

DE GUZMAN, VIDEA P. 1978. Syntactic derivation of Tagalog verbs.
Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press. Pp. XIII, 413.

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De Guzman's book, originally her dissertation, is an interesting treatment of structure in a Philippine language. For all of us interested in Philippine linguistics, her study is a welcome addition, a new and refreshing look at a fascinating structure — Tagalog verbs. De Guzman uses a model which she says is 'narrowly restricted', 'a less powerful framework', but 'one which can account for a broad range of linguistic facts'. Her model is Lexicase. It is a general feeling that much of the grammar of Tagalog lies in its highly complex verbal system. To come to grips with such a system and to adequately explain and classify it, it seems that what is required is a framework which is so simple that important generalizations can be brought to light. It is sad but often the case that the model obfuscates, rather than explains, the linguistic phenomena at hand. According to De Guzman, Lexicase is the answer.

It is claimed that the main merits of Lexicase, a model developed by Starosta and his students in Hawaii, are its simplicity and its recourse to surface structure. The model analyzes linguistic outputs rather than abstractions from outputs. It does not recognize the level of deep structure. It does away completely with transformations which relate deep and surface structure.

The framework has three components: the Phrase Structure Rules (PSR), the Lexicon, and the Phonological Component. Of the three, the Lexicon is the most interesting. It is here that virtually all of the grammatical issues are explained.

The Lexicase PSR's generate trees whose terminal constituents are words and not morphemes or formatives. These PSR's are very much similar to those in Chomsky 1965. One difference, however, is that in the former only category symbols like V, NP, PP, and N, which dominate lexical items, are allowed, while in the latter, both category symbols and items with relational or semantic content such as Tense, Place, and Manner are included. All these other items are indicated in the Lexicon in Lexicase. Another difference is that in Chomsky 1965, the PSR's contain subcategorization and selectional restriction rules. Moreover, the labelled trees include complex symbols which conflate these selectional and subcategorization rules. Again, these semantic specifications and subcategorizations are indicated only in the Lexicon in Lexicase.

The Phonological Component is not fully described in most Lexicase literature. It is generally taken that this component gives the full phonological representation of the sentence. But since morphological processes are specified in the Lexicon, the Phonological Component operates only across word boundaries within the sentence.

The Lexicon lists the lexical items together with their phonological representations, their category features, their case features, and the syntactic and semantic features. These features are bundles, and not ordered categories like those of Generative Semantics (cf. atomic predicates). The Lexicon also lists three types of lexical rules: (a) Subcategorization Rules which identify the subcategories of the lexical items, (b) Redundancy Rules which add or predict lexical features on the basis of some others, and (3) Derivation Rules which relate one lexical item or class of items to another.

From the above, it is immediately apparent that Lexicase is a cross between Chomsky's and Fillmore's models. De Guzman's work is a study on how well the framework,

which is admittedly derived from two others and which is asserted to be an improvement over both of the sources, handles Tagalog data. The author, consistent with the model of her choice, works primarily on the lexicon of Tagalog verbs, touching only very briefly on the PSR's of the language in one of the major chapters. The syntactic derivations she points to are for the most part localized in the Lexicon.

The book contains four chapters: Chapter I gives the Introduction to the study. Here the author identifies the structure in focus, describes the Lexicase framework, and compares Lexicase with Chomsky 1965, Fillmore 1968 and 1971, and the Generative Semantics of Lakoff.

Chapter II discusses case relations and case forms. The proponents of Lexicase acknowledge the leadership of Blake, Fillmore and Chafe in conceptualizing the notion of case. Lexicase, however, differs from these other descriptions in significant ways. First, in contrast to Fillmore, but in agreement with Chafe (also in contrast to a much later Relational Grammar where cases are considered linguistic primitives) the verb is central and its case frame specification dictates the kinds of actants or nominal expressions it can take. Second, in contrast to both Fillmore and Chafe, because they recognize two levels (deep and surface) and transformations which relate these levels (such as Subjectivization), Lexicase marks both case relation and case form only on one level. Case relations indicate the semantic relationship of a nominal with the verb (or predicate). Case forms realize this relationship as well as give the grammatical function of the case relation. For instance, a sentence may contain the actant *ang nanay* 'mother' which has the following case specification $[+NM, +Ben]$. The benefactive feature [+Ben] indicates that *nanay* is the person/being for whom the action is carried. The nominative feature [+NM] indicates that the actant is marked and functions as the subject of the sentence. The description is very appealing because it suggests that case relations and case forms are unified entities and must not be separated by transformations which could very well distort our perception of syntactic structures.

One thought, however, comes to mind. It is true that the Lexicase PSR's become very simple with the exclusion of transformational rules. However, it is also true that features like the ones above must be reflected somewhere in the grammar, in this case, the Lexicon. Moreover, relationships which hold between sentences, if not indicated in the base or transformational component, must be indicated somewhere else, again in this case, as features (syntactic or semantic) or as rules (derivational) in the Lexicon. In Lexicase, therefore, the Lexicon becomes the highly efficient component, to compensate for the imposed inactivity of the base.

In general, the case relations identified agree with most standard descriptions of Tagalog case (see for instance Otones, McFarland, Ramos). In addition, the modifications on case suggested by De Guzman seem to be generally reasonable.

For instance, her distinction between inner locatives and outer locatives in Tagalog captures an insight that has not, to my knowledge, been described very well elsewhere. There are, however, certain classifications with which I do not feel very much at ease.

The Benefactive case relation is problematic. The inclusion of the notion 'purpose' in the definition seems to be counter-intuitive. In the sentence:

Kumakain ako ng bitamina *para lumakas*.

'I eat vitamins *to grow strong*'.

the italicized phrase is analyzed as [+Ben]. The confusion lies in the fact that both 'purpose' and 'benefactive' share the same case form manifested by *para*. In this instance, the choice of conflating both 'purpose' and 'benefactive' into [+Ben] is motivated by surface structure. However, since case relation has been defined as the semantic relationship between a nominal and its predicate, and since case is registered in the Lexicon,

which admittedly deals with the 'intrinsic' meaning of the structure, will it not be a better strategy to list two separate case relations and to recognize surface homonymy in *para*?

De Guzman is correct in not labelling [+Ben] all structures that have been classified previously as 'indirect object'. In the sentence below *Nena* is obviously not benefactive:

Binigyan ko ng pera si *Nena para sa simbahan*.

[+Loc] [+Ben]

'I gave Nena money for the church'

What is not clear to me is why the actant *Nena* is analyzed as [+Loc]. I suppose it is in analogy to a second example given in the book:

Binigyan ko ng pera si *Nena sa simbahan*.

[+Ben] [+Loc]

'I gave Nena money in church'

However, I cannot see a more logical reason either in the surface structure or in the meaning structure which would support the analysis of *Nena* as [+Loc].

One observation which I find most appropriate is that regarding the classification of a language as either accusative or ergative. Tagalog seems to defy such a classification. In Tagalog, the verbs and verb classes dictate the cooccurring case relation which may be realized in the nominative case, that is, will take the [+NM] feature and correspondingly will be manifested as subject of the sentence. It is clear that neither the accusative nor the ergative classification applies to Tagalog. What is a better analysis for the language is to classify verbs and verb classes rather than the total language itself. The ergative verb or verb class may be defined as 'one which may have a [+Agt] or a [+Ins] in its case frame for some types, but whose unmarked subject choice is [+Obj]'. The accusative or nonergative verb may be defined as one 'whose unmarked subject choice is determined according to the Fillmorean hierarchy of Agt-Dat-Ins-Obj'. The redundancy rules De Guzman comes up with to define the possible cases for the [+Erg] verbs capture a generalization which has escaped most investigators of Tagalog verbs. The discussion on ergative verbs is repeated in Chapter III.

Chapter III starts with a review of major studies on Tagalog verbs. Included are the works of Bloomfield, Blake, Wolfenden, Llamzon, Otañes, and Ramos. Then the chapter moves on to its main discussion, the inventory of the semantic and syntactic features of verbs and their subcategorization based on the features identified.

The main contribution of the chapter lies in its classification of verb stems according to their inflectional features (semantic and syntactic). The feature trees and charts appeal to my sense of order and logic. The two generalizations on verb stem classifications are heuristic and significant: (a) 'Each verb stem class is distinguished from every other class by at least one distinct feature' and (b) 'Each stem class manifests its own voice paradigm and corresponding voice affix or affixes according to its distinguishing features'.

One description, however, does not completely concur with my own. This is regarding the feature [+Recent]. De Guzman gives us five reasons why this feature cannot be classified as an aspect inflection. Among them are: (a) It exhibits syntactic characteristics which are unique to itself. (b) A following particle *lang* is required with this feature. (c) The application of this feature is restricted to certain well-defined instances. All these, I feel, indicate the uniqueness of the feature, but they do not necessarily disqualify the feature as an aspect inflection. Again, it is obvious that the motivations for the conclusion drawn by the author are surface structure characteristics.

The distinction between derivation and inflection are given in Chapter III. It is a correct contention that 'if inflection and derivation are properly distinguished, we can

provide a more satisfactory account of the lexical relations among verb forms'. Derivation is defined as the 'creation of a lexical entry in a given syntactic category in accordance with a systematic analogy with a lexical entry in another syntactic category'. Inflection is defined as a 'modification in the phonological representation of a lexical entry which corresponds to the choice of a particular inflectional feature'.

In Chapter IV, the lexical process of derivation is further explained. It is claimed that in Lexicase, a variety of syntactic relationships can be explained much more efficiently and with less fanfare through derivations which apply on lexical items rather than through transformations which apply on trees. Derivation rules may be fully productive (as when application is quite uninhibited), semi-productive (as when application is restricted), and idiomatic (as when application is considerably limited). There are two basic derivation types: syntactic derivation and semantic derivation. The former changes the lexical categorization on verb subcategorization of a stem. The latter modifies the semantic features and morphological structures of the stem. This latter type includes formation of simultaneous plural, intensive, moderative, accidental, and requestive. The chapter actually expands on what are identified as syntactic derivations which change lexical categories and those which change verb subcategories. The former include derivations of verb stems from nouns and from adjectives. The latter include three types of derivations: (a) those that change morphological voice features (e.g. *ipampano'od* 'used for watching' which requires [+Ins] in the nominative is derived from *pano'od* 'watch' which does not have this requirement), (b) those that change case relation features (e.g. *mahinog* 'become ripe' which does not have an agentive counterpart can be the source of the causative *pahinog* 'allow to ripen') and (c) those that incorporate case relations (e.g. *pagintindihan* 'try to understand each other' which as an intentional reciprocal psych verb is derived from *intindi* 'understand', an intentional perception verb).

Through derivation of this latter type (where semantic features and subcategorization features are changed, rather than category features only), relationships between lexical items and, ultimately, between sentences can be accounted for. Here the efficiency of the Lexicon is once more demonstrated.

This conceptualization of derivation is, however, quite a departure from the usual definition of the concept, which allows only for lexical operations which change the lexical category of the item. To most, only processes which derive a noun, for instance, from an adjective or a verb from a noun, are considered derivation. Such notions as 'frequentative', 'simultaneous plural' and 'accidental' are considered inflectional rather than derivational. The positing of rules which explicitly relate verb stems is required in Lexicase, since this is one way by which crucial relationships in Tagalog can be highlighted. The grammar which denies a more abstract level by which relationships may be explained must have a mechanism to explain such relationships elsewhere. This is the motivation underlying the novel look at derivation. Otherwise, this expanded definition of derivation is not justified, and the added semantic features can just as well be described as inflectional.

In sum, the book is a consistent study of Tagalog verbs using a lexical framework which relieves the base component of much of the burden of explanation and lays such a burden instead on the lexicon.