

Temporal modification of event kinds

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Manner vs temporal modification

- ▶ Event kinds are the counterpart of nominal kinds (Carlson 1977) in the event domain. Event kinds can be realized by event tokens.
- ▶ It has been claimed that the formation of event kinds is restricted: Event kinds take manner modification, but not spatiotemporal modification (Landman & Morzycki 2003):
 - (1) Maria hat **langsam** getanzt und Jan hat auch **so** getanzt.
Mary has slowly danced and John has also thus danced
'Mary danced slowly, and John danced like that too.'
 - (2) * Maria hat **am Dienstag** getanzt und Jan hat auch **so** getanzt.
Mary has on Tuesday danced and John has also thus danced
'Mary danced on Tuesday, and John danced like that too.'

Is the restriction necessary?

- ▶ Following Landman & Morzycki (2003), manner adverbials are event kind modifiers, but temporal modification only applies to event tokens.

(3) *slowly*: $\lambda P \lambda e_k [\mathbf{slow}(P)(e_k)]$

(4) *on Tuesday*: $\lambda P \lambda e [P(e) \wedge \tau(e) \subseteq \mathbf{Tuesday}]$
but not $\lambda P \lambda e_k [\mathbf{on-Tuesday}(P)(e_k)]$

- ▶ I argue that event kinds should be allowed to take temporal modification.
- ▶ Evidence from English verbal gerunds: event kind descriptions that accept temporal modification.

Verbal gerunds as event kind descriptions

- ▶ Verbal gerunds are nominalized *-ing* forms that take direct complements:

(5) Clay('s)/his/him **singing the song**

- ▶ Verbal and nominal gerunds in English are distributed differently. Verbal gerunds cannot inhabit **narrow containers** (Vendler 1967):

(6) *Clay('s) singing the song took place at midnight/was slow.

(7) Clay's singing **of** the song took place at midnight/was slow.

- ▶ I adopt the analysis by Grimm & McNally (2015): Verbal gerunds are event kind descriptions; in contrast, nominal gerunds can be either kind- or token-referring.

Verbal gerunds accept temporal modifiers

- ▶ It is predicted that as event kind descriptions, verbal gerunds should not take temporal modification.
- ▶ Examples from the British National Corpus (2007) show that verbal gerunds take temporal modifiers:
 - (8) Does **my writing this down now** mean that I am a little bit reconciled to myself?
 - (9) [...] in the hope that Edward would eventually get launched again on crusade, a hope stimulated by **his taking the cross in 1287** when he vowed to depart in June 1293 and by the fall of Acre in 1291.
- ▶ The narrow container data show that unmodified verbal gerunds are not token-referring expressions.

The problem

- ▶ Kinds are instantiated by tokens through spatiotemporal localization (Mueller-Reichau 2013). However, temporally located verbal gerunds do not become token-referring: they are still not compatible with narrow containers.

(10) *Clay's winning the game yesterday took place at midnight.

- ▶ The narrow container data have led to analyses of verbal gerunds as facts/propositions (Portner 1992, Asher 1993, Zucchi 1993). They could be preferred for easier treatment of temporal modifiers:
 - ▶ *Clay's winning the game yesterday* interpreted as *the fact that Clay won the game yesterday*

Frequency modifiers to the rescue

- ▶ Verbal gerunds also take frequency adverbs:
- (11) So when he rehearsed the scene he based it on his experience at the chemist's, an example of his **always** having to make contact with a real, lived emotion. (BNC)
- ▶ Frequency modifiers show a similar problem: They describe the distribution of event tokens, but the modified expression remains kind-referring.
 - ▶ Gehrke & McNally (2015): Frequency adjectives are interpreted as event kind modifiers.
- (12) *frequent* as in a *frequent* downdraft:
 $\lambda P \lambda e_k [P(e_k) \wedge \mathbf{frequent}(e_k)]$ where
 $\forall e_k, i [\mathbf{frequent}(e_k) \text{ at } i \leftrightarrow \mathbf{distribution}(\{e : \mathbf{R}(e, e_k) \text{ at } i\}) = \mathit{high}]$

Proposal

- ▶ Temporal and frequency modifiers can be treated in similar ways.
- (13) *yesterday*: $\lambda P \lambda e_k [P(e_k) \wedge \mathbf{yesterday}(e_k)]$ where
 $\lambda P \lambda e_k [P(e_k) \wedge \forall e, i [\mathbf{R}(e, e_k) \text{ at } i \rightarrow \tau(e) \subseteq \mathbf{yesterday} \text{ at } i]]$
- ▶ The formation of event kinds is less restricted than assumed.
- (14) *clumsily*: $\lambda P \lambda e_k [\mathbf{clumsily}(P)(e_k)]$
(15) *yesterday*: $\lambda P \lambda e_k [\mathbf{yesterday}(P)(e_k)]$
- ▶ **Conclusion:** Temporally modified verbal gerunds should not be an argument against the event kind analysis.

Selected references

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A short paper can be found in the online proceedings.
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