

ADJECTIVAL SCALES AND ASPECTUALITY OF DEADJECTIVAL VERBS: LOOKING FOR PRINCIPLES OF CORRELATION

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BACKGROUND

Deadjectival verbs are verbs derived from adjectives via affixal derivation.

We distinguish so-called inchoative deadjectivals and causative deadjectivals (cf. notion of causative – inchoative alternation [Hale & Keyser 2002])

Asymmetry of (1) – (3):

- (1) *The tank emptied in/*for an hour.*
(2) *The sky darkened in/for an hour.*
(3) *The beer cooled in/for 10 minutes.*

The asymmetry is explained through the difference between types of adjectival scales:

closed scales → verbs are telic
open scales → verbs are atelic

Cases such as (3) are considered as verbs of variable telicity. The telicity depends on the so-called **standard value**.

If an adjective has a maximum value (*empty*), the deadjectival verb must have a telos. If it does not have a maximal value (*hot, fast*) then the availability of telos depends on the context.

- Cf:
(4) **The lake cooled in an hour.*
(5) *The beer cooled in an hour.*

Situation described in (4) cannot have a salient bound [Hay, Kennedy & Levin 1999] while (5) can have it: the salient bound for cooling beer is the temperature the beer must have to be able to be consumed.

In such cases, we say that the adjective *cool* has a standard context-dependent value.

CHALLENGES

The telicity depends on the choice of affix:

HUNGARIAN [Csirmaz 2009]

The telicity depends on the choice of prefix:

- (6) A póló száradt
the shirt.NOM dried
'The shirt dried / was drying'
(atelic)
- (7) A póló meg száradt
the shirt.NOM MEG dried
'The shirt dried' (telic)
- (8) János félig meg / ?fel
J.NOM halfway MEG / FEL
melegítette levest
warmed soup.ACC
'Janos warmed the soup halfway'
- (9) János egy kicsit ??meg / fel
J.NOM a little.ACCMEG / FEL
melegítette a levest
warmed the soup.ACC
'Janos warmed the soup a bit'

FRENCH [Martin & Tovená 2012]

-ifier/-iser: standard-endstate-entailing verb
a-, en-, é-: comparative-endstate entailing

- (10) *clarifier* 'to make clear' *éclaircir* 'to make clear(er)'
mollifier 'to make soft' (*r*)*amollir* 'to make soft(er)'

RUSSIAN

The inherent semantics of the adjective is preserved even in the presence of a telicizing prefix:

- (11) *Vas'a polnost'ju ras-tolst-el
V. absolutely PFV-fat-PAST.M
Intended: '*Vasya has got absolutely fat'.

Preliminary conclusions:

- correlation between the adjectival scale and the aspectual features of the verb cannot always be predicted by inherent semantics of the adjective
- there are systems in which the semantics of the affix but not the stem predetermines the telic features of the verb

The deadjectival verb is not an accomplishment:

CHINESE (PUTONGHUA)

- (12) ??tā zài yī nián nèi
3SG in one year in
gāo le
high PFV
Intended: 'He grew up in a year'.
- (13) *tā gāo le yī nián
3SG high PFV one year
Intended: 'He grew for a year'
- (14) tā yī shùnjiān gāo
3SG one instantly high
le
PFV
He grew up instantly.
- (15) *lǐsì zhèngzài pàng
L. PROG fat
le liǎng gōngjīng
PFV two kilo
Intended: 'Lisi is gaining two kilos'
[Lin 2004]

The idea is that deadjectival verbs are always achievements but not accomplishments. Even when the atelic interpretation is supported by adverbials, "The durative adverbial is modifying the resulting state, not the actual change of state" [Lin 2004]:

- (16) #The sun dried the clothes for an hour, but they're still wet.
(17) *The sun has dried the towel for two hours.*
??=> 'The sun has dried the towel, and the towel stayed dry for two hours.'

The idea seems counter-intuitive since it is not true that the towel is dry at the beginning of the process of drying.

But there are languages in which ALL deadjectivals cannot be accomplishments because they are punctives:

TOMO KAN (Dogon < Niger Kongo):

- | | | | |
|-----------------|------------|------|-----|
| (18) | PFV | IPFV | HAB |
| 'deepen' | nòmbi -ri | * | OK |
| 'lengthen' | gɛ bi -ri | * | OK |
| 'become bad' | mwe ji -ri | * | OK |
| 'get fat' | màndi -li | * | OK |
| 'blacken' | je n-di | * | OK |
| 'cool' | twe n-di | * | OK |
| 'become smooth' | we re -di | * | OK |
| 'wear out' | ko llo -gi | * | OK |

Consider also Russian examples:

- (19) ??Vas'a sejčas tolst-e-et.
V. now fat-INCH-PRES.3SG
'Vas'a is now getting fat'.

Telic interpretation and presence of durative reading are interdependent parameters, and that's why we consider them to be both indicators of instantaneous events.

Scalarity is not universal?

HILL MARI

(20) Inchoatives:

		'for an hour'	'in an hour'
üksäs	'cool'	+	+
söksëmäs	'warm up'	?	+
piŋgödëmäs	'harden'?		+
sápas	'turn sour'	?	+
arlas	'sober'	?	+
müängäs	'ripen'	?	+
jaksárgas	'reddden'	??	+
toštëmäs	'wear out'	??	+
közgemäs	'get fat'	*	+
əşəŋgas	'become clever'	*	+
nelemäs	'grow heavy'	*	+
səŋgemäs	'get old'	*	+

(21) Causatives:

müän	'sweet'	*	+
kəmda	'wide'	+	+
kuzə	'narrow'	+	+
kustəlgə	'lightweight'	+	+
mətək	'short'	+	+
oxər	'empty'	+	+

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