Severing away the incremental theme

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Incremental Theme Verbs

(1) She ate the sandwich.
• The sandwich is an incremental theme: it is used up incrementally ‘bit by bit’ as the event denoted by the VP progresses.

Is the incrementality located in the semantics of objective case? No.

(2) She ate at the sandwich.
• Conative: there is incremental consumption in (2), although the conative argument is no direct object (Beavers, 2013).

Is the incrementality located in the verb? No.

(3) She ate.
• Object drop: incremental theme verbs pattern with activity verbs and activities are not incremental. (Rappaport Hovav, 2008).

The incrementality is located in the semantics of objective case

(4) Sie fraß den Apfel.
She ate.

The verb meaning does not depend on the direct object (object drop), thus to write is an activity and a writing event is entailed.

(5) Peter baut *(an einem Haus).
Peter build at a.DAT house.

The accomplishment VP describes a whole-part structure of some (SI: but not all) subparts of the apple are affected by the eating activity.

Asp[dat] = λxλxe.∃f.measure(f)∧
∀x'x.≤x f(x) → (3e'.e' ≤ e ∧ affect(e')(x'))

Verbs and activities are not incremental. (Rappaport Hovav, 2002).

The Patterning of incremental theme verbs with activities (3): severing away the incremental theme via event identification with the VP denotation (as in Kennedy (2012)).

(6) She ate at the sandwich.
• Severing away the incremental theme:

All subparts of the apple are affected by the eating activity.

Asp[act] = λxλxe.∃f.measure(f)∧
∀x'x.≤x f(x) → (3e'.e' ≤ e ∧ affect(e')(x'))

Conatives of consumption activities: theme measures out event

(7) Sie fraß den Apfel.
She ate at the.DAT apple.
• Incrementality in the conative (2): extend case checking mechanism to dative case on conative arguments.
• Uninterpretable dative case is checked by an interpretable dative case feature on Asp as in (8).

Conatives of creation accomplishments: event measures out theme

(8) Peter baut *(an einem Haus).
Peter build at a.DAT house.

• Some (SI: but not every) subevent of the plan for building a house has been executed.

Asp[act] = λxλxe.∃f.measure(f)∧
∀x'x.≤x f(x) → (3e'.e' ≤ e ∧ affect(e')(x'))

Severing away the incremental theme

• Patterning of incremental theme verbs with activities (3): severe away the internal argument from the VP and let Asp introduce the incremental theme via event identification with the VP denotation (as in Kennedy (2012)).

Conatives of creation activities

(9) Sie schrieb *(an einem Brief).
She wrote at a.DAT letter.

• The verb meaning does not depend on the direct object (object drop), thus to write is an activity and a writing event is entailed.

Germanic Particles & Progressives

• Overt Asp: eat up: telic + accusative + all parts affected
• Overt Asp: anfressen (up.PRTC.eat): telic + accusative + not all parts affected (vs. conative eat at: atelic + dative + some parts affected)

• Entailments of progressives pattern with conatives: like conatives progressives are licit only with accomplishments and activities, progressives developed out of a construction with at (He was a-tellin’ the truth) (Alexiadou, 2013).