

## Aspect and Distribution of Prepositional Resultative Phrases in English

Resultative phrases in English come in two major varieties: adjectival (*I willed myself invisible*) and prepositional (*I marched myself into the bookstore*) (Carrier & Randall, 1992). Boas (2000) provides a comprehensive look at co-occurrence restrictions between verbs and result XPs, attributing most of them to conventionalization. However, recent work by Wechsler (2001) explains distributional facts on the basis of aspect and gradability, focusing mostly on adjectival result XPs. Expanding on this, I examine the largely unexplored behavior of prepositional resultatives in terms of the aspect and sense of the verb and resultative construction as well as the selectional restrictions imposed by the prepositions, focusing on *to* and *into* result XPs.

First, I show that *into* XPs preserve the durativity or punctuality of verbs, whereas *to* XPs always produce durative readings. Thus when *to* XPs modify punctual predicates, they tend to force iterative readings (*the outlaw shot the sheriff to death in ten seconds*). With achievements, however, modification by *to* XPs is ungrammatical since achievements, as they entail result states, cannot be coerced into iterative readings (*\*She stunned him to silence*, cf *\*She stunned him in ten seconds*). Since *into* XPs preserve punctuality they may occur with achievements (*She instantly stunned him into silence*). This also explains why *to death* may modify both punctual and durative verbs (*The outlaw shot/beat the sheriff to death*) although the nongradable adjective *dead* modifies only punctual verbs (*The outlaw shot/\*beat the sheriff dead*) (Wechsler, 2001).

Second, selectional restrictions imposed by the prepositions partially determine their distribution. *To* XPs appear exclusively when the goal is something one can be *at* (*Tatanya coached her skaters to/\*into 51 gold medals*, cf *at/\*in 51 gold medals*), but *into* XPs appear when the goal is something one can be *in* (*Tatanya coached her skaters into/\*to the record books*, cf *in/\*at the record books*). Third, the semantics of the verb plays a role in distribution, e.g., verbs of transformation only combine with *into* XPs (*The mixture steeped itself into/\*to refreshing lemonade*).

This work extends to English motion constructions, which are sometimes analyzed as resultatives, where *to* and *into* XPs both introduce goals of motion. However, *into* only entails crossing a threshold to the inside of the goal, whereas *to* entails movement up to and including the goal, as in *we walked/swam/hiked to/into the cave*. I therefore propose that *to* entails the existence of a nontrivial path which requires a nontrivial span of time to traverse. Abstracting to resultatives in general, this entailment explains the durative reading of *to* resultatives and further explains the coercion of punctual predicates to iterative readings. *Into* has no such entailment and thus is compatible with punctual readings.

Boas, H.C. (2000). *Resultative Constructions in English and German*. PhD thesis, UNC Chapel Hill.

Carrier, J. & Randall, J.H. The argument structure and syntactic structure of resultatives, LI 23(2), 1992.

Wechsler, S. (2001, February). A fresh aspect on resultatives. Talk, UC Berkeley.