

## Aspect and adverbial quantifiers in Spanish

This paper deals with the contrast between perfective and imperfective aspect in Spanish. I argue that imperfective and perfective sentences that contain an adverb of quantification differ in the type of generalization they express: only imperfective sentences are able to express non-accidental generalizations. Furthermore, I claim that this distinction can be traced back to different domains of quantification: in perfective sentences, the adverb quantifies over parts of a sum-event while in imperfective sentences, the adverb quantifies over events that instantiate a kind.

When no adverbial quantifier is present, there is a clear-cut contrast between perfective and imperfective sentences: perfective sentences are episodic (they report a particular episode) and imperfective sentences are characterizing (they report regularities.) This is illustrated in (1) and (2). However, when they contain an adverbial quantifier, both perfective and imperfective sentences express generalizations over particular episodes (witness (3) and (4).)

Bonomi (1997) suggests that the perfective/imperfective contrast is neutralized in the presence of an adverbial quantifier. This predicts that the imperfective and the perfective forms will be interchangeable when the sentence contains an adverb of quantification. The prediction, however, is not borne out. Even when an adverbial quantifier is present, imperfective and perfective forms behave differently with respect to generic adverbs (*normalmente* 'normally'), durational phrases (*durante dos años* 'for two years') and exceptive phrases: the imperfective can combine with generic adverbs, but the perfective cannot; the perfective is fine with durational phrases but the imperfective is not; imperfective and perfective allow for different types of exceptive phrases (*menos el lunes*, 'except for Monday', is bad with the imperfective but good with the perfective. *Menos los lunes*, 'except for Mondays', works the other way around.)

The perfective/imperfective contrast is, thus, not neutralized when an adverbial quantifier is present. Then, what is the difference between imperfective and perfective adverbially quantified sentences? Imperfective and perfective adverbially quantified sentences differ in that only the former can express non-accidental generalizations (Goodman 1947; Kratzer 1989). The following facts support that claim:

- 1) Only imperfective sentences can report the content of laws or regulations
- 2) Only imperfective sentences may support the truth of counterfactuals.
- 3) Perfective morphology readily coerces individual-level predicates (that express non-accidental generalizations) into stage-level predicates.

Characterizing the perfective/imperfective contrast in term of the accidental/non-accidental distinction explains why perfective sentences that contain an adverbially quantifier and their imperfective counterparts have been assumed to be truth-conditionally equivalent. According to Kratzer 1989, accidental generalizations and their non-accidental counterparts are true in the same worlds (that is, they *are* truth-conditionally equivalent if we evaluate sentences in terms of worlds), but not in the same situations. An accidental universal generalization will be true only in situations that are big enough to contain all the elements in the domain of quantification. A non-accidental universal generalization will be true either in all the situations of a world or in none.

In the nominal domain, accidental generalizations involve quantification over parts of a sum-individual that is not a kind while non-accidental generalizations involve quantification over the instantiations of a kind, as (5) and (6) illustrate.

I would like to take the parallel with the nominal domain seriously and argue that in perfective sentences adverbs of quantification quantify over parts of a group of events while in imperfective sentences adverbs of quantification quantify over events that instantiate a kind.

Exceptive phrases provide an additional argument for that position. As shown by von Stechow (1994), exceptive phrases subtract elements from the domain of quantification. The fact that different types of elements can be extracted from the domain of quantification in the perfective and imperfective cases indicates that we are dealing with different domains of quantification.

## DATA

- (1) Juan fumó (pfv.)  
'Juan smoked' [at least once]
- (2) Juan fumaba(imp.)  
'Juan smoked' [he had the habit of...]
- (3) Siempre que vino (pfv.) a mi casa, Juan fumó (pfv.)
- (4) Siempre que venía (imp.) a mi casa, Juan fumaba (imp.)  
'When Juan came to my place, he always smoked'
- (5) All dimes are silver *non-accidental*
- (6) All the coins in my pocket are silver *accidental*

## REFERENCES

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