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SEMELFACTIVE VERBS AND ACTIVITIES: CORPUS-CONTEXTUAL AND COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

ДІСЛОВА СЕМЕЛЬФАКТИВИ ТА ДІЯЛЬНОСТІ: КОРПУСНО-КОНТЕКСТУАЛЬНИЙ ТА ПОРІВНЯЛЬНИЙ АНАЛІЗ

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The article is devoted to the study of criteria for distinguishing aspectual classes of predicates in the modern English language. In particular, the works of M. Moens, K. Smith, B. Comrie, D. Doughty, J. Doling, S. Rothstein were analyzed. The concept of the aspectual category at the predicate level is highlighted and its lexical type is considered. The verbs of the semelfactive and activity class are examined. The criteria for dividing semelfactive verbs and activities into separate aspectual classes are presented on specific examples.

The lexical aspect of a verb is a part of the way in which that verb is structured in relation to time. Any event, state, process, or action which a verb expresses-collectively, any eventuality-may also be said to have the same lexical aspect.

Activities do not have a terminal point (a point before which the activity cannot be said to have taken place, and after which the activity cannot continue). These verbs do not foreknow any limit in their progress. The activities can be infinite in theory and the continuance of its realization cannot determine its discontinuance in any way.

The verbs we use to describe one-time actions can ultimately be described as semelfactives. These verbs express actions that happen very quickly and without the result or out. They are able to express the value of multiplicity regardless of the form in which they occur. They are characterized as dynamic, atelic and instantaneous. Since they are single-stage events, semelfactives are intrinsically bounded.

During the work on the article, several methods of analysis were used, namely corpus-contextual, comparative and descriptive.

The conclusion summarizes the main results of research, which, in turn, determine the relevance of further study of the aspectual and structural features of verbs of the class of semelfactives and activities. Observations and conclusions made in the course of the study are illustrated by examples from the British National Corpus (BNC).

Key words: aspectuality, telicity, semelfactives, activities, predicate.

Стаття присвячена дослідженню критеріїв для виокремлення аспектуальних класів дієслів-предикатів у сучасній англійській мові. Зокрема проаналізовано праці М. Моенса, К. Сміт, Б. Комрі, Д. Дауті, Дж. Дьолінг, С. Ротстайн.

Виділено поняття категорії аспектуальності на рівні предиката та розглянуто його лексичний тип. Проаналізовано дієслова класу семельфактивів та діяльностей. На конкретних прикладах обгрутовано критерії розподілу дієслів семельфактивів та діяльностей на окремі аспектуальні класи.

Лексичний аспект дієслова – це частина способу, яким це дієслово структуровано у зв'язку з часом. Можна також сказати, що будь-яка подія, стан, процес або дія, які виражає дієслово – у сукупності, будь-яка подія – мають той самий лексичний аспект.

Дієслова діяльності не мають кінцевої точки (точка, до якої не можна сказати, що дія відбулася, і після якої дія не може продовжуватися). Ці дієслова не передбачають жодних обмежень у своєму прогресі. Діяльності теоретично можуть бути нескінченими, і продовження їх здійснення жодним чином не може визначати їх припинення.

Слова, які ми використовуємо для опису одноразових дій зрештою можна описати як семельфактиви. Ці дієслова виражають дії, що відбуваються дуже швидко і без результату. Вони здатні виражати значення кратності незалежно від форми, у якій вони зустрічаються. Для них характерні ознаки динамічності, граничності та миттєвості. Оскільки вони є одноразовими діями, семельфактиви є внутрішньо обмеженими.

Під час роботи над статтею використано декілька методів аналізу, а саме корпусно-контекстуальний, порівняльний та описовий.

У висновку узагальнено основні результати досліджень, які, своєю чергою, зумовлюють актуальність подальшого вивчення аспектуальних та структурних особливостей дієслів класу семельфактивів та діяльностей. Спостереження і висновки, зроблені в ході дослідження, обгрунтовані прикладами з Британського Національного Корпусу (БНК).

Ключові слова: аспектуальність, граничність, семельфактиви, діяльності, предикат.

Formulation of the scientific problem. Our experience of events is deeply rooted in the perception of time, and these events can take on many, complex, temporal configurations. For instance, we can listen to the radio right now, tomorrow, yesterday, every afternoon, while taking a job, before having dinner, for several hours, etc. Likewise, this temporal structure is coded in every human language, such that any situation description, no matter how simple, provides temporal information.

In narratives, as in experience, events have varying duration, do not always occur in continuous sequence, and do not always wait for the previous event to finish before beginning. Complex system of language cues are employed to capture this rich temporal structure, and these cues arise from multiple sources, such as grammatical markers, lexical categories, and inherent semantics of events.

Analysis of the latest investigations of the question. If the distinction between the aspectual classes of achievements and accomplishments has been controversial, the aspectual class of semelfactives is even more controversial in this regard. Semelfactive verbs were usually interpreted as achievements. B. Comrie [3] was the first to note the features of this aspectual class. However, they received large-scale coverage in the studies of K. Smith [13]. The author defined semelfactives as unlimited achievements (atelic achievements) [13, p. 180–181]. In the classification of M. Moens and M. Steedman, we find the fifth class of verbs – instant verbs, which in all their properties and examples coincide with semelfactives. S. Rothstein notes the property of some verbs to express a semelfactive value, which is limited and immediate, but does not distinguish them into a separate aspectual class. According to her statement, semelfactives, subjected to the summation operation,

form verbs of the activity category and are non-finite [7, p. 183–186].

The main **aim** of the work is the analysis of verbs of the categories of semelfactives and activities as separate classes of the lexical aspect, their comparison, as well as the determination of their similar and dissimilar features.

Presentation of the basic material and interpretation of the results of the investigation. Semelfactives and activities are known to be related.

Semelfactives are verbs such as *kick*, *knock*, *jump*, *skip*, *flap(its wings)*, *wink*, which denote single actions, in the sense that knock (on the door), for example, may be understood as denoting a single event in which an object is brought in contact sharply with a door **once**. These events can be counted: (40), (41), (42) asserts that someone brought an appropriate object in contact with the door once, twice, three times and (43), (44), (45) that someone left the ground by jumping once, twice, three times.

(40) *He knocked three times, and the door swung open* [BNC H89 390].

(41) *Laidlaw stopped outside Room 4, glanced round to see that nobody was about, then knocked twice* [BNC EF1 1928].

(42) *He knocked once on the door, and it was instantly opened, not by the black man whom he had quite been expecting, but by Pauline Simonescu herself* [BNC C8S 3046].

(43) *She jumped three times, and her voice squeaked a little as she said, 'Much better; thank you...'* [BNC JY2 2809].

(44) *My mum jumped once and screamed* [BNC HR9 1577].

(45) *She jumped twice at the unexpected prezy, but Cathedral pigeons are raised on bread and pretty soon my bird was tucking in, which is when I followed*

up – a bit harder – with a handful of precinct gravel [BNC G02 908].

When they occur in the progressive **with a semelfactive reading** they induce the imperfective paradox. Each of the examples in (46), (47) can be used to describe a situation in which a single knock or a single kick was interrupted:

(46) *Dave was knocking hard when he saw me, so he turned it into a tap instead* (and didn't knock hard) [BNC BNC 2178].

(47) *Frank was kicking him when he saw me, so he stopped midway* (and didn't kick him) [BNC HJH 877].

The fact that these induce the imperfective paradox indicate that semelfactives are quantized (in the sense of Krifka 1992, 1998). They denote minimal events such that if *e* is in the denotation of a semelfactive predicate no part of *e* is also in the denotation of that predicate. They also occur with the telic temporal modifiers in α time. In a context of a pole vault or, a slow motion film, (48) is acceptable on the single event reading:

(48) *Sally jumped in three seconds* [BNC B0B 1030].

However, all semelfactives are homonymous with activity predicates, and these activity predicates occur with atelic temporal modifiers, and do not induce the imperfective paradox:

(49) *Karen knocked on the door for several minutes, then opened it without waiting* [BNC ECK 2523].

(50) *Hari knocked on the door a couple of minutes and it was opened by an elderly lady who stared down at her with a frown* [BNC CKD 1780].

(51) *Someone was knocking at the door when the phone rang* [BNC G13 2323].

(52) *A farmer was knocking on the door when mother arrived* [BNC HER 435].

Importantly, as we shall see, while all semelfactive predicates have a homonymous activity reading, not all activities have a homonymous semelfactive reading. *Run, swim, and walk* have only activity readings.

As we already pointed out, semelfactives have a related activity reading, which seems to be an iteration of the single event reading, so that *jump* can denote either events of single-occurrences-of-leaving-the-ground or iterations of these events. However, not all activities are related to semelfactives. The activity *run* cannot be used as a semelfactive, and this results in a set of systematic differences between *run* type predicates and *jump* type predicates:

1) Counting adverbials can count either the single events or the iterations for *jump* type predicates.

With *run*, only extended events can be counted. Let us compare *run* with *jump*:

(53) *He jumped down the steps three times as happily as any boy* [BNC K95 3466].

(54) *Kelly put the phone down and skipped once* [BNC BP7 307].

(55) *He ran once round the house and stopped near the door* [BNC HGV 1884].

(56) *He ran twice, beaten on both occasions, and was then sold to the Imperial Racing Club of St. Petersburg for £13,000* [BNC AD7 402].

2) When in *a time* is used as a modifier, it induces the semelfactive reading on *jump* type predicates, and measures the time of a single jump. When the same modifier is used with *run*, a contextually determined measure for the extended event is required, and the modifier measures the time of the extended event:

(57) *Jackob jumped in two minutes* [BNC CHG 430].

(58) *David ran in two minutes* [BNC KS7 703].

3) *Again and again* can modify either the single event or the activity predicate with *jump*. The semelfactive reading in (59) can be paraphrased by (60). Since there is no semelfactive reading for *run* in (61), *again and again* can only modify the extended reading, and thus (62) is not appropriate as a paraphrase.

(59) *She jumped again and again* [BNC AMU 607].

(60) *Dafina jumped for several minutes* [BNC CBD 744].

(61) *He ran again and again* [BNC CED 196].

(62) *Christina ran for several minutes* [BNC CED 196].

4) The nominalisations of *jump* type predicates denote single events, and occur naturally with the light verb *give*, while nominalisations of *run* denote extended events and occur with *have*:

(63) *The little, now indistinguishable dark patch, gave a jump and then moved slowly forward into the uncertain light* [BNC HWN 3288].

(64) *He gave a kick, and something skittered across the alley and bounced against the wall opposite* [BNC GW0 2520].

(65) *He gave a glance over his shoulders, but no sounds yet coming from the bedroom, only the occasional snatch of Yiddish as Mrs Finklestein conferred with Mrs Robovitch* [BNC ATE 2015].

(66) *So Jord Jordan and I had a walk down to the mark the nursery yesterday morning* [BNC G3X 441].

(67) *That's the second time in twenty-four hours I've had a swim in that damned water* [BNC FSR 2708].

(68) *Lucy, who has 13 grandchildren and two great grandsons, added: 'I have already been down to my flat and have had a laugh with my friends [BNC K3J 727].*

So, activities come in two kinds; those that are related to semelfactives and those that are not. The kind that are related to semelfactives seem to denote an iteration or repetition of the single event in the denotation of the semelfactive.

At this point, we go back to D. Dowty's (1979) discussion of activities. D. Dowty (1979), in his discussion of the imperfective paradox, argues that, while *John is running* normally entails *John ran*, it does not have this entailment if the running event is in its initial stages. He shows that some minimal interval must pass at the beginning of an activity event *e* in *P* before one can say that an event in *P* has happened, and comes to the conclusion that

(1) all activities are related to a 'minimal' activity event, and

(2) all non-minimal activities can be seen as concatenations of minimal events.

He argues further that it is not normally possible to define the minimal event, but stresses that it holds at an interval and not at an instant. Thus two minimal events of walking can get put together to make a single, non-minimal walking event, and so on. In general, there will be some condition on which elements can be put together via S-summing, which we express by saying that elements to be S-summed must stand in the R-relation, and define the operation S-summing (for singular summing) [5].

A predicate is S-cumulative if and only if it is closed under S-sum. Since activity predicates are S-cumulative, they are closed under S-sum. It follows that activity predicates denote a set of events which hold at intervals and which are not conceptualised as changes, and that the set is closed under S-summing. We assume that all activity predicates, whether or not they are related to semelfactives denote sets of minimal events closed under S-summing in this manner [5].

We can now explain what the relation between semelfactives and activities is. Assume that all activity predicates denoting a set *A* are derived from a set of basic minimal activity events which we call *MinA*. In some cases, the minimal events can be lexically accessed and the predicate is ambiguous between:

(a) the semelfactive reading in which it denotes the set of minimal activity events and

(b) the activity reading in which it denotes the set closed under S-summing.

The question is now why some activity predicates are ambiguous in this way and others are not.

Semelfactive events can be lexically accessed. They are **naturally atomic**. A naturally atomic entity is one whose unit structure is perceptually salient and given by the world. Most objects in the denotation of non-abstract nominals in the count domain are naturally atomic in this way: person, cat and cup are all naturally atomic, since in a situation in which there are a number of humans or cats or cups, what counts as one of each is in some basic sense given. But even in the domain of concrete entities, not all count nouns denote sets of naturally atomic entities. S. Rothstein (1999, 2004) discusses nouns such as fence, wall, and lawn, which denote non-abstract objects whose unit structure is contextually determined.

A naturally atomic event is one which has a natural beginning and end point, determined by the trajectory which defines the event. If we look at the diagrammatic representations of a stretch of jumping and running events, given below, it is clear that the set of jumping events can naturally be divided into individual minimal jumping events, with the beginning and the endpoints of the events indicated by the arrows, representing the points where the jumper leaves and returns to the ground.

In contrast, no such natural intuitive division into atomic minimal events is possible in the case of *run* since minimal running events do not have naturally defined beginning and endpoints. Instead, any one of a set of overlapping events could be considered a minimal running event. We suggest that only when the minimal events in a set of activity events are naturally atomic in this way are they lexically accessible. When a set of minimal activity events is naturally atomic, then the predicate is ambiguous between a 'normal' activity reading, where it denotes the set closed under S-summing and a semelfactive reading when it denotes the set of minimal activity events. This is the case with *jump*-type predicates. When the minimal events are not naturally atomic, then the set of minimal events is not lexically accessible, and the predicate has only the reading where it denotes the complete set of activity events [5].

The analysis that we have just given is an analysis of the semelfactive-activity relation in English. Nonetheless, it has implications for other languages. The distinction between minimal events and events derived under S-summing should be a feature of all languages which have activity predicates, and the implied constraint that minimal events which are not naturally atomic are not lexically accessible is also a constraint which should not be language specific. But, there is no reason why other languages should express the contrast between minimal events and extended

events in the way English does, namely via an ambiguous predicate, and we would expect other languages to lexicalise the distinction differently. Preliminary investigation of some Slavic languages indicates that the activity/semelfactive distinction is indeed lexicalised differently, with activity verbs having the imperfective aspect, and semelfactives having the perfective aspect and being derived from activity predicates via affixation.

Conclusion. Perspectives for further investigations. The study has shown that semelfactives and activities have a lot of common and different features. Semelfactive verbs generally pattern with

activity verbs in terms of grammatical properties that might have their source in event structure. Many semelfactive verbs also allow for activity interpretations when the events they describe occur in repetitive sequences. For instance, the verb *cough* is semelfactive when it describes ‘one cough’, but an activity when it describes ‘one cough’ a sequence or series of coughs. Such sequences are multiple-event activities. So the further study of these two classes gives the opportunity of using the examples and the results of the investigation in the teaching process, practical classes in the theoretical grammar in particular.

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UNDERSTANDING OF THE CONCEPT GOOD IN THE CONTEXT OF THE NOOSPHERE DOCTRINE

РОЗУМІННЯ ЦІННІСНОГО КОНЦЕПТУ ДОБРО В КОНТЕКСТІ ДОКТРИНИ НООСФЕРИ

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The research is devoted to studying one of the most critical moral and ethical value categories – the concept GOOD, which manifests in the desire to perform good and valuable actions to harmonize relationships between people and nature. The study aims to understand this moral and ethical category not only in a constantly changing world but also under the influence of scientific thought, reason and the transition of civilization to a fundamentally new system – the noosphere. A system in which the task is set under the influence of scientific planetary thought to create a new type of person – a person of the noosphere: free, independent, on the one hand, and at the same time decent, virtuous, with stable moral virtues.