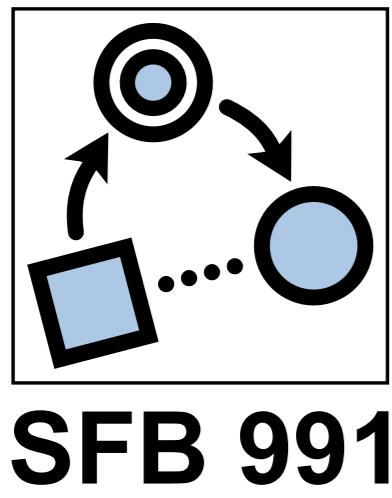


# Transparency in multi-word expressions: An LTAG approach



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## Overview

- Aims:**
- to model the *transparency* (modifiability, compositionality) of idiomatic MWE within the framework of Lexicalized Tree-Adjoining Grammar (LTAG)
- ⇒ three different strategies for three types of transparent MWE
- General questions:**
- How to implement transparency without provoking overgeneration?
  - To what degree does transparency imply morpho-synt. flexibility?
  - How to account for morpho-syntactic preferences/fixations?
  - How to integrate underlying conceptual/figurative mappings?

## Framework: LTAG + frames

- Lexicalized Tree-Adjoining Grammar (LTAG)**
- lexicon: lexicalized *elementary trees*
  - combinatorial operations: *substitution* (replacement of leaf node) or *adjunction* (replacement of inner node)
  - extended domain of locality (EDL): elementary trees can be made large enough to span any MWE.
- Frame representations**
- base-labelled typed feature structures + unification (Kallmeyer & Osswald, 2013)

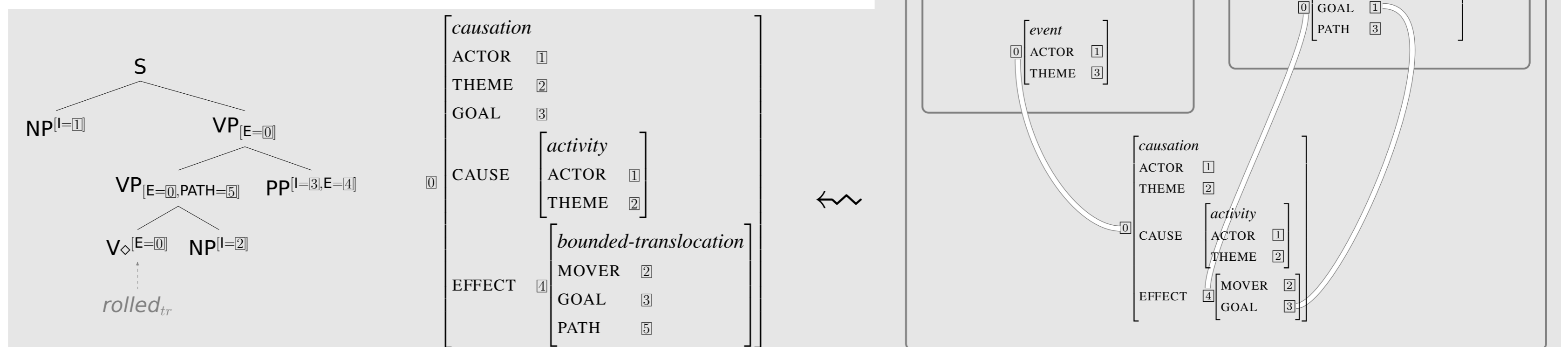
## Argument structure constructions

Contrast between intransitive and transitive directed motion constructions:

(1) He rolled (the barrel) into the house.

**Proposed analysis:** constructional analysis of Kallmeyer & Osswald (2013); *rolled* may anchor different tree templates with different argument linking patterns; tree templates are further factorized in the metagrammar.

**Open questions:** Do we rather want to let the object NP immediately trigger the transitive reading? Can we implement a more general linking theory based on abstract roles such as ACTOR and UNDERGOER (Van Valin, 2005)?

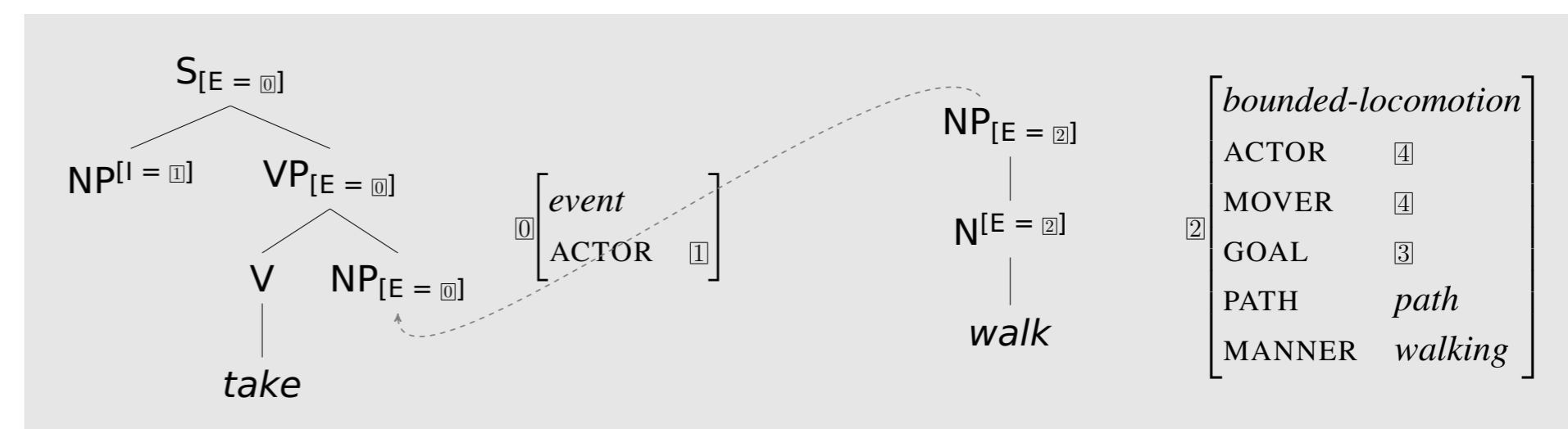


## Light-verb constructions

**Proposed analysis:** syntax remains rather unchanged; semantics of the light verb and the event noun are unified at the root nodes (cf. Culicover & Jackendoff, 2005:225).

**Transparency:** morphology and syntax of the object NP are largely unconstrained (*take (three) walks; take the easiest walk*)

**Open questions:** not applicable to every event noun (*#take a kiss*) - How to constrain the event type in the light verb? One single entry for light verb *take*?

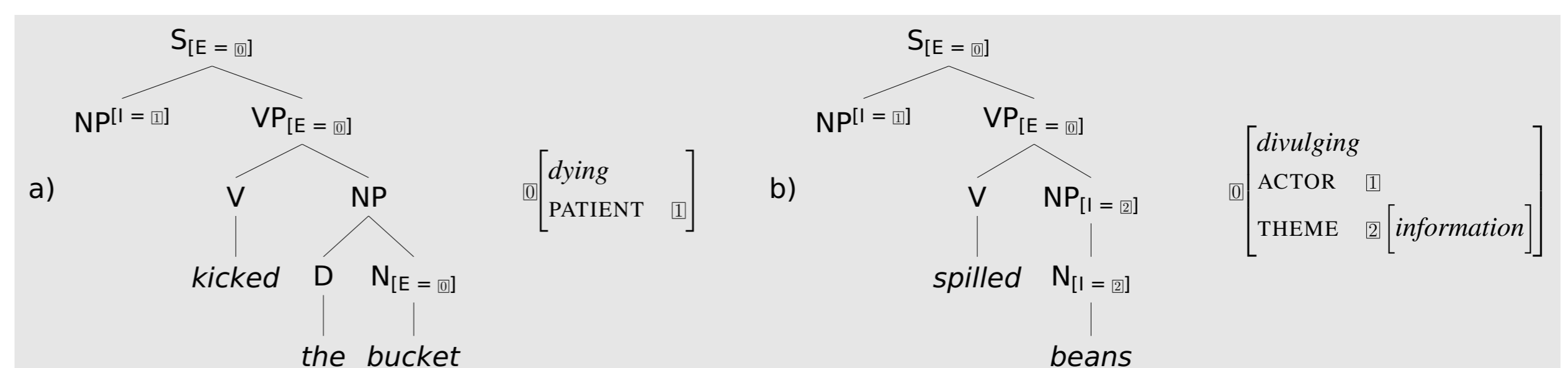


## Compositional/non-compositional figurative MWE

Contrast in the semantic target of NP modifiers:

- (2) He kicked the proverbial / social / #rusty bucket.  
(3) He spilled the hot / juicy / political beans about the meeting.

**Proposed analysis:** different interface patterns.  
**Open question:** What is the connection between the syntax and the figurative/conceptual dimension?



- (4) The strings [that Pat pulled] got John the job. (Sailer, 2000:(420-b))  
(5) Pat pulled some strings for Chris. But Alex didn't have access to any strings. (Manfred Sailer, p.c.)