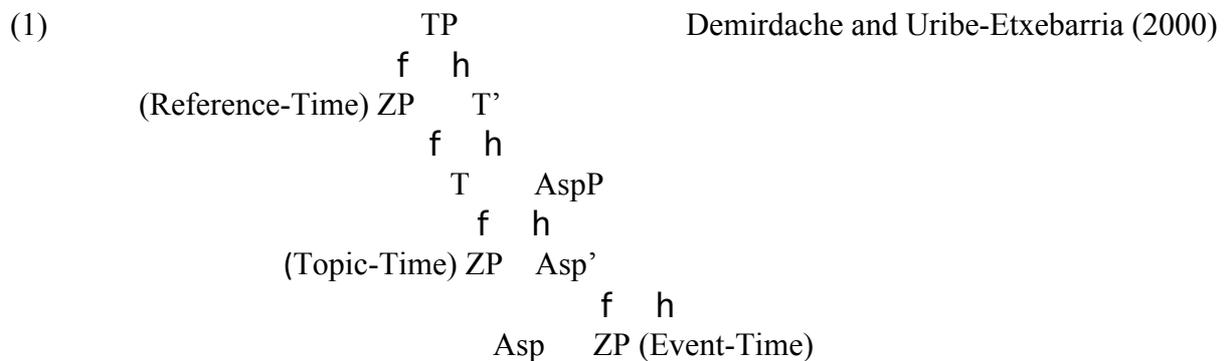


Bleached Aspect

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In this talk we discuss the semantic and syntactic properties of viewpoint Aspect. We defend that viewpoint Aspect can be shown to be syntactically present but semantically defective and even empty in some instances, such as those involving non-verbal categories. In this regard we focus on derived nominalizations, making a further distinction between deverbal and deadjectival ones.

As a point of departure, we take the model advanced by Klein (1994, 2009) and Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2000) whereby Aspect is conceived as a syntactic head whose semantic content consists of a predicate that takes intervals as arguments (ZPs) and orders them, as depicted in (1).



In line with Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2004), we take adverbials modifying the duration of the intervals as a signal supporting the presence of interval arguments. We take this line of reasoning one step further and argue that the licensing of adverbial modifiers can be taken as empirical evidence to the syntactic presence of Aspect. Following Klein (1995), among others, we take it that durative adverbials are adjuncts to the interval that the assertion is about, known as the Topic-Time (TT), giving information about its length. An examples is in (2); modifiers headed by *for* and equivalent ones in other languages such as *durante* in Spanish express the minimal span of time the event asserted in the sentence, allowing for the logical possibility of the event lasting longer. This can be seen by the lack of contradiction if the sentence continues as shown in (3).

- (2) Tom read *for fifteen minutes*.
- (3) As prescribed by his teacher, Tom read *for fifteen minutes* last night; actually he read for twenty minutes.

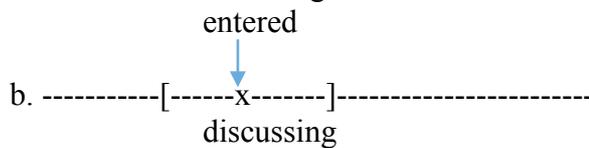
The nominalizations that allow for such durative modification are those that derive from verbs that also allow for it, that is, those that can be considered as activities and accomplishments; those derived from achievements typically do not support durative modifiers, as expected. Cases in (4) and (5) show the verbal and the nominalization cases respectively.

- (4) a. Tom discussed the thesis for an hour.
b. *Tom discovered the solution for an hour.
- (5) a. The discussion of the thesis for an hour.

- b. *The discovery of the solution for an hour.

We posit that the availability of such adverbial modification points to the syntactic presence of time arguments (ZPs) and, as a consequence, to the presence of an Aspect head, since ZPs act as arguments to an ordering category in the system depicted in (1). However, there are reasons to hypothesize that the Aspect head of nominalizations has different properties from the ones Aspect embodies in fully inflected clauses. While in fully inflected clauses the Aspect head establishes an ordering relation between intervals, which is clearly seen in compound clauses, this is not possible with nominalizations. For example, in the compound clause of (6), the event of Tom's entering the room is ordered within the span of time of Daniel's eating. In contrast, (7) shows that this is not possible with nominalizations: Daniel's entering cannot be ordered within the span of the discussion.

- (6) a. Daniel was discussing the thesis when Tom entered.



- (7) *The discussion of the thesis when Tom entered.

This reveals a puzzling fact: whereas the Aspect head can still be defended based on the licensing of the adverbials, the content of the head does not seem to be operative. We argue that this suggests that Aspect is syntactically present, which accounts for the licensing of the ZP arguments and their modification, but semantically defective, and, therefore, unable to establish fully fledged ordering relations. Finally, we show that nominalizations derived from adjectives represent a further level of defectiveness. Cases such as those in (8), showing that temporal modification of the sort discussed is unavailable, point to the lack of syntactic presence of interval arguments, and therefore the Aspect category altogether.

- (8) *The cruelty of Tom for an hour

This is noteworthy since such derived nouns refer to events that have happened –e.g., when we speak of a cruelty we refer to somebody's cruel action (Stowell 1991, Arche & Marin 2015). That is, it is conceptually possible to measure the durativity of the action, but the fact that this is not viable suggests that for this to be possible the intervals need to be syntactically present. We therefore take this result as evidence of lack of a viewpoint Aspect head in the structure of deadjectival nominalizations of this sort.

The gradient availability of temporal modification (full clauses>deverbal nouns>deadjectival nouns) suggests a gradient scale of syntactic and semantic complexity across categories not pointed out before.

Additional discussion deserves the fact that both deverbal and deadjectival nominalizations of the kind of *cruelty* allow for modification that concerns the quantification over occasions (Arche 2006, 2014) (*the habitual cruelty of Tom; the frequent discussion of the thesis*). We argue that such modifiers provide information about numbers of instantiations, not about ordering. Thus, they are also compatible with an Aspect head syntactically present but defective in its semantic core.