Directionalized Locatives: Evidence for a small clause structure

Overview: When used with motion verbs, locative PPs are ambiguous between located motion LM and directed motion as demonstrated in (1).

(1) Kulap ran between the posts . . .
   a. for an hour. (Located Motion)
   b. to get home. (Directed Motion)

Most current analyses of this ambiguity argue that this ambiguity is lexical in nature, with directed motion readings being the result of a null PATH head (Zwarts and Winter, 2000; Svenonius, 2010; Gehrke, 2006). This paper presents evidence that the ambiguity (a) is structural in nature, and (b) does not involve a null PATH head.

More specifically, I argue that located motion readings arise when locative PPs adjoin to Voice projections, while directed motion readings arise when locative PPs merge in the complement of the lexical verb and as parts of resultative small clauses.

Previous literature: Current work on spatial expressions starts with the distinction between paths and places (Jackendoff, 1983), with locative PPs encoding places and directional PPs encoding paths. Svenonius (2010) formalizes the place-path distinction with two functional heads PLACE and PATH. The located motion interpretations of locative PPs, arise from PLACEPs, while the directed motion interpretations arise from PATHPs projected by null PATH heads that take PLACEPs as complements.

(2) a. Located Motion: \([\text{PLACE} \text{between} \text{DP}]\)
    b. Directed Motion: \([\text{PATH} \emptyset \text{TO} \text{PLACE} \text{between} \text{DP}]\)

Directed motion readings, then, are paths that specify the place denoted by their locative counterpart as an endpoint.

Evidence of a structural ambiguity: I argue that located motion PPs attach structurally higher than the lexical verb, while directed motion PPs attach lower. Evidence for this claim comes from two observations:

(1) When fronted and with neutral intonation, locative PPs do not have the directional interpretation.
(2) When attached to a do-so anaphor, only the locative interpretation is available.

(3) Between the posts, Kulap runs. (locative/*directional)
(4) Scott ran behind the buliding, and [Kulap did so between the posts] (locative/*directional)

I further show that these empirirical arguments are bolstered by commonly held assumptions regarding the mapping of verbal syntax to neo-davidsonian event semantics.

Directionalized locatives as resultative small clauses: The analysis of directionalized locative PPs as PATHPs when paired with the semantics of paths outlined by Zwarts and Winter (2000) makes clear predictions about the modification of those PPs, that are not borne out in the data. A PATHP, when modified by degree adverbs, such as halfway, denotes a subpath of the path denoted by the unmodified PATHP. For instance, halfway across the street denotes half of the path denoted by across the street. Directionalized locatives, however do not behave like PATHPs when modified by halfway. The sentence Kulap ran halfway between the posts does not mean Kulap ran half of a the path that goes to the place between the posts. I show that an analysis of directionalized locatives as resultatives (per Kratzer, 2004) can better allow for the interpretation of directionalized locatives. I further demonstrate that the subject of directionalized locative sentences such as (1) originates in a small clause structure as in (5-a) rather than as the argument of a complex predicate as in (5-b).

(5) a. \([\text{VoiceP} \text{Kulap} [\text{Voice} [\text{VP} \text{Kulap} [\text{run} [\text{ResP} [\text{SC} \text{Kulap} \text{between the posts}]])]])\]
    b. \([\text{VoiceP} \text{Kulap} [\text{Voice} [\text{VP} \text{Kulap} [\text{run} [\text{ResP} \text{between the posts}]])]])\]

A small clause analysis, as I demonstrate is able to derive the fact that cognate objects cannot co-occur with directionalized locatives, as in (6) from locality considerations, while a complex predicate analysis cannot.

(6) Jamie and Leslie danced a waltz behind the house (locative/*directional)

Conclusion: This paper provides empirical and theoretical arguments for an analysis of directionalized locatives as resultative small clauses. The ultimate goal of this exercise is to provide a basis for an eventual explanation of the fact that, while directionalized locatives are common to many languages (e.g., Germanic languages, PEI French), they are not found in languages such as Standard French and Spanish.
References


