This talk investigates the theoretical underpinnings of novel findings about the argument structure of out-PRED verbs. In particular, three generalizations about the grammatical properties of out-PRED will lead us to conclude that internal arguments for all predicates are syntactically merged outside of VP (like external arguments; e.g. Hale and Keyser 1993, Chomsky 1995, Kratzer 1996, Pylkkänen 2002, Lohndal 2012, among many others).

The first generalization that we note is (1), which is supported by the data in (2):

(1) **Generalization 1**:
Whatever irregular forms PRED has, out-PRED inherits those same forms.

(2) a. outrun + -ed = *outran*, *⋆outrunned*
    b. outdo + -s = *out*[dʌz], *⋆out*[duz]

Thus out-PREDs cannot be entirely separate listemes in the lexicon (Keyser and Roeper 1984), but are morphologically built upon PRED. This is perhaps surprising, as out-PRED has a radically different argument structure than PRED. In particular, any internal argument of PRED (often introduced by the lexical PRED root) must not surface, as (3) indicates, with an unergative, a ditransitive, and an obligatory transitive.

(3) **Generalization 2**:
None of PRED's internal argument(s) can surface with out-PRED.

(4) a. i. Mike danced (a good dance).
       ii. Mike outdanced (⋆a good dance) Janet (⋆a good dance).
    b. i. Jackie donated money to museums.
       ii. Jackie outdonated (⋆money) (⋆to museums) Lisa (⋆money) (⋆to museums).
    c. i. Armageddon grossed ⋆($349m).
       ii. Armageddon outgrossed (⋆$349m) Deep Impact (⋆$349m).

It doesn't matter if the internal arguments are optional or obligatory; they cannot be expressed. Because of this:

(5) **Generalization 3**:
If PRED depends on an internal argument to receive proper interpretation, out-PRED is impossible.

(6) a. i. Julie cooked better than Lee. (literal transitive)
       ii. Julie outcooked Lee.
    b. i. Julie cooked the books better than Lee. (idiomatic reading)
       ii. # Julie outcooked Lee.
    c. i. Tofu cooks better than tempeh. (change-of-state unaccusatives)
       ii. ⋆ Tofu outcooks tempeh.

In (6b), the idiom *cook the books* (meaning 'keep false financial records') requires *the books* as an internal argument; however, the internal argument is never syntactically projected, so the idiomatic interpretation is unavailable. (Idioms can be syntactically complex, and involve abstract lexical items across functional projections, as shown in Richards 2001, and they can even include external arguments, e.g. *curiosity killed the cat*. Some are passivizable – cf. Fraser 1970 among many others – and in particular, the idiom *cook the books* is passivizable, so *the books* need not occur as the object of (6b.ii).)
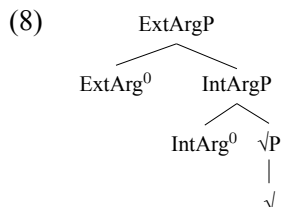
As for (6c), even though the internal argument of *cook* can be realized as the subject of *cook*, it cannot be the subject of *outcook*. This is because *tofu* is the internal argument of *cook*, but *cook*'s internal arguments are suppressed in the syntax for *outcook*. Similar problems arise with other change-of-state unaccusatives (e.g. *break*, *dry*, etc.), but not other unaccusatives, where the interpretation of the verb does not depend on the internal argument:

(7) Basketballs out-bounce baseballs. (Keyser and Roeper 1984)

Like (6a), *bounce* does not depend on its internal argument for proper interpretation.

Together, Generalizations 1–3 show that *out-* prefixation is like passivization in that it is a case of morphosyntactically controlled "argument suppression". In a Minimalist framework, syntactic "suppression" of an argument is modeled by not merging the (feature on a) head that introduces that argument. That is, when the external argument is not syntactically merged (e.g. unaccusatives; Chomsky 1995), the external-argument introducing head is not merged – made possible by said head being separate from the lexical predicate (see citations in first paragraph).

The evidence indicates that internal arguments can similarly be suppressed morphosyntactically, so there must also be a head which is separate from the lexical predicate and which introduces internal arguments, as in (8):

(8)
```
              ExtArgP
             /      \
        ExtArg⁰    IntArgP
                  /      \
             IntArg⁰    √P
                         |
                         √
```

(8)

ExtArgP

ExtArg^0 IntArgP

IntArg^0 √P

√

With this analysis, the properties in Generalizations 1–3 are accounted for by the fact that *out* merges with the √P, thereby preventing arguments from syntactically merging in an IntArgP projection of √P. Instead, out-PRED projects its own argument structure. This analysis is further supported by the fact that out-PRED can always be passivized, even when PRED cannot be.

(9)   a.   By mid-September, they numbered 10,000.   (Google Result)
       b.   *By mid-September, 10,000 were numbered by them.
       c.   By mid-September, they out-numbered us.
       d.   By mid-September, we were out-numbered by them.

At the same time that arguments of a predicate are syntactically severed from the √P, those √s still have effects on possible internal arguments. This is accounted for if the PRED √ projects semantic constraints, while the internal argument XP is syntactically introduced higher outside of √P (as recently argued for external arguments; Harley 2013).

To conclude, this investigation reveals that *out-* prefixation involves suppressing the syntactic expression of the internal arguments of a predicate PRED by forming a new with PRED, before PRED can project its own syntactic argument structure. This corroborates (i) theories in which word-building is syntactic in nature, and (ii) neo-Davidsonian approaches to syntax, with all arguments syntactically merged outside of the lexical predicate's own projection.

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