

Periphrasis in Romance

1 Introduction

Periphrasis has been treated as part of the syntax, but it now considered by many to be the domain of morphology. Several questions arise from this reanalysis, which are the objectives of this work. The framework is inferential-realisation morphology.

2 Objectives

To answer the following questions about periphrasis:

1. What is periphrasis?
2. How are periphrases identified?
3. How are periphrases modelled by realisational morphology?

3 What is periphrasis?

Q. Is periphrasis syntax or morphology?

A. It's a little bit of syntax behaving as morphology.

(1) Syntactic	(2) Periphrastic
a. must eat oblig.MODAL eat.BASE	a. was eaten AUX.PAST.3SG eat.PPL
b. should eat oblig.MODAL eat.BASE	b. had eaten AUX.PAST.3SG eat.PPL

4 Identifying periphrases

Test 1: intersective features

(a) *em*-conjugation verb KOL 'die'

tense	affirmative (1sg form)	negative (1sg form)
present desiderative	koló-ne-m	ə-ne-m koló
first past	koló-š-əm	š-əm koló
second past	kol-en-äm	koló-øe-l-am

(b) negative auxiliary verb AK

tense	1sg form
present desiderative	ə-ne-m
first past	š-əm

Table 1: The negative present desiderative and first past of the Mari (Western dialect) *em*-conjugation verb KOL are periphrastic. (Ackerman & Stump 2004, pp. 127–128)

Test 2: non-compositionality

(3) What makes a passive sentence passive?	
a. The chicken was eaten.	[passive]
b. The chicken had eaten.	[not passive]
c. Chicken eaten after its best before date is bad for you.	[passive]

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French: past perfective and perfect

The French past perfective is often called the *passé composé* or the compound past.

(a) simple tenses		(b) perfect tenses		
tense	1sg form	perfect tense	1sg form	
present	mange	present perfect	ai mangé	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One form: two sets of syntactic features; ⇒ The syntax makes a distinction where the morphology does not.
past imperfective	mangeais	pluperfect	avais mangé	
<i>passé composé</i>	ai mangé	past anterior	eus mangé	
future	mangerai	past future	aurai mangé	
conditional	mangerais	past conditional	aurais mangé	

Table 2: The French *passé composé* and perfect tenses are periphrastic.

Catalan: past perfective

The Catalan past perfective is often called the preterite.

type	1sg form	
synthetic	arribí	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One set of morphological features: two forms (Wheeler, Yates & Dols 1999); ⇒ The morphology makes a distinction where the syntax does not.
periphrastic	vaig arribar	

Table 3: The Catalan analytic preterite is periphrastic.

Example of Catalan preterite

Example of both forms of the preterite of the same verb, CONÈIXER 'meet, know', inflected for first person plural subject agreement found in a single paragraph in a text on the Internet.

... Els qui **vam conèixer** i tractar l'escriptor tot just arribat de Mèxic. ... Així una mica astorats, **coneguérem** un Sales que pactava; ...

(Source: Article de Joan Triadú a paregut al diari "Avui" el 09/03/00 amb motiu de l'aparició de la versió final d' Incerta glòria de Joan Sales; <http://www.joanducros.net/corpus/Joan%20Sales.html>)

Ramifications for morphological theory

- There is a mismatch between syntactic features and morphological features.
 - Other such mismatches include syncretism, heteroclisis, deponence, morphological reversals and defectiveness.
- ⇒ Morphological theory must be able to model mismatches in general; periphrasis will follow naturally.

References

Ackerman, F. & Stump, G. (2004). Paradigms and periphrastic expression in Sadler & Spencer (2004) ch. 5, pp. 111–157.
 Sadler, L. & Spencer, A. (eds) (2004). *Projecting morphology* Stanford: CSLI Publications.
 Wheeler, M. W., Yates, A. & Dols, N. (1999). *Catalan: a comprehensive grammar* Routledge Grammars London: Routledge.

6 Periphrasis in realisational morphology

Paradigm models

(a) Repeated paradigm model: fails to capture the generalisation		(b) Syncretic paradigm model: ok for syncretism, but fails for other mismatches		(c) Abstracted paradigm model (form paradigm): suitable for mismatches between syntax and morphology	
tense	1sg form	tense	1sg form	LEXEME[index]	form
<i>passé composé</i>	ai mangé	<i>passé composé</i>	⟨empty⟩	MANGER[III]	ai mangé, ...
present perfect	ai mangé	present perfect	ai mangé	MANGER[VI]	mangé
				AVOIR[I]	ai, ...

Table 4: Paradigm models for the past perfective and present perfect in (spoken) French

LEXEME[index]	form
ARRIBAR[IIIa]	arribí, ...
ARRIBAR[IIIb]	vaig arribar, ...
ARRIBAR[VIII]	arribar
VA[I]	vaig, ...

Table 5: Abstracted paradigm model for the past perfective in Catalan

French

- (4) Rules used in conjunction with the abstracted paradigm model (Table 4(c)):
- LEXEME[syntactic feature set] \mapsto LEXEME[index]
 - MANGER[*passé composé*] \mapsto MANGER[III]
 - MANGER[present perfect] \mapsto MANGER[VI]
 - LEXEME[index] \mapsto LEXEME[index_x] LEXEME[index_y]
 - MANGER[III] \mapsto AVOIR[I] MANGER[VI]

Catalan

- (5) Rules used in conjunction with the abstracted paradigm model (Table 5):
- LEXEME[syntactic feature set] \mapsto LEXEME[index]
 - ARRIBAR[preterite] = {ARRIBAR[IIIa], ARIBAR[IIIb]}
 - LEXEME[index] \mapsto LEXEME[index_x] LEXEME[index_y]
 - ARRIBAR[IIIb] \mapsto va[I] ARIBAR[VIII]

7 Conclusions

1. Periphrasis is a piece of syntax that represents a set of morphological features in a paradigm.
2. Periphrases are identified by means of tests: intersective features and non-compositionality. The *passé composé* and perfect tenses in French are periphrastic, as is the analytic preterite in Catalan.
3. Periphrasis is best modelled in realisational morphology by the abstracted paradigm model. Furthermore, it was found that the abstract paradigm model:
 - (a) requires a clear distinction between morphological and syntactic features;
 - (b) is suitable for other mismatches between syntax and morphology;
 - (c) needs to be able to model relations (that are not functions) *as do all models*.