

CATEGORY MATTERS: STATIVES, DENOMINAL PREDICATES, AND THEMATIC FLEXIBILITY

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1 INTRODUCTION

| **STATIVE PARTICIPLES:** deverbal adjectives typically denoting states resulting from an event.

(e.g. Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 2008; Alexiadou et al. 2014; Anagnostopoulou 2003; Bešlin 2022; 2026; Biggs & Embick 2025; Bresnan 1982; Bruening 2014; Dubinsky & Simango 1996; Embick 2004; 2023; Emonds 2006; Gehrke 2013; Kratzer 2001; Levin & Rappaport 1986; Maienborn et al. 2016; McIntyre 2013; Paparounas 2023; under revision; Wasow 1977)

(1) The pencil is now [_A [_V sharp-en] -ed]. ≈ ‘The pencil is in a state resulting from a sharpening.’

(2) *Thematic Rigidity Generalization* (TRG)

When a stative participle is predicated of a DP, the DP is interpreted in the same way as the direct argument of the corresponding verb (phrase).

(for discussion and different implementations see Anderson 1977; Biggs & Embick 2025; Bresnan 1982; Bruening 2014; Dryer 1985; Embick 2004; Horvath & Siloni 2008; Levin & Rappaport 1986; McIntyre 2013; Meltzer-Asscher 2011; Paparounas 2025; Rapp 1996; Wasow 1977; 1981; E. Williams 1981)

(3) a. Mary danced (the tango).

b. The tango / #Mary is now danced.

Thematic rigidity: only one reading

| **EXPLANANDUM:** The TRG is ostensibly overridden in the presence of the exhaustive particle *out*:

(4) Mary is (all) danced #(out).

Thematic flexibility: multiple readings

a. ...John has been dancing her around the room for 3 hours

Mary-as-dancee

b. ...she’s been dancing for 3 hours.

Mary-as-dancer

c. ...she’s been at the kids’ dance recital for 3 hours

Mary-as-dance-watcher

Puzzle: many readings, of which only (4a) is TRG-conforming (see Biggs 2019) (cf. *I danced Mary to death*).

(5) a. Kay smoked (the ham). (Biggs & Embick 2025)

b. The ham / #Mary is now smoked.

c. Mary is (all) smoked **out**.

(6) a. I mailed (Mary) the letter.

b. The letter / #Mary is now mailed.

c. Mary is (all) mailed **out**.

TODAY: CATEGORY TO THE RESCUE

FINDING: **Category** modulates the availability of TRG-violating parses in *X-ed out*.

(7) *X is verbal: Only (4a)*

[[_V ... √DANCE] -ed out]

*true deverbal participle + resultative particle;
respects the TRG*

(8) *X is nominal: Source of (4b)-(4c)*

[[_N ... √DANCE] -ed out]

*denominal base masquerades as a participle;
circumvents the TRG*

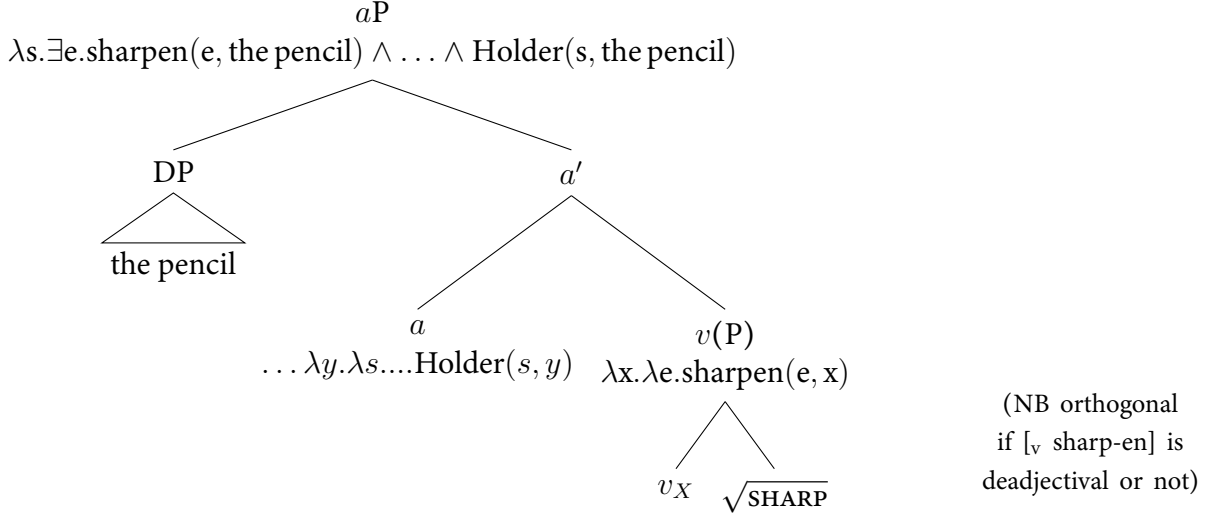
APPROACH: Leverage **allomorphy** to reveal cases where (7) and (8) are not string-identical.

2 BACKGROUND: THE TRG

| IMPLEMENTATION FOR CONCRETENESS: There are different implementations of the TRG (see below (2)).

— *X-ed out* raises questions for all of them; and our solution is compatible with all of them.

(9) *TRG-conforming stative participle*: ‘*The pencil is sharpened*’ (see Appendix B for full derivation)



1. **Pieces:** Acategorial Root head-adjoins to a verbalizing head v_X ; the result meets a stativizer a .
(Possible intervening projections, e.g. Voice, orthogonal in this talk)

2. **Selection:** a c-selects v_X , a flavor of v that:

- (a) does not have a DP complement → English participles are external predications
(Biggs & Embick 2025; Bruening 2014; Levin & Rappaport 1986; McIntyre 2013; cp. Embick 2004)
- (b) introduces an individual argument of the event at LF (cf. Bruening 2014; Meltzer-Asscher 2011)

3. **Role of the stativizer:** a identifies the argument of the event with the Holder of the state.

— **Outcome** in (9): sets of states held by the pencil resulting from events of sharpening of the pencil.

| THE TRG FOLLOWS from selection of v_X , which effectively abstracts over the internal role of the verb

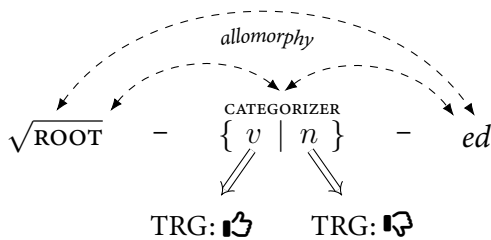
— thereby allowing verb-dependent construals of the internal role

— while keeping out higher roles, e.g. Agents and Goals.

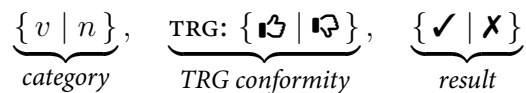
3 A NOMINAL BASE: EVIDENCE FROM FORM

| APPROACH: Test for the imprint of nominal structure on the form of each piece in (10); cross-reference with TRG compliance. (for prior conjectures on *X-ed out* being denominal, see Chang 2004: 6, Jackendoff 2002: 85-86)

(10)



(11) *Notation*



3.1 Root allomorphy

| ABLAUT can help distinguish the category of the base

- Some Roots take special forms in the deverbal participle: *dug* = [_v √DIG *v*] -*ed*
- Consider (12), where *dug* (*out*) has one reading—the subject underwent a digging event:
 - fine for trenches, (12a); strange/unavailable for archaeologists, (12b).
- (12b) cannot mean the archaeologists did digging, so deverbal *dug* obey the TRG.

- (12) a. The trenches are all **dug** (*out*). *v*, TRG: , ✓
- b. #The archaeologists are all **dug** *out*. *v*, TRG: , ✗

— *Digged out* can describe someone who is exhausted due to experiencing (too many) digs.

- (13) a. The archaeologists are all **digged** *out*. *n*, TRG: , ✓
- b. #The trenches are all **digged** *out*. *n*, TRG: , ✗

— The shape of the Root is informative:

- *digged* carries the default participial ending -*ed*, not ablaut.
- suggests it is built not from base verbal [_v √DIG *v*] but rather from a nominal [_n √DIG *n*]

— Roots like √SING make more distinctions, between finite verbs (*sing*), participles (*sung*) and Root nouns (*song*); The true deverbal participle obeys the TRG, but denominal *songed* does not:

- (14) a. The aria is all {**?sung** / ***songed**} *out*. { *v*, TRG: , ✓ / *n*, TRG: , ✗ }
- b. The choir is all {**?sung** / **songed**} *out*. { *v*, TRG: , ✓ / *n*, TRG: , ✓ }
- (cf. *The director sang the choir (out)*)

| STRESS PAIRS: English has noun/verb distinctions marked by stress with certain Roots, e.g.:

- (15)

verb	suspéct _v	recórd _v	progréss _v	perμί _v
noun	súspect _N	récord _N	prógress _N	pérmit _N

— Verbally stressed *X-ed out* is TRG-compliant, (16a); Nominally stressed *X-ed out* is not, (16b).

- (16) a. *I am a detective who's been tracking his suspicions on a case the whole day*
 ??I'm all **suspécted** *out*. *v*, TRG: , ✗
- b. *I am a detective who's been sifting through pictures of suspects the whole day*
 I'm all **súspected** *out*. *n*, TRG: , ✓

— More data:

- (17) a. *I'm a sound engineer who's been recording bands in the studio all day*
 ??I'm all **recórded** *out*. *v*, TRG: , ✗
- b. *We've been alphabetizing my massive record collection all day*
 I'm all **récorded** *out*. *n*, TRG: , ✓

3.2 Exponence of categorizers

| OVERTLY NOMINALIZED NOUNS converge with the findings from Roots.

— Consider $[_v \sqrt{\text{CANCEL}} \emptyset_v]$ versus $[_n \sqrt{\text{CANCEL}} \text{-ation}_n]$: NB $*[_n \sqrt{\text{CANCEL}} \emptyset_n]$

- (18) a. *The airline double-charged my card, but they processed a cancellation this morning.*
 The charge is now { **cancelled out** / #**cancellationed** } out. $\{ v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$
 b. *I work the rebooking desk at the airport, and it's been a day of nonstop flight cancellations.*
 I'm all { **cancellationed** / #**cancelled** } out. $\{ n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$

— More data:

- (19) a. *There are no vacancies at the resort*
 The rooms are all { **rented** / ***rentaled** } out. $\{ v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$
 b. *The property manager has been touring new rental properties all day*
 She's all { **rentaled** / #**rented** } out. $\{ n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$

| DEVERBAL NOUNS WITH OVERT VERBALIZERS/NOMINALIZERS reinforce the conclusions drawn so far:

- (20) a. *After two hours of yoga, my hamstrings and spine feel longer than they have in years.*
 I'm all { **lengthened** / #**lengthed** } out. $\{ v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$
 b. *I've spent the whole day measuring long vowel durations in Praat.*
 I'm all { **lengthed** / #**lengthened** } out. $\{ n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$

— More data:

- (21) a. *Hens judge a courting male turkey largely by his fan's breadth. During the courtship,*
 the tom's fan remains { **broadened** / #**breadthed** } out. $\{ v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$
 b. *Kim just finished her dept.'s gruelling breadth requirements.*
 Kim is all { **breadthed** / #**broadened** } out. $\{ n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$

3.3 Allomorphy of the stativizer

| CONTEXT: True deverbal participles show irregular participial allomorphs with certain Roots.

- (22) a. $[a] \Leftrightarrow /ən/ \text{ / } [_v \{ \sqrt{\text{SHAKE}}, \sqrt{\text{FREEZE}}, \sqrt{\text{TAKE}} \dots \} v] \text{ __}$
 b. $[a] \Leftrightarrow /(\text{ə})d/$

— TRG violations go together with the default allomorph (22b):

- (23) a. *While cleaning rugs, I tell you not to worry about that one because*
 it's already { **shaken out** / #**shaked out** }. $\{ v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$
 b. *Ross works at a milkshake place. It's the end of the shift.*
 Ross must be (milk-) { **shaked out** / ***shaken** } out by now. $\{ n, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \checkmark / v, \text{TRG:}\mathfrak{L}, \times \}$

| TWO DISTINCT SCENARIOS for the emergence of a default here:

1. *Trigger of allomorphy absent: no v (+ $\sqrt{\text{ROOT}}$):* $[\sqrt{\text{SHAKE}} \text{ } n] a$
2. *Trigger of allomorphy present but inaccessible: v not visible across n :* $[[\sqrt{\text{SHAKE}} \text{ } v] n] a$
 (locality à la Embick 2010)

4 RECONCILING *X-ed out* WITH THE TRG

| RECAP: Across all three pieces of (24), the form of *X-ed out* co-varies with TRG compliance:

$$(24) \quad \sqrt{\text{ROOT}} - \{v \mid n\} - ed$$

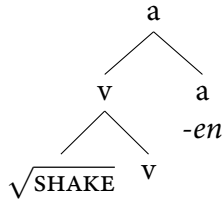
TRG-compliant *X-ed out* has a **verbal base**:

- ablaut
- verbal stress
- verbalized roots
- irregular participial allomorphs

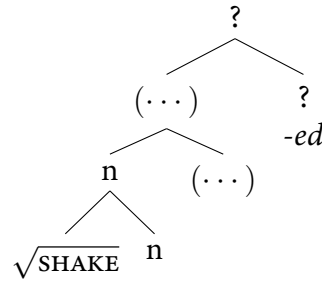
TRG-violating *X-ed out* has a **nominal base**:

- nominal/no ablaut
- nominal stress
- overt nominalizers
- default *-ed*

(25) *shaken* (deverbal participle)



(26) *shaked (out)* (denominal; provisional)



On the present implementation of the TRG, consider how the two bases differ:

$$(27) \quad \llbracket [\sqrt{\text{SHAKE}} v] \rrbracket = \lambda x. \lambda e. \text{Shake}(e, x)$$

- an open argument and an event; x will be identified with the state holder introduced by a , and saturated by the externally introduced DP. Hence (29).

$$(28) \quad \llbracket [\sqrt{\text{SHAKE}} n] \rrbracket = \lambda x. \text{Shake}(x)$$

- no event, no open argument related to an event. Hence, (30).

(29) a. The rugs are shaken out

$$b. \models \exists e. \text{Shake}(e, \text{rugs})$$

(30) a. Ross is shaked out

$$b. \not\models \exists e. \text{Shake}(e, \text{Ross})$$

| UPSHOT: The DP of thematically flexible *X-ed out* is not an argument of a (deverbal) participle, because there is no participle. The TRG is not violated; it was never at stake.

- Thematic flexibility follows: nothing in (26) relates the argument to an *event*; context does the rest.
- This conclusion does not depend on our implementation: every account of the TRG is an account of participles, and these aren't participles.

What remains:

1. What is the object in (26)?
2. What is the role of *out*?

5 DENOMINAL PARTICIPLES?

5.1 *Two options*

| **OPTION 1: denominal verbs**; noun is verbalized before *-ed* attaches; these are participles after all.

(31) [[[[$\sqrt{\text{ROOT}}$ *n*] *v*] -ed_a] out] (to be rejected)

- Such structures exist, but they are TRG-conforming, like any other participle: (for so-called location/location verbs see Adamson 2018; Arad 2003; Bruening 2018; Clark & Clark 1979; Hale & Keyser 1997; Harley 2005; Kiparsky 1982; McIntyre 2015)

| **OPTION 2: no verbalization**; base is still nominal when *-ed* attaches; no participle in the sense above.

(32) [[[$\sqrt{\text{ROOT}}$ *n*] -ed_?] out]

5.2 *Denominal adjectives*

| **OBSERVATION**: a non-participial *-ed* on nominal bases is well-attested in English.

(Allen 1979; Beard 1976; Hirtle 1970; Hudson 1975; Ishida 2024; Ljung 1976; Myler 2016; Nevins & Myler 2014)

(33) *Possessive ('ornative') denominal adjectives*

bearded man / talented artist / wooded meadow / walled city / hooded sweatshirt / gendered language / manned ship / armed robbers ...

- Not event-entailing: being bearded does not entail having been bearded.

(34) #His genes/his hair follicles/Mother Nature bearded John.

- **Possibility**: denominal *dance-ed* is just like *beard-ed*.

- If *bearded*-type adjectives involve possessive denotations (Myler 2016: 370-374), then the thematic flexibility of denominal *X-ed out* is exactly what we expect.

| **AN APPARENT DIFFICULTY** for this assimilation: Why the following contrast?

(35) John is bearded / talented / moneyed. (36) #John is danced / partied / laughed.

- It is not clear without further investigation if (36b) is ungrammatical or merely interpretively odd. (cf. e.g. Embick & Marantz 2008 on #*stealer* vs *base-stealer*)

- Crucially, *bona fide* denominal adjective formation rarely comes for free:

- (36a) is the exception; support-by-modification is the rule (see e.g. Allen 1979; Nevins & Myler 2014)

(37) #(brown-)eyed #(white-)haired #(well-)intentioned #(good-)natured #(double-)edged
#(three-)legged #(well-)mannered #(simple-)minded #(heart-)shaped #(long-)sleeved

- Perhaps *out* is to *danced* as *brown* is to *eyed* (See Appendix C for a proposal on the role of *out*)

- If conditions on pragmatic felicity play a role, we expect to find contrasts like the following:

(38) #a headed man : a headed relative clause (39) an armed guard : a one-armed guard

| **A CORRECT PREDICTION**: The role of *out* in deriving the behavior of denominal *X-ed out* is incidental, not causal.

5.3 Coda: To be or not to be a participle

| ACCIDENTAL HOMOPHONY? Most analyses of English possessive adjectives take the adjectivizer in *bearded* to be accidentally homophonous to the stativizer in participles. (Beard 1976; Hirtle 1970; Myler 2016; Nevins & Myler 2014)¹

— But it's common elsewhere for the two to be identical.

- (40) a. Greek *bratso-menos* 'muscled', *matso-menos* 'moneyed', *kamburjaz-menos* 'with a hump', *psomo-menos* 'plump (lit. breaded)' (Anagnostopoulou 2016: 456)
- b. German *ge-stiefel-t* 'booted', *geflügelt* 'winged'; Dutch *be-haar-d* 'hairy', *bejaard* 'yeared, aged' (Myler 2016: 373)
- c. Slovak *brada-tý* 'bearded', *chlpa-tý* 'hairy'; *nosa-tý* '(big-)nosed', *uša-tý* '(big-)eared'
- d. Latin *barbā-tu-(lu)-s* '(somewhat) bearded', *turrī-tus* 'towered' (Embick & Halle 2025: 67, fn. 6), *togā-tus* 'clad in a toga'
- e. Hebrew *mesufam* 'mustachioed', *memuškaḥ* 'bespectacled' (Horvath & Siloni 2008: 120) *metultal* 'curly'

Possibility: The difference between true deverbal participles and denominal adjectives is smaller than we've taken it to be thus far.

— Perhaps a single object α derives both (see Appendix C for a concrete proposal).

6 CONCLUDING REMARKS

| CENTRAL FINDING: A case that *prima facie* constitutes a flagrant violation of the TRG turns out, upon closer inspection, to reinforce its validity.

— TRG-violating parses of *X-ed out* do not involve deverbal participles

| IMPLICATIONS FOR THE TRG: The possibility that deverbal participles and denominal adjectives share a common piece α is instructive.

— The TRG tracks not the presence of α , but the presence of verbal structure.

| A PARTING PROMISE: Pieces vs constructions:

— Cases like *X-ed out* – where a generally well-understood grammatical structure exhibits unexpected behavior – have sometimes been used as arguments for the necessity of constructions in the sense of Goldberg (1995)

◦ In fact, *X-ed out* itself has been approached in this way (Jackendoff 2002)

— If the suggestive proposals here are on the right track, such arguments are at best premature – with the *prima facie* unexpected behavior in fact arising from the combination of independent pieces (e.g. a verbal/nominal base, one and the same α , and resultative particles)

¹Myler (2016: 374) in fact proposes that some (but not all) of the formations in question *are* deverbal participles. We agree; cf. ???. See also Anagnostopoulou (2016) and Anagnostopoulou & Samioti (2013) for highly relevant observations on the distribution of verbalizing morphology vis-à-vis that of eventivity.

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APPENDIX A WHY EXAMINE ALLOMORPHY?

| CONTEXT: That *X-ed out* can be denominal is in fact an intuition shared by the small literature on the topic – based on the occurrence of plausibly nominal bases (Chang2004; Jackendoff 2002: 85), e.g.:

(41) I'm all carpeted out.

- But since zero-derivation of denominal verbs is widespread in English, cf. (42), the *form* of (41) is not immediately probative (see e.g. Clark & Clark 1979)

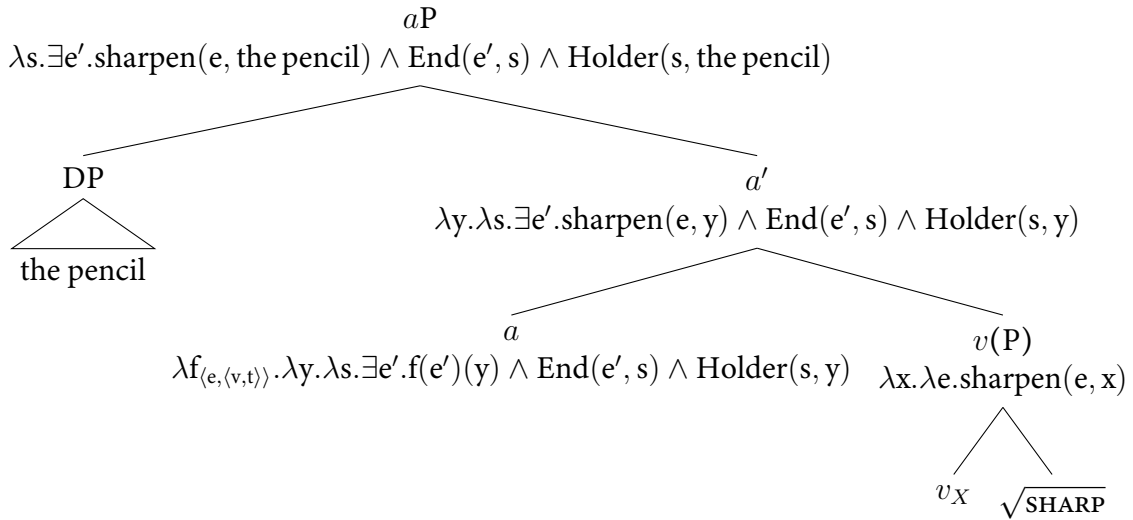
(42) I decided to carpet my room.

- Note also that (predicative) stative passives are subject to independent restrictions on event modification, so we cannot test for the presence of verbal structure by examining e.g. adverbs.

(see e.g. Biggs & Embick 2025; Embick 2023; Gehrke 2015; Maienborn et al. 2016; McIntyre 2013)

APPENDIX B THE TRG: FULL DERIVATION

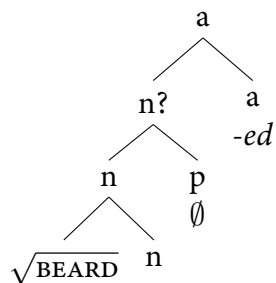
(43) TRG-conforming stative participle: 'The pencil is sharpened'



Event-structure-wise, *a*...

1. existentially binds the *vP*'s event argument (e.g. Kratzer 2001);
2. introduces a stative eventuality variable *s*;
3. links the two via a predicate *End* (Pietroski 2006; A. Williams 2015);

(44) *Possessive adjective: bearded*

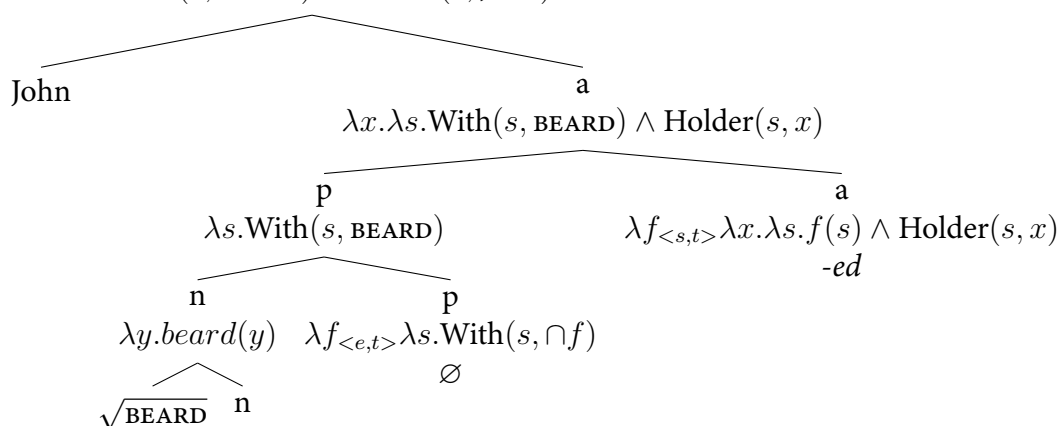

$$(45) \quad \llbracket p_\emptyset \rrbracket = \lambda f_{\langle e,t \rangle} \lambda s. \text{With}(s, \cap f)$$

(46) *Allosemy of stativizer*

- $$\begin{array}{ll} \text{a. } \llbracket a \rrbracket \longleftrightarrow \lambda f_{\langle e, \langle vt \rangle \rangle} \lambda x. \lambda s. \exists e. f(x)(e) \wedge \text{End}(e, s) \wedge \text{Holder}(s, x) & / _v \\ \text{b. } \llbracket a \rrbracket \longleftrightarrow \lambda f_{\langle s, t \rangle} \lambda x. \lambda s. f(s) \wedge \text{Holder}(s, x) & (\text{elsewhere}) \end{array}$$

(47) *Denominal: John is bearded*

- a. $\lambda s. \text{With}(s, \text{BEARD}) \wedge \text{Holder}(s, \text{John})$



- b. for a state s , it is true iff s is a state of association with the kind `BEARD` and John is the holder of s .

| OUT: Exhaustive *out* is a resultative particle (McIntyre 2003; Svenonius 2003; 2007) introducing a (contextually filled-in) threshold, a Limit (48).

$$(48) \quad \llbracket \text{out} \rrbracket = \lambda s. \text{Limit}(s)$$

Inanimate state-holders are read as being out of capacity (49); animate ones as having attained an internal limit for some contextually relevant stimulus.

- (49) a. The store's out of bagels. (50) That's it, I'm out.
b. The hotel is booked out.

Note also situations where *out* seems to introduce experiencers with psych verbs:

(51) I grossed/freaked/psyched/stressed/tripped/mellowed/bummed/put him *(out).

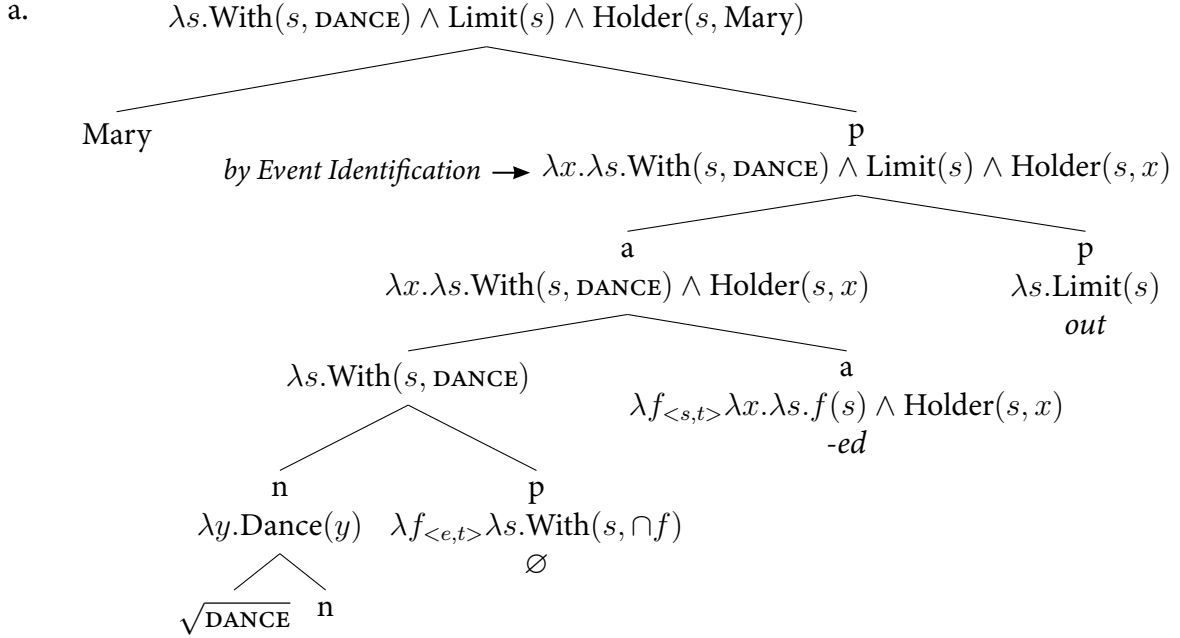
PROSPECT: In (52), *Mary* is at capacity with respect to dances – with context filling in the rest.

(52) Mary has been watching the kids' dance recital all day – she's all danced out.

| DENOMINAL STRUCTURE:

- Nominal *dance* combines with predicativizing *-ed*;
- The result, combined with *out*, denotes a predicate of states whereby *dance* is on the state-holder and the state-holder has attained an internal limit;
- Thus: the holder has had enough of dances.

(53) *Denominal: Mary is danced out*



- b. for a state s , it is true iff s is a state of association with the kind DANCE , s is at the bound of its scale, and Mary is the holder of s .