

WHEN, HOW AND WHY 'STATE + PERFECTIVE = ACHIEVEMENT'

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GOAL. A study of aspectual classes that goes beyond a mere taxonomy tries to derive the (un)attested patterns through the (im)possible combinations of a reduced set of aspectual primitives (eg. Piñón 1997, MacDonald 2008, Marín & McNally 2011). This talk provides evidence for this view through the study of states that become achievements via external aspect.

DATA. As an (IL) state, *saber* 'know' rejects locative and aspectual (1) modifiers. However, in Spanish when combined with perfective aspect, it accepts locative modifiers and allows *in*-phrases in an interpretation identical to *after*-phrases (2). This is the same reading that an *in*-phrase gets with an achievement (*arrive in X time = arrive after X time*, Piñón 1997), so it seems that a state has become an achievement.

- (1) Juan sabe (\*en el hospital) (\*en cinco minutos) que la tierra es redonda.  
Juan knows (in the hospital) (in five minutes) that the earth is round
- (2) Juan supo (en la universidad) (en cinco minutos) que la tierra es redonda.  
Juan knew.aor in the university in 5 minutes that the earth is round  
'Juan came to know in the university, after five minutes, that the earth is round'

Not all verbs allow 'state > achievement' with perfective external aspect. Verbs that allow it involve mental states (*odiar* 'hate', *querer / desear* 'want'...).

- (4) Juan conoció en cinco minutos al presidente.  
Juan became acquainted after five minutes with the president

This is not the case with other states, including those that express possession, inclusion, location, existence or resemblance.

- (5) a. \*El barril contuvo cincuenta litros en cinco minutos.  
The cask contained 50 liters in five minutes  
b. \*Faltaron mil euros en cinco minutos.  
There.lacked 1000 euros in 5 minutes

That the right generalisation is mental states vs. the rest is supported by contrasts like the following: with the same verb, the achievement reading with perfective aspect is only available if the predicate denotes a mental state experienced by the subject.

- (6) a. \*Juan estuvo enfermo en cinco minutos.  
Juan was sick in five minutes  
b. Juan estuvo seguro de eso en cinco minutos.  
Juan was certain of that after five minutes

ANALYSIS. Following standard assumptions (Smith 1991, García Fernández 2000, i.a.), perfective aspect focuses the culmination of the situation time (7a). What is special with the cases we discuss here is that with mental states perfective aspect can focus the onset of the state and thereby define an instantaneous transition interpreted as 'come to STATE', which corresponds to the denotation of an achievement (7b). This is possible –we suggest– because in mental states there is an experiencer which, following Ramchand (2008), controls the onset

of the state because their internal properties (such as animacy) are a prerequisite for the state to start. This gives the initial stage of mental states semantic saliency which external aspect can take advantage of in order to focus a left boundary, and hence, an achievement.

- (7) a. -----+++++++[-]-----
- b. -----[-+]+++++++-----.