Kano: The case of a light verb in MG[1]

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Abstract
This paper focuses on some of the uses of the verb kano (=to do/to make). The use of idiomatic kano is juxtaposed with that of light kano. As far as the latter is concerned, it is treated as belonging to a special group of verbs whose interpretation is supplied compositionally. It is argued that the selection requirements of this verb are responsible for its interpretation at the level of LF. With respect to the LF representation of the light kano, it is suggested that it can either remain or be deleted at this level. Kano in the structures kano+nominal (argument or non-argument), kano+clausal complement and causative kano+clausal complement remains at LF, whereas it is deleted at LF in pseudo-cleft constructions and wh-questions. The latter structures are taken to represent the lightest use of kano.

1. Another class of verbs: The case of Light Verbs

It is well known that verbs are divided into two classes: Lexical or main verbs vs. auxiliary verbs. **Lexical or main verbs** have Lexical Conceptual Structure (LCS) and argument-structure (AS), so they can assign theta-roles to their arguments. Also, they carry Tense and Agreement features, as a result of their categorial V status. With respect to their representation in the mental lexicon, note that there is direct mapping of linguistic/morphological representation of a main verb onto a concept (Fodor, 1975). **Auxiliary verbs** on the other hand are used in periphrastic tense formation. Thus, they cannot stand on their own, but co-occur with already fully-fledged predicates. Consequently, they lack theta-marking ability. However, auxiliaries are capable of carrying function features (agreement features), because they are verbal elements.

However, there are verbs that neither main verbs nor auxiliary verbs, since they can stand on their own as main verbs do, but they are semantically underspecified in the sense that their linguistic representation does not exactly map onto a concept unlike the case of main verbs. This set of verbs is called **Light Verbs (LVs)** (Cattell 1984, Grimshaw and Mester, 1988). Light verbs in MG are considered to be the following ones: *kano (to do/to*

make), pao (to go), ime (to be), dino (to give), perno (to take), vazo (to put).
With respect to MG, a first attempt to investigate their morphological and
syntactic characteristics in relation to those of main verbs with the same or
nearly the same meaning has been conducted by Nakas (1987)[2], whereas the
properties of the verbs *ime* and *dino* have been analysed by Moustaki
(1992,1993,1998) and Tsolaki (1998) respectively within the framework of
Lexique-Grammaïre (Lexical Grammar)[3]. The class of Light Verbs is not
homogeneous; all of them except from *kano* and *ime* have prototypical
meaning, whereas *kano* and *ime* lack prototypical meaning in the sense that
they require a complement to be interpreted and thus their interpretation is
the result of their combination with a complement.

2. The Light Verb *kano (to do/ to make)*
The focus of this study is the use of one of the most representative light
verbs in MG, which is the verb *kano (to do/to make)*[4]. It is a representative
light verb, because it cannot carry prototypical meaning in any case and also
the interpretation of the whole predicate and indeed of the verb *kano* is
supplied compositionally. **The main aim of this study is to investigate the
syntactic and primarily the LF representation of *kano* in some of the
constructions in which is involved.**

As far as the morphosyntactic properties of *kano* are concerned, note
that they are similar to any other verb with the exception of aspect; the verb
kano can carry agreement, tense and only imperfective aspect, while all the
other verbs have perfective and imperfective aspect. Imperfective aspect is
the morphological aspect (viewpoint aspect) of *kano* in terms of Smith
(1991). According to her, the aspectual features of a verb are determined by
two independent aspectual components. These components are the viewpoint
aspect and situation type. *Viewpoint aspect* is encoded primarily in
morphological affixation, whereas *situation type* include the inherent
aspectual meaning of the verb as well as the use of aspectual adverbials
(Smith, 1991). As it has already been mentioned before the viewpoint aspect
of *kano* is imperfective, whereas its situation type[5] denotes activity. **As far**

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[2] Nakas (1987) calls this class of verbs *verbo-nominal, verbo-adverbial periphrases*,
following the traditional grammar (Tzartzanos, 1953).
[3] In this approach, light verbs are treated as a kind of auxiliary verbs (verbes
supports), because they contribute to the process of nominalization. For example,
syntactic structure such as *I lena apergi (Lena is on strike)* can be nominalized if the
verbs *kano, ime* and *eho* combine with the appropriate deverbal nominals: *kani
aperjia* (Moustaki, 1993).
[4] Another approach on the verb *kano* has been conducted by Vasiliadou (1998).
[5] The basic situation types include distinctions between states (know the answer),
activities (stroll in the park), accomplishments (build a house), semelfactive (cough),
achievements (reach the top). Situation types are further identified in terms of the
interaction of 3 features [+/-telic], [+/- static] [+/-durative]. Viewpoint aspect
involves a distinction of perfective, imperfective and neutral. Perfective aspect

as the LF is concerned, I will try to show that the selection requirements of *kano* are responsible for its interpretation at that level. More specifically, I claim that the distinction between what follows the verb *kano* can show some properties of its LF representation. Also, I will try to show that there is a continuum of lightness in the use of the verb *kano*. Finally, I suggest that *kano* in its lightest use is deleted at LF.

3. Light *kano* vs. idiomatic *kano*

Before I move on to discuss the uses of the light verb *kano*, it would be useful to refer to the use of *kano* in idiomatic constructions. *Kano* can be used in idioms. In this case it is not considered to be a light verb. To classify an expression as an idiom, I use the criteria that have been suggested by Di Sciullo & Williams (1987). The first criterion is that idioms are syntactic objects and the second is that they are listed because of their failure to have a predictable property (usually their meaning). More specifically, idioms are treated like memorized objects, which are called *listemes*. *Listemes* are put in the lexicon, which contains those objects failing to conform to interesting laws. According to the criteria that I adopt the following expressions are idioms:

(1)   a. to   idio   mu   kani
         the same-nom   me-gen   do-3s
         " It makes no difference to me"
      b. kani   to   logariasmo horis   ton   xenothoho
         do-3s   the bill-acc   without   the   hotelier-acc
         " He/she does not take into account the real circumstances"

Furthermore, according to the criteria, which are adopted here, the structure *kano+ concrete, non-referential noun* is an idiom because it has unpredictable meaning. Consider the examples below:

(2)   a. kano   horio
         do-1s   village-acc
         " I agree with someone"
      b. kano   spiti
         do-1s   house-acc
         " I get married"

Note that one of the basic constructions in which light verbs are involved is that which is formed by *a light verb + nominal*. Look at the examples below:

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specifies initial and final points whereas imperfective aspect does not. Neutral specifies the initial point and at least one internal stage.

(3) a. I make progress
    b. I do the shopping

Since the structures *kano + concrete, non-referential noun* (idiomatic use of *kano*) and *kano + nominals* (*kano* as a light verb) are quite similar, I am going to use syntactic tests to disambiguate them. The hypothesis is that if the noun cannot be separated from the verb, then the construction is a lexical unit and thus an idiom. The syntactic tests which are used are the following ones:

- **coordination**

(4). a. *ekanan   horio   ke spiti[6]
       do-3p-past village-acc and house-acc

   b. ekana   ta piata   ke ta   potiria
      do-1s-past the dishes-acc and the glasses-acc
      " I washed the plates and the glasses"

   c. ekanan elejho ke axiologisi tis   paragojikotitas ton ergaton
      do-3p-past check and evaluation the-gen productivity-gen the-gen-pl

workers-gen
      " They checked and evaluated the productivity of workers"

- **topicalization and focus operations**

(5). a. * horio   mas ipe   oti ekanan
      *HORIO   mas ipe   oti ekanan
      village/VILLAGE us tell-3s-past that do-3p-past

   b. to spiti   apofasise   na kani
      the house-acc   decide-3s-past to do-3s
      " The house, he decided to clean it "

   c. TO SPITI   apofasise   na kani
      the house-acc   decide-3s-past to do-3s
      " THE HOUSE, he decided to clean"

   d. prospathia,   tu   zitisan   na kani   megali
      effort-acc   he-gen ask-3p-past to do-3s   big-acc
      " They asked him to make a great effort"

   e. PROSPATHIA, tu   zitisan   na kani
      EFFORT   he-gen ask-3p-past to do-3s
      " They asked him to make AN EFFORT"

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[6] Recall that *kano horio* means "I agree with someone" and *kano spiti* means "I get married".

- **wh-questions**

(6) a. - ti   ekane   o   Jianis?
       what   do-3s-past   the John-nom
       " What did John do?"

   b. - * horio
        village-acc

   c.   - ta   piata
         the dishes-acc

   d. - ipomoni
        patience-acc

- **modification by adjectives**

(7)   a. * ekanan   kalo   horio
           do-3p-past   good   village

   b. ekana   poles   patates
      do-1s-past   many   potatoes-acc
      " I fried a lot of potatoes"

   c. ekana   axiosimioti   proodo
       do-1s-past   remarkable   progress-acc
       " I made remarkable progress"

As it is indicated by the examples above, in the structure *kano+ non-referential, specific noun* the noun cannot be separated from the verb (4a, 5a, 6b, 7a). Thus, that structure is a lexical unit; it is derived from the lexicon and so it is idiom. On the other hand, *LVCs* yield to the above syntactic tests (4b&c, 5b-e, 6c&d, 7b&c), giving us some evidence to believe that syntactic rules are not blind to the internal structure of LVCs. Let us now discuss the properties of the light verb *kano*.

4. The properties of the light verb *kano*.
Consider the structure *kano+nominal*.

4.1   kano+nominal:
The nominal can be an argument or a non-argument.

4.1.1   The nominal is argument
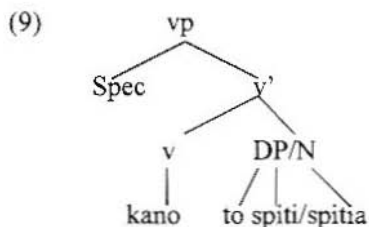Consider the examples below:

(8) a. kano   to spiti
        do-1ˢs the house-acc
        " I construct the house"
        " I build the house"
        " I clean the house"

   b. kano spitia
      do-1s houses-acc
      " I construct houses"

" I build houses"
" I am a builder"

Kano has activity features in its LCS, because its situation type denotes activity. These features require an actor/doer in LCS and an entity affected by the action. In this case, LCS is projected into AS. Consider the linguistic representation of *kano* at LF:

(9)

```
              vp
            /    \
        Spec      v'
                 /  \
                v    DP/N
                |    / | \
              kano  to spiti/spitia
```

The light verb *kano* has the following properties:

☐   *Kano* is an agentive transitive verb that has theta-marking ability
-   The structural representation of *kano* is similar to a main VP

However, the difference with a main VP is that the representation in (9) does not directly correspond to the concepts *htizo (to build)* or *katharizo (to clean)*. The instruction that LF gives to further conceptual processes is limited to that someone does an activity upon an object. The exact mapping of the linguistic representation in (9) onto the appropriate concept is a matter of pragmatics. Note that in (8b) the noun is non- referential; however, the same structural representation stands for (8a&b). They seem to function in the same way, with the exception that the interpretation in (8b) is affected by the bare plural status of the nominal. This is the usual case of bare, plural nominals which in combination with imperfective aspect and present/past tense contribute to the habitual interpretation of an utterance. Since the predicate *kano spitia* is pragmatically recovered, it corresponds to the full predicate *htizo spitia (I build houses)* or *ime htistis (I am a builder)*.

Schematically, the structures (8a&b) follow the rule (i) for Light Verb Construction (LVC) formation in adult Greek:

(i) kano+nominal (argument) →   someone does an activity upon an object: pragmatic recovery →   mapping onto a concept
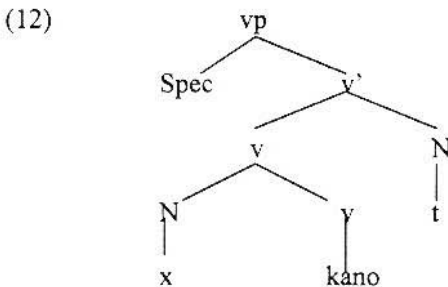
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4.1.2 The nominal is a non-argument.
Look at the examples below:

(10). a. kano prospathia
        do-1s try-acc
        " I try"
     b. kano ipomoni
        do-1s patience-acc
        " I have patience"
     c. kano hares
        do-1s happiness-acc-pl
        " I am happy"

Although the activity features of *kano* in LCS require an agent/doer, LCS is not always projected into AS. This means that the situation type of *kano* (activity) is denoted at the level of LF, but the activity features are not reflected at the level of AS. As a consequence, the deverbal nominal cannot be theta-marked by the light verb *kano* and the implied agent cannot be syntactically expressed. Thus, there is neither theme nor agent at AS. However, the deverbal noun carries AS[7] (Grimshaw 1990, Markantonatou 1992), since it inherits it from its verb. Consider the example below:

(11) Prospathia (Ev (x(y))): an event such that x tries y.

The structural representation of *kano* at LF is depicted in (12):

(12)

```
              vp
            /    \
        Spec      v'
                /    \
               v      N
              / \     |
             N   v    t
             |   |
             x  kano
```

The deverbal noun x can neither be theta-marked by the v *kano* nor be case marked and thus it moves to adjoin to the light v kano forming a single predicate. What exactly occurs is that the deverbal noun x is incorporated into *kano* at LF; as a result a Light Verb Constuction (LVC) is formed. The LVC bears an AS inherited from the AS of the deverbal nominal. In this

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[7] The issue whether a deverbal nominal is capable of carrying AS is beyond the scope of this paper. For detailed discussion on this issue see Grimshaw (1990) and Markantonatou (1992).

way, the linguistic representation of LVC at LF maps precisely onto a concept in mental lexicon. Consider the rule (ii) for the mapping onto a concept:

(ii) kano+ deverbal nomimal(Ev(x(y))) ˒ complex predicate(Ev(x(y))) at LF ˒ mapping onto a concept which is nearly the same with that of the equivalent main verb

The contribution of *kano* to the LVC which is formed is that the structure *kano+ deverbal nominal* (LVC) has a temporally bound interpretation, due to the aspectual features of activity of the verb *kano*. This can be clarified by the examples below:

> (13) a. kano   ipomoni
>   do-1s   patience-acc
>   " I have patience"
>   b. ime   ipomonetikos
>   be-1s   patient-nom
>   " I am patient"

Note that the above predicates cannot be synonymous. (13a) is a temporally bound predicate whereas (13b) is a purely stative one. This difference can be attributed to the aspectual features of activity that contribute to a temporally bound interpretation of the structure *kano+ deverbal nominal*.

4.1   kano + clausal complement.
The clausal complement can be a Small Clause (SC), a CP or a MoodP.
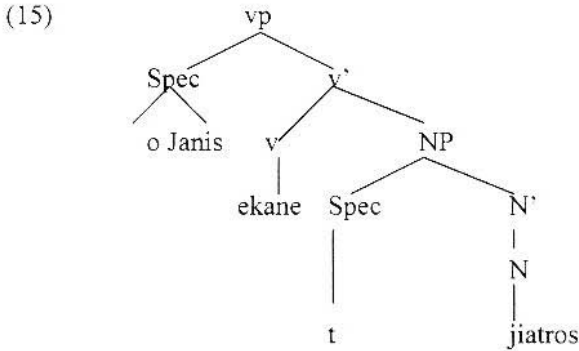
4.2.1.   Small Clause
Look at the example below:

> (14)   o Jianis ekane   jiatros
>   the John do-3s-past   doctor-nom
>   " John was a doctor"

In this case *kano* c-selects a small clause: ekane[jiatros o Jianis]. LCS of *kano* in which an actor/doer is required is not projected into AS. Consider the structural representation of *kano* at LF as it is depicted in (15).

(15)

```
                        vp
                   ┌────────┴────────┐
                Spec                  v'
              ┌────┴────┐        ┌────┴────────┐
            o Janis     v                       NP
                        │              ┌─────────┴────────┐
                      ekane          Spec                 N'
                                      │                    │
                                      │                    N
                                      │                    │
                                      t                  jiatros
```

The DP *O Jianis* occupies the Spec position of NP. It moves to the Spec position of vp. Raising of the subject is required for predication requirements at LF and nominative case requirements at syntactic level. *Kano* cannot map on its own onto the appropriate concept in mental lexicon. The exact mapping presupposes that a complex predicate is formed at LF by incorporation: SC is incorporated into the light *kano*. Consider the rule (iii) below:

(iii)   Kano(+ past) + SC → complex predicate at LF ᐟ exact mapping
         onto the concept: in the past I had the property to be…x

Note that the activity features of *kano* contribute to its incompatibility with purely stative adjectives. Consider the examples (16a&b) and (17a&b):

(16) a. ekane   jiatros
         do-3s-past   doctor-nom
         " She/he was being a doctor"
      b. itan   jiatros
         be-3s-past   doctor-nom
         " She/he was a doctor"
(17) a. *o   Jianis ekane   xanthos
         the John do-3s-past blond-nom
      b. o   Jianis   itan   xanthos
         the John-nom be-3s-past   blond-nom
         " John was blond"

As the above examples indicate, *kano* imposes temporal requirements on what follows; hence, the ungrammaticality of (17a). This is not the case for the verb *ime* (to be) which lacks completely activity features.

4.2.2. CP

Consider the examples below:

(18) a. o   Jianis   ekane   ton   exipno
         the John-nom do-3s-past the-acc clever-acc

    b. o   Jianis   ekane   pos ine exipnos
         the John-nom do-3s-past that is-3s clever-nom
         "John pretended that he was clever"

(19) a. o   Jianis   kani jia politikos
          the John-nom do-3s for politician-nom

    b. o   Jianis   kani jia na jini/ine   politikos
          the John-nom   do-3s   to   become-3s/be-3s politician-nom
          " John is suited to be politician"

Note that in the examples (18a&19a), *ton exipno* and *jia politikos* are not arguments but reduced CPs; thus, the accusative case of *ton exipno* is a morphological, not a structural one. The equivalent full CPs are indicated by the examples (18b&19b). In the above examples, the actor/doer which is required at LCS of the verb *kano* is reflected at AS level as agent. Therefore, *kano* has an external argument which obligatorily controls the subject of the subordinate clause. Thus, the external argument of *kano* is co-referential with the subject of the subordinate clause. *Kano* is considered to be a control predicate. Look at its structural representation at the level of LF.

(20)
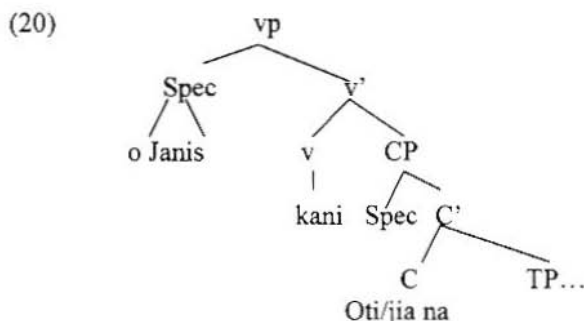
With respect to the mapping of *kano* onto a concept in mental lexicon, note that CPs are incorporated into *kano* at LF, and thus the exact mapping of the linguistic representation of *kano* in (20) onto a concept is being realized. Look at the rules (iv) and (v):

(iv) Kano+ oti → complex predicate at LF ‣ mapping onto the concept: to pretend

(v) Kano+ jia na ‣ complex predicate at LF ‣ mapping onto the concept:

to fit for something

Furthermore, note that due to aspectual features of *kano* (activity) utterances such as (21) are excluded.
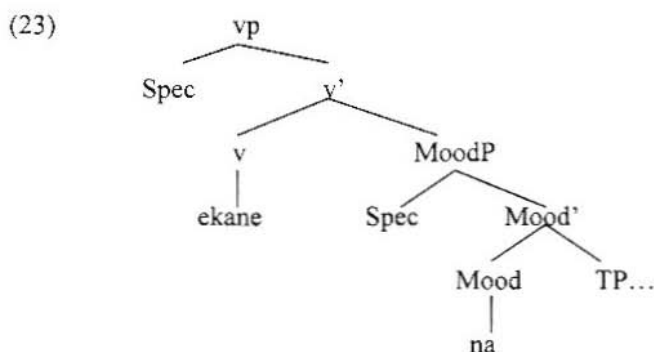
(21) *o Jiannis   kani   jia xanthos
        The John-nom   fit-3s   for blond-nom

4.2.3   MoodP

Look at the example below:

(22) Ekane   na fiji
        do-3s-past to   leave-3s-subj.
        " She/he tried to leave"

Kano has an external argument at the level of AS and thus it is considered to be control predicate. Its structural representation is quite similar with that of (20). Consider the LF representation of *kano* in (23).

(23)

```
                    vp
          _____/  \
       Spec           v'
                  ____/  _____
                 v              MoodP
                 |            __/   \__
               ekane       Spec      Mood'
                                   __/   \__
                                 Mood      TP...
                                  |
                                  na
```

There is incorporation at the level of LF between light *kano* and MoodP; the complex predicate (LVC) which is formed maps onto the concept *to try to*. Consider the rule (vi):

(vi) Ekane+ na ‣ complex predicate at LF → mapping onto the concept: to try to

4.3 Some generalizations on the structures: (i) kano+nominal (ii) kano+ clausal complement

- The combination of the light verb *kano* with what follows is crucial to the interpretation of the whole predicate.
- *Kano* remains at LF to be interpreted. The nominal and clausal complement are incorporated into the light v at LF except from the structure *kano+ nominal (argument)* and so the exact mapping of the linguistic representation onto a concept is being realized.
- In the structure *kano+ nominal (argument)* the exact mapping onto a concept in mental lexicon is a matter of pragmatics.
- The situation type of *kano* (activity) imposes temporal requirements on its complements.
- The LCS is completely projected into AS only in the structure *kano+nominal (argument)*. In the structures *kano+ deverbal nominal, kano+ SC* there is no projection of LCS at AS at all.

5. The causative *kano* + SC/MoodP

The causative *kano* appears with a clausal complement which is a SC or a MoodP. Consider the example below:

(24) a. ta   nea   ekanan   [ti Maria   harumeni]
      the   news do-3p-past the Maria-acc   happy
         " The news made Mary happy"
     b. ta   nea ekanan   [ti Maria   na   herete]
      the   news do-3p-past the Maria-acc to   be happy-3s
       " The news made Mary to be happy"

The causative *kano* contributes to the formation of periphrastic causative structures. A causer argument is introduced by the causative verb *kano* at AS. Consider the structural representation of the causative *kano* below:

(25)
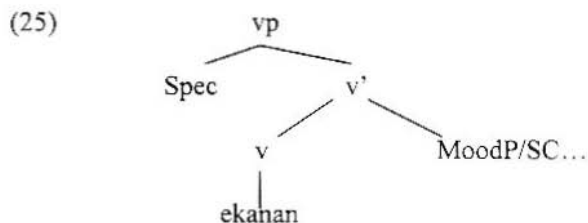
The subject of the SC or MoodP is exceptionally case marked. Note that SC/MoodP are incorporated at LF into causative *kano* and in this way the mapping of the complex predicate onto a concept in mental lexicon is possible. Consider the rule (vii):

(vii) Causative kano+ SC/MoodP → complex predicate at LF →
       exact mapping onto a concept

6. Kano in pseudo-cleft constructions and wh-questions
Look at the examples below:

(26)a. afto   pu   ekane   I Maria   itan na figi   amesos
       this-acc which do-3s-past the Mary-nom was to leave-3s-subj.
                                                                immediately
       " What Mary did was to leave immediately"
    b. Ti   ekanes   htes?   Diavaza
       what-acc do-2s-past yesterday?   Read-1s-past
       " What did you do yesterday?"   " I read"

It is indicated that *kano* stands for a full VP predicate (it stands for *fiji amesos* in the case of (26a) and *diavaza* in (26b)), in the sense that it is replaced by the main VP. Although, *kano* carries activity features at the level of LCS, the required actor/doer is not reflected at AS at all. The fact that *kano* keeps its situation type in structures such as (26a&b) is indicated by the incompatibility of *kano* with a purely stative predicate. Consider the example (27) below:

(27)   * afto   pu   ekane   itan na ine xanthos
          this-acc   which   do-3s-past was to be blond-nom-masc
        " *What he did was to be a blond"

However, *kano* in pseudo-cleft contsructions and who-questions does not keep its morphological aspect, which is the imperfective one. As it is shown by the example below, *kano* lacks imperfective aspect:

(28)afto   pu   ekane   itan na tilefonisi amesos   to jiatro
    this-acc   which   do-3s-past was to call-3s   immediately the doctor-acc
      " What she did was to call the doctor immediately"

Therefore, it could be said that although *kano* lacks morphological aspect, it can stand for an agentive predicate, due to its situation type. In the latter case, *kano* does not contribute to the Full Interpretation of the structure at the level of LF (Chomsky, 1995). Since *kano* seems to be a pleonastic element at LF, it can be suggested that *kano* is deleted at LF. This is the case for the lightest use of *kano*.

Conclusion

In this paper I made a distinction between the idiomatic use of *kano* and the use of it as a light verb. Moreover, I discussed the properties of the light verb *kano* in some of the constructions in which it is involved. In general terms, two main groups were identified with respect to the LF representation of the verb *kano*: In the first one –where the structures *kano+ nominal, kano+ clausal complement*, causative *kano+ clausal complement* belong- kano remains at LF, whereas in the second one, in which *pseudo-cleft constructions and wh-questions* belong, *kano* is deleted at LF. Furthermore, it was argued that the least light use of *kano* is represented by the structure *kano + nominal (argument)*, while its most light use by *pseudo-cleft constructions and wh-questions*. It was also showed that the exact mapping of the light v onto a concept has to do with pragmatic considerations in the structure *kano+ nominal (argument)*, whereas in the remaining cases the mapping is realized by incorporation of the complement into a light v at LF.

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