Ditransitive constructions in Vietnamese:

How to integrate serial verb constructions in

a typology of alignment patterns

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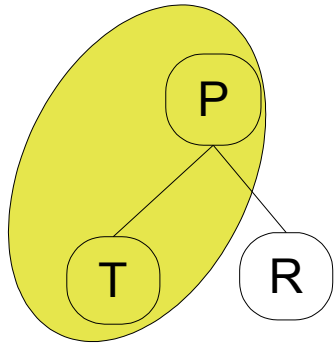theresahanske@yahoo.de

Ditransitive Constructions

- *Ditransitive constructions* consist of a conceptually ditransitive predicate, an **A**gent, a **T**heme and a **R**ecipient-like argument.

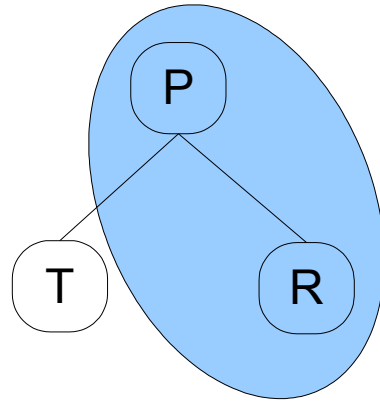- Different strategies can be employed to encode A, T and R.

Focus on ditransitive constructions with transfer verbs (cho 'give', đưa 'hand over' etc.).
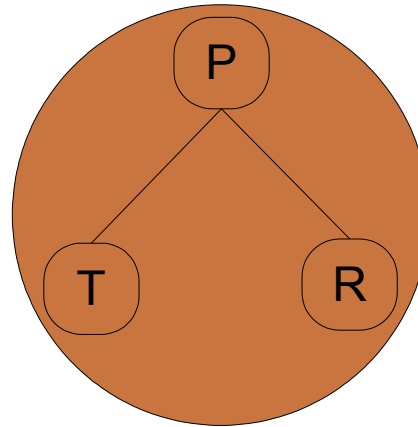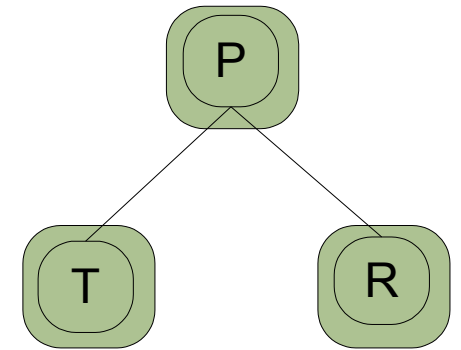
Alignment Patterns

Indirective   Secundative   Neutral   Tripartite

Malchukov/Haspelmath/Comrie (MS:4)

Ditransitive Strategies in Vietnamese

Ditransitives

non-serial construction — A V **R T**

Con chuột đưa   **R** con voi   **T** cái chảo.
CL   mouse hand.over   CL   elephant   CL   pan

SVCs

A V$_1$ **T** cho$_{v2}$ **R**
A V$_1$ cho$_{v2}$ **R T**

Con chuột đưa   **T** cái chảo   **cho** con voi.   **R**
CL   mouse hand.over CL   pan   give   CL   elephant

A **lấy$_{v1}$** **T** V$_2$ **R**

Con chuột **lấy**   **T** cái chảo đưa   **R** con voi.
CL   mouse take CL   pan   hand.over CL   elephant

A V$_1$ **R** V$_2$ **T**
A V$_1$ **T R** V$_2$

Con chuột đưa   **R** con voi   cầm **T** cái chảo.
CL   mouse hand.over CL   elephant hold CL   pan

How do SVCs relate to the alignment typology of ditransitives?

Some characteristics of SVCs

i.   Shared TAM and negation

ii. Argument-sharing (at least one, possibly more)

iii. Only one subject / external argument

iv. No verb is a complement of the other

v.   One clause

vi. Argument configurations in SVCs correspond closely to argument + adjunct configurations in non-SVC-languages

vii. Tend strongly to grammaticalize or lexicalize

(cf. Durie 1997)

Two Lines of Reasoning...

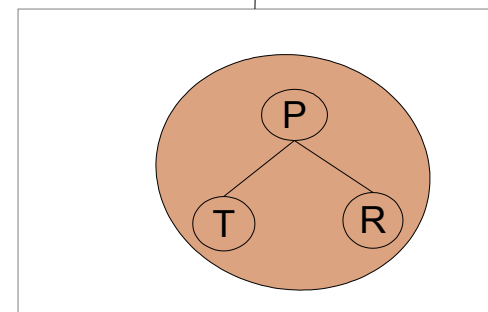SVCs and ditransitive alignment

SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments

and mark them as oblique

(cf. Margetts/Austin 2007, Clark 1978, Li/Thompson 1981)
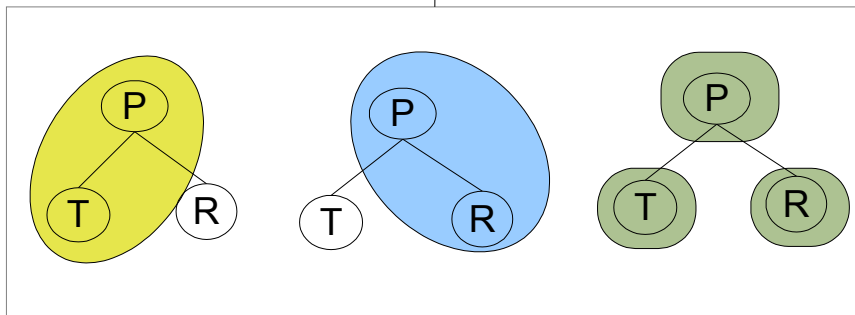
SVs contribute their own semantic (core) arguments

arguments of SVs are syntactic core arguments of the SVC as a whole

(cf. Foley/Van Valin 1984)

Pursuing the Oblique Argument Hypothesis

SVCs and ditransitive alignment

SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments

and mark them as oblique
(cf. Margetts/Austin 2007, Clark 1978, Li/Thompson 1981)

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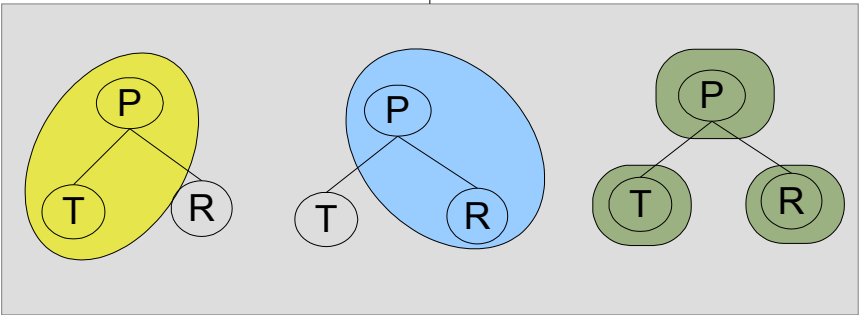(cf. Foley/Van Valin 1984)
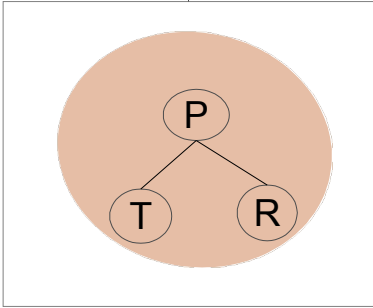
Oblique Argument Hypothesis: empirical evidence

SVCs and ditransitive alignment	SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments	and mark them as oblique

Nó đưa   **[T cái chảo]** **[R cho con voi.]**
3sg hand.over CL pan   give CL elephant

'It hands over the pan to the elephant.'

Cô ấy đang cắt **[T tóc]** **[Benefactive cho ông ta.]**
she   PROG cut hair give he

'She is cutting his hair.'

Oblique Argument Hypothesis: empirical challenge

| SVCs and ditransitive alignment | SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments | and mark them as oblique |

?

	T	R
Nó đưa	cái chảo	**cho** con voi.
3sg hand.over	CL pan	give CL elephant

'It hands over the pan to the elephant.'

	R	T
Nó đưa	con voi	cái chảo
3sg hand.over	CL elephant	CL pan

'It hands over the pan to the elephant.'

Oblique Argument Hypothesis: evidence

| SVCs and ditransitive alignment | SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments | and mark them as oblique |

Kuhn's (1990) study on verbiness of serial verb in SVCs seems to support the Oblique Argument Hypothesis: *cho* 'give' (V$_2$) is a coverb or preposition.

Features of verbiness

	Questioning V$_2$	NEG V$_2$	TAM-marking V$_2$	*có*-Emphasizing V$_2$
cho 'RECIPIENT, BENEFACTIVE'	+	-	-	-

Oblique Argument Hypothesis: marking of a Theme or a Recipient?

SVCs and ditransitive alignment	SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments	and mark them as oblique

Asymmetrical Analysis

	T	Head	
Ông ấy	**lấy** tiền	đưa	bà ấy.
He	take money	hand.over	she

'He gives her money.'

	Head		R	
Ông ấy	lấy	tiền	**đưa**	bà ấy.
He	take	money	hand.over	she

'He gives her money.'

Oblique Argument Hypothesis:
How to integrate symmetrical SVCs?

| SVCs and ditransitive alignment | SVs introduce (peripheric) **?** semantic arguments | and mark th**?**m as oblique |

Symmetrical Analysis

Bi-headed

		T		R
Ông ấy	**lấy**	tiền	**đưa**	bà ấy.
He	take	money	hand.over	she

'He gives her money.'

Oblique Argument Hypothesis:
How to integrate symmetrical SVCs?

| SVCs and ditransitive alignment | SVs introduce (peripheral) semantic arguments | and mark them as oblique |

again symmetrical SVC(s)

A V$_1$ **R** V$_2$ **T**

A V$_1$ **T R** V$_2$

Bi-headed

	R		**T**
Nó **đưa**	con voi	**cầm**	cái chảo.
3sg hand.over	CL elephant	hold	CL pan

'It gives the elephant a pan to hold.'

Bi-headed

	T	**R**	
Nó **đưa**	cái chảo	con voi	**cầm**.
3sg hand.over	CL pan	CL elephant	hold

'It gives the elephant a pan to hold.'

Behavior of Theme and Recipient

with non-serial constructions

Được-Construction

T
Đóa hoa được anh ấy tặng người yêu.
CL flower được he present person love

'The flower was given to his lover by him.'

R
Người yêu được anh ấy tặng đóa hoa.
person love được he present CL flower

'His lover was given the flower by him.'

Relativization

T
Đóa hoa mà anh ấy tặng chị ấy
CL flower REL he present she

'The flower that he gives her...'

R
Chị ấy mà anh ấy tặng đóa hoa...
she REL he present CL flower

'She, to whom he gave a flower...'

Core Argument Hypothesis:
Behavior of Theme and Recipient

with cho$_{V2}$-SVC

Được-Construction

T
Cái chảo được nó đưa **cho** con voi.
CL   pan   được it give give CL elephant

'The pan was given to the elephant by it.'

R
Con voi   được nó đưa **cho** cái chảo.
CL   elephant được it give give CL pan

'The elephant was given a pan by it.'

Relativization

T
Cái chảo mà nó đưa **cho** con voi...
CL   pan   REL it give give CL elephant

'The pan that it gives to the elephant '

R
Con voi   mà nó đưa **cho** cái chảo
CL elephant REL it give give CL pan

'The elephant that it gives the pan to'

Core Argument Hypothesis: Behavior of Theme and Recipient

with lấy$_{V1}$-SVC

Được-Construction

T

Tiền	được	ông ấy	lấy	đưa	bà ấy.
money	được	he	take	hand.over	she

'The money was given her by him.'

R

Bà ấy	được	ông ấy	lấy	tiên	đưa.
she	được	he	take	money	give

'She was given the money by him.'

Relativization

T

Tiền	mà	ông ấy	lấy	đưa	bà ấy
money	REL	he	take	hand.over	she

'The money that he gives her'

R

Bà ấy	mà	ông ấy	lấy	tiên	đưa
she	REL	he	take	money	hand.over

'She, to whom he gives the money '

Core Argument Hypothesis:
Behavior of Theme and Recipient

with V_1-V_2-SVC

T

Cái chảo được nó đưa con voi cầm.
CL pan được it hand.over CL elephant hold

'The pan was given to the elephant to hold by it.'

R

Con voi được nó đưa cầm cái chảo.
CL elephant được it hand.over hold CL pan

Con voi được nó đưa cái chảo cầm.
CL elephant được it hand.over CL pan hold

'The elephant was given a pan to hold by it.

T

Cái chảo mà nó đưa con voi cầm
CL pan REL it hand.over CL eleph. hold

'The pan which it gives the elephant to hold'

R

Con voi mà nó đưa cầm cái chảo
CL elephant REL it give hold CL pan

Con voi mà nó đưa cái chảo cầm
CL elephant REL it give CL pan hold

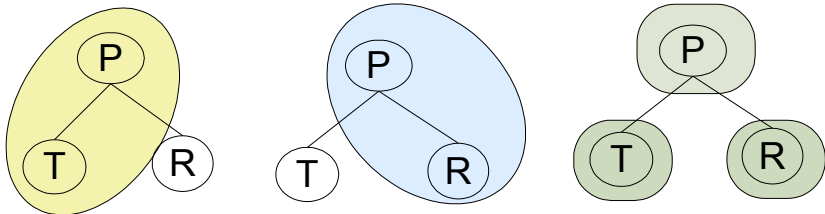'The elephant to which it gives a pan to hold'

Conclusion

- In Vietnamese, serial verbs do not necessarily *introduce* arguments; not all SVCs are valency-increasing devices – especially in ditransitive constructions

- Some SVCs in Vietnamese operate over core arguments

- Symmetrical ditransitive SVCs in Vietnamese cannot be integrated into the alignment typology, if argument introduction as main function of SVC is taken as basis of classification

- T and R in ditransitive constructions in Vietnamese both behave like P in monotransitive clauses
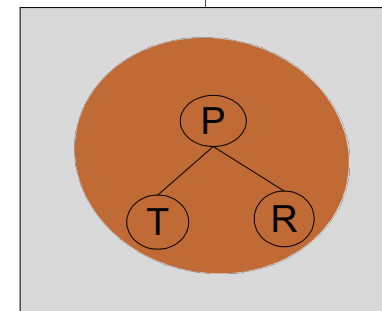
Conclusion

Thank you