EVIDENCE OF TELICITY MARKING BY NONMANUALS IN HZJ

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1) INTRODUCTION

1.1. Telicity

- Identified semantically as “having an end-State”.

- Telic verbs describe an event with an end-State different from the beginning state.

- Atelic events lack an endpoint.

- In American SL (ASL) and Austrian SL (ÖGS), telic verbs have been identified phonologically as "being end marked", showing the end-State in their form, whereas atelic predicates do not.

- Telic verb signs display a change in space, abrupt stop or contact with a part of the body.

- Atelic verb signs do not show these or other marks of telicity because they have homogenous structure (no end-State).

1.2. Nonmanuals

- In ASL, if the verb sign is end marked because it has an end-State, the mouth is also end marked. Since atelic verbs lack an end-State, there is no mouth end marking.

- Schalber (2004) observed two types of adverbial mouth gestures in ÖGS: continuous (also ‘posture’ nonmanuals/P-NMs) and discontinuous NMs are end-marked.

- These two types of mouth gestures correlate with the event structure of predicates: Atelic verb signs co-occur with continuous mouth gestures, whereas Telic verb signs co-occur with both continuous and discontinuous mouth gestures.

References:


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2) METHODOLOGY

Participants

9 native Deaf HZJ signers (age = 18, 5 female, 4 male), who signed consent forms, were filmed in Zagreb, Croatia while interacting with a native signer.

Materials

- brief video clips of animals and people engaged in various activities (5 video clips):

- five pairs of pictures showing activities which are ongoing (4) and which have ended (5):

- target HZJ verbs in sentences (25 short signing narratives, asking several questions about the verbs in them):

- isolated target verb in pairs for grammatical judgments (250 pairs):

Research questions

- How is telicity marked in HZJ?
- Is telicity shown by nonmanuals with verb signs in HZJ?
- Do nonmanuals for telic and atelic verbs differ in HZJ? If they do, is it systematic?
- Which nonmanuals correspond to telic and which to atelic verbs?

Further research questions/aims:

- Do any verbs require a particular mouth?
- Do classifier constructions occur with particular mouth NMs?
- What is the relationship between types of reduplication (continuous, repeated/iterative) and mouth NMs? Is it a question of one large event with mini-events inside it – atelic marking with continuous (P-NMs), or is it viewed as a string of events and each event has its own mouth NM (T-NMs)?

3) RESULTS

3.1. Nonmanual marking of atelic events

Verbs that occurred with this NM: PLOVITI (fall), POKAZIVATI (show), PADATI (fall), PISATI (write)

Verbs that occurred with this NM: POSTAVLJATI-NEŠTO (build something in)

Verbs that occurred with this NM: ČEKATI (wait), PLANIRATI (plan), PROMATRATI (observe), MISLITI (think)

Verbs that occurred with this NM: OBLAČITI-SE (getting dressed), ODNOŠITI (take away), DOPLAČIVATI (pay extra money), PRIZNAVATI (allow)

3.2. Nonmanual marking of telic events

Verbs that occurred with this NM: POJAVITI-SE (appear), SPAZITI (notice), PASTI (fall), BACITI (throw)

Verbs that occurred with this NM: PREREZATI (cut in two pieces), SKRENUTI (make a turn), UPASTI (fall in), PRIHVATITI (accept)

Verbs that occurred with this NM: SASTATI-SE (meet), ODUZETI (take away), POKLJULATI (win), POKLOPITI (cover with a lid)

4) CONCLUSION

- Telicity is marked in HZJ manually and nonmanually.
- Telicity in HZJ is visible by nonmanuals (mouth shapes), which differ for telic and atelic verbs, and it happens systematically.
- NMs occurring with telic verb signs are [closed → open], [open → closed], [puffed], and those occurring with atelic verb signs are [ph], [puffed cheeks], [mm], [jaw dropped].

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