conditions in §3.1).
- Consequently, the syntactic analysis I proposed in Figure 1, repeated below, simply contains a $\sqrt{\text{ROOT}}$ that is verbalized to form a v P (much in the same way a passive v P is formed), and this v P then merges with a stativizing head.⁴

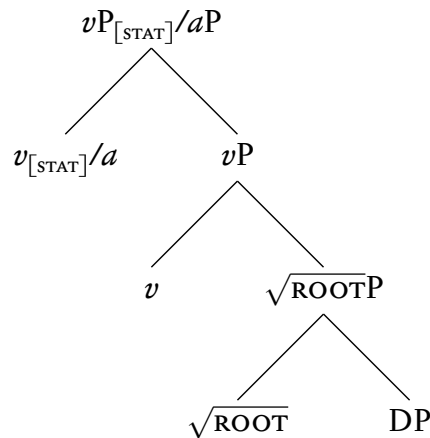


Figure 1: Proposed structure for Palauan resultatives

- The stativizer head ($v_{[STAT]}$ or a), spelled out post-syntactically as $-(e)l-$, might be thought of as a functional head that (c- and/or s-)selects a v P complement.
- A semantics for the resultative head might look something like (20) for the interpretation of (2b) = *The letter is written*.

(20) a. $vP = \lambda s \lambda e [\text{WRITE}(e) \ \& \ \text{EVENT}(e) \ \& \ \text{WRITTEN}(\text{letter})(s) \ \& \ \text{CAUSE}(s)(e)]$

b. $v_{[STAT]}/a = \lambda \mathfrak{R} \lambda s \exists e . \mathfrak{R}(s)(e)$

⁴The stativizer might be either $v_{[STAT]}$ or a , depending on whether resultatives should be considered verbal or adjectival. As far as I can tell, there is no clear empirical evidence one way or other, which is somewhat unsurprising given the extremely blurry line of demarcation between (especially stative) verbs and adjectives in Palauan (and Austronesian more generally).

$$c. \nu P_{[STAT]}/aP = \lambda s \exists e [\text{WRITE}(e) \ \& \ \text{EVENT}(e) \ \& \ \text{WRITTEN}(\text{letter})(s) \ \& \ \text{CAUSE}(s)(e)] \quad (\text{cf. Kratzer 2000: 391, ex. 14})$$

- The stativizer head existentially quantifies the event argument of a νP that also contains a target state component.
- On this analysis, resultative predicates have a full internal eventive νP structure, which explains why certain properties that characterize eventive νP s manifest themselves in resultatives too.
- Still, the stativizer effectively transforms the event into an internally complex stative predicate constituent, which is treated as stative by the semantics and the (predicate-external) syntax.

4.2 At least 2 Primary Consequences

- I. On this analysis, the stativizer $\nu_{[STAT]}/a$ can, in principle, merge freely with any νP in the syntax.
 - Derivation will crash at LF if the event doesn't have a target state component.
 - E.g., unaccusatives of achievement (**The stars are appeared./*the appeared stars*) or existence (**My plants are flourished./*the flourished plants*).
 - If this is right, then resultatives just should not be able to be formed from such roots. Can they?
 - A NATURAL EMPIRICAL QUESTION: Do roots from which resultatives *can* be formed share any semantic properties?
2. Assuming the Phase Impenetrability Condition, the head of the resultative $\nu P_{[STAT]}/aP$ cannot be a phase head (cf. ν^* in Chomsky's (2001: 43, fn. 8) terminology).
 - If it were a phase head, the structure associated with the $\sqrt{\text{ROOT}}$ would be Spelled Out before the stativizer $\nu_{[STAT]}/a$ could access it.
- So even though the stativizer can in principle freely merge with νP complements of any type, in practice, it can only merge with a semantically and syntactically restricted subset of νP s to form syntactically complex resultatives.

5 Conclusion

I have proposed a syntactic analysis of Palauan resultative predicates that accounts for some of their unusual properties, including some that diverge from standardly assumed properties of resultatives in other languages. The analysis predicts that resultatives may be formed syntactically from a subset of roots that have the following two properties: (i) the root selects an internal argument, (ii) the root denotes an eventuality that has a target state component. If correct, the analysis represents a straightforward explanation of lexical semantic, compositional

semantic, morphological, and syntactic properties as resulting from interaction of different modules of the grammar, rather than stipulating them in “resultative lexical entries.”

Appendix: Resultative idioms as evidence for root-selection

- A possibly controversial aspect of the syntactic analysis in Figure 1 is the placement of the DP as complement to the root.

- Evidence supporting root-selection arises from idiomatic interpretations, which persist in resultatives (as well as nominalizations).
- We already saw an example with the idiom *olsiich er a rengul* “make sb. proud” (*lit.* “tighten sb.’s heart”), and consider (21) below, which contains the idiom *olsebek er a rengul* “worry sb.” (*lit.* “fly sb.’s heart”).

- (21) a. Ng **suebek** a reng-uk.
 3SG= fly D heart-my
 “I am worried.” (*lit.* “My heart was flying.”) INTRANSITIVE
- b. Ke **ol-sebek** er a reng-uk.
 2SG= CAUS-fly ACC D heart-my
 “You are worrying me.” (*approx.* “You are making my heart fly.”) CAUSATIVE
- c. Ng **ul-sebek** a reng-uk (er kau).
 3SG= RES.CAUS-fly D heart-my (P you)
 “I am worried by you.” (*approx.* “My heart is flown (by you).”) RESULTATIVE
- d. [_{DP} a **sebekrreng** er ngak]
 [D worry P me]
 “my worry” (*approx.* “my heart-flying”) NOMINALIZATION

- Resultative forms of a handful of additional transitive idioms are given in Table 2.
 - Transitive variants: argument of the idiomatic predicate grammaticized as a direct object and marked with accusative case.
 - Intransitive variants: subject agreement with the argument of the idiomatic predicate (no accusative case).
- If one assumes that idiomatic interpretations arise via some locality restriction between the idiomatic predicate and idiom chunks:
 - The situation suggests an unaccusative analysis of the intransitive variants.
 - In the nominalization in (21d), the argument *reng* is incorporated into the derived noun *sebek* to form a compound.

Transitive Idiom	Meaning	Resultative Form	Meaning
<i>melamet er a rengul</i>	“do as one pleases” (<i>lit.</i> “straighten one’s heart”)	<i>telematel a rengul</i>	“pleased; happy” (<i>lit.</i> “one’s heart is straightened”)
<i>omosech er a rengul</i>	“make sb. suspicious” (<i>lit.</i> “break open sb.’s heart”)	<i>blosech a rengul</i>	“suspicious” (<i>lit.</i> “one’s heart is broken open”)
<i>olsarech er a rengul</i>	“hold in one’s emotions” (<i>lit.</i> “pin down one’s heart”)	<i>ulsarech a rengul</i>	“one’s emotions are held in” (<i>lit.</i> “one’s heart is pinned down”)

Table 2: Some additional resultatives formed from phrasal idioms

- If the DP is introduced by the root instead of a higher functional head (*e.g.*, *v*), transitivity alternations in idioms (and resultative formation) can receive a natural analysis.
- TAKE HOME MESSAGE: If resultatives are derived syntactically, we predict resultative idioms to be formed the same as “normal” resultatives.

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