

Aspectual composition with verbal prefixes/particles in Germanic and Slavic languages

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In the talk we provide a deeper analysis of the function of prefixes/particles in aspectual composition and the role they play in realizing a telic incremental theme predication (ITP). Incremental theme verbs (e.g. *eat*, *drink*) are well known for the fact that the referential properties of the incremental theme arguments (ITA) affect the telicity of the whole predication (e.g. Krifka 1986, Filip 1993/1999). We focus on the contrast between Germanic and Slavic, which differ concerning aspectual composition. Slavic languages, like Polish (1), make use of the perfective/imperfective opposition to realize a telic ITP. Germanic languages lack a grammaticalized aspectual distinction and mainly employ nominal determination, i.e. (in)definite article, for aspectual composition. In contrast, most Slavic languages, with the exception of Upper Silesian Polish and Bulgarian/Macedonian, lack a definite article.

- (1) (a) *On pił wodę (*w godzinę).*
 he drank.IMPF water.ACC in hour
 'He drank water.'
- (b) *On wy-pił wodę w godzinę.*
 he WY-drank.PF water.ACC in hour
 'He drank the water in an hour.'

Similarly to the Slavic languages, Germanic ones have a large set of verbal particles (Stiebels 1996, Müller 2002), which interact with aspectual composition. This is exemplified by German (2), in which case the verbal particle requires a quantized ITA.

- (2) (a) **Er hat Wasser aus-getrunken.*
 he has water AUS-drunk
- (b) *Er hat das Wasser aus-getrunken.*
 he has DEF water AUS-drunk
 'He drank the water out.'

The German examples look very much like what we can observe in Upper Silesian (3). A definite article is required to get a telic reading. In addition, the verb has to be used in the perfective aspect, like in Polish, for a telic interpretation. This is exhibited by the contrast between (3) and (4), as the unprefixed and imperfective verbs in (4) only license an atelic reading, irrespective whether the definite article is present or not.

- (3) (a) *#Łon wy-pił woda.*
 he WY-drank.PF water.ACC
- (b) *Łon wy-pił ta woda (za godzinę).*
 he WY-drank.PF DEF water.ACC in hour
 'He drank the water in an hour.'

- (4) (a) *Łon jod jabk-o (*za godzina).*
 he ate.IMPF apple-ACC.SG in hour
 'He ate/was eating (of) an apple.'
- (b) *Łon jod te jabk-o (*za godzina).*
 he ate.IMPF DEF apple-ACC.SG in hour
 'He ate/was eating (of) the apple.'

The prefixed verbs in the three languages require a quantized ITA, as shown by the definite interpretation in (1b) and the necessary presence of the definite article in (2b)/(3b). Nevertheless, only in the Slavic languages (mentioned above) do prefixes add a perfective reading. The data raise the question whether in German, Polish and Upper Silesian Polish telicity (in incremental theme predications) is really dependent on perfective aspect or rather results from the lexical semantic of the prefix.

The data for the three investigated languages were elicited from native speakers and supplemented by data from the literature (for example Wierzbicka 1967, Müller 2002). We used grammaticality tests which were discussed by, for example, Filip (1993/1999) among others, to decide whether certain constructions get a (i) definite, (ii) perfective and/or (iii) telic reading in the investigated languages.

Filip, Hana (1993/1999): *Aspect, Eventuality Types and Noun Phrase Semantics*. New York/London: Garland.

Krifka, Manfred (1986): *Nominalreferenz und Zeitkonstitution*. München: Fink.

Müller, Stefan (2002): *Complex predicates - verbal complexes, resultative constructions and particle verbs in German*. Stanford: CSLI.

Stiebels, Barbara (1996): *Lexikalische Argumente und Adjunkte - zum semantischen Beitrag von verbalen Präfixen und Partikeln*. Berlin: Studia Grammatika.

Wierzbicka, Anna (1967): On the Semantics of the Verbal Aspect in Polish. In: Jakobson, Roman. *To Honor Roman Jakobson. Essays on the Occasion of his Seventieth Birthday*. The Hague: Mouton.