

### **Non-volitional Tagalog verbs: Achievements, Accomplishments, or both?**

This paper uses an aspectual test analysis in order to investigate the situation type of the ability and involuntary-action (AIA) class verbs in Tagalog. Travis (2010) claims that all AIA verbs are achievements, however, her claim is drawn from event structure analysis and is purely theoretical. On the other hand, Saclot (2011) provides a brief aspectual test analysis of Tagalog verbs with AIA voice morphology, and claims that AIA verbs can denote, states, activities, achievements, and accomplishments. Saclot (2011) claims that the situation type that AIA verbs can denote varies based on the category of the base predicate (e.g. positional, perception, etc). In order to resolve these counter claims, I offer a more in depth aspectual test analysis.

AIA verbs differ from the neutral (N) Tagalog verb class in morphology and semantic features. AIA verbs are marked by the prefix *naka-* and *maka-* in Actor voice, as in (2), or *na-* or *ma-* in other voices, and N verbs are denoted by other voice morphologies found in Tagalog.

- (1) UM-inum siya ng lasun.  
N-drink he poison  
“*He {intentionally drank/tried to drink} poison.*”
  
- (2) NAKA-inum siya ng lasun.  
AIA-drink he poison  
“*He accidentally drank poison (Kroeger 1993).*”

N verbs, such as *Um-inum* ‘drink’ in (1), semantically entail only the intentionality of the action, and that the Actor acted or attempted to act with the intent to achieve a particular result, but do not semantically entail the attainment of the goal result state. Unless information to the contrary is explicitly given, the interpretation that the action was carried out and the result was achieved is strongly preferred (Kroeger 1993). AIA verbs semantically entail the actual performance of the reported action and the attainment of the corresponding result state, but do not semantically entail intentionality. Unless there is explicit information to the contrary, the default implicature is that the action was involuntary/non-volitional (as in (2)) (Dell 1983-84).

If AIA verbs are achievements, they must be [-process], [+telic] (Vendler 1967), and lack a volitional agent (Piñón 1997). In order to analyze the relevant features necessary for these verbs to fall within the achievement classification, I apply nine aspectual tests to AIA verbs. Of the nine tests, outlined in Figure 1 and 2, six show AIA verbs pattern as achievements, and three tests show that AIA verbs do not pattern as achievements. The tests in Figure 1 depict AIA verbs as being [-process], [+telic], and as incompatible with a volitional Actor interpretation, or with adverbs that indicate non-volitionality. The tests in Figure 2 show AIA verbs as being [+process], and as not requiring the attainment of a goal state. Just like Travis’s (2010) and Saclot’s (2011) conflicting claims, these tests demonstrate conflicting results as well. Therefore two possible conclusions can be made from these results: AIA verbs are [+/- process] and can denote achievements and accomplishments, or AIA verbs are achievements, as Travis (2010) claims, and further investigation and analysis of the results in Figure 2 is necessary.

FIGURE 1: Standard Aspect Tests that show AIA verbs pattern as Achievements

TEST	Used with N Verb	Used with AIA Verb
itigil 'stop'	✓	*
simulan/umpishan 'start'	✓	*
sa X minuto 'in X minutes'	✓	✓
para sa X minuto 'for X minutes'	??	??
sinadya 'intentionally/deliberately'	✓	*
pinilit 'force' test	✓	*

FIGURE 2: Standard Aspect Tests that show AIA verbs do not pattern as Achievements

TEST	Used with N Verb	Used with AIA
bahagyang natapos 'partial'	✓	✓
unti-unti 'little by little'	✓	✓
muntik 'almost'	✓	✓

**References:**

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