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Pseuo-resultatives in English

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In this talk we discuss the semantics of those which Levinson (2007) might call pseuo-resultatives. An example is given in (1):

(1) He passed the ball wide. (pesudo-resultative)

According to Levinson, pseudo-resultatives differ in meaning from ordinary resultative adjectives which are illustrated in (2):

(2) She hammered the metal flat. (ordinary resultative)

While the sentence in (2) can entail the subject-predicate relation of the postverbal elements, such an entailment may not be possible in (1):

(3) a. He passed the ball wide. \nrightarrow The ball was/became wide.
b. She hammer the metal flat. \rightarrow The metal was/became flat.

But rather, as Levinson observes, a sentence with a pseuo-resultative entails its semantic relation to the main verb modifying its nominal content:

(4) a. He passed the ball wide. \rightarrow (a) wide pass
b. She hammered the metal flat. \nrightarrow (a) flat hammer

In the presentation I argue that pseudo-resultatives are mere variations of the family of resultative constructions (cf. Goldberg & Jackendoff (2004)). I also consider them as evidence for the tight relationship between the syntax and semantics of English resultatives in general (Chang 2008).

References

- Chang, K. 2008. On the syntax and semantics of resultative adjectives in English. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal* 16 (4): 147-171.
- Goldberg, A. and R. Jackendoff 2004. The English resultative as a family of constructions. *Language* 80(3): 532-568.
- Levinson, L. 2010. Arguments for pseudo-resultative predicates. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 28 135-182.

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