

What is manner modification?

In this talk, we approach the question of what manner modification is, and what distinguishes manner modifiers from other types of adverbial modifiers. We focus on the idea that manner modification can be captured via a particularly tight interaction between the concept expressed by the verb and by the modifier, and that this is what sets manner modification apart from other modifier types (e.g. modification by pure locative PPs) or complementation with arguments.

In the current literature, we find two approaches towards a semantic theory of manner modifiers. On the one hand, it has been proposed that manner modification corresponds to the creation of event kinds (Landman & Morzycki, 2003; McNally & Boleda, 2004; Anderson & Morzycki, 2015). Another proposal is to posit a Davidsonian manner argument as part of an expanded event ontology (Piñón, 2007; Schäfer, 2005, 2013), using the predicational format of neo-Davidsonian semantics for such *m*-variables. We argue for the view that manner modification involves the creation of subtypes of events. However, we argue that the introduction of new variables is not explanatory, and that talk of kinds does not sufficiently get at the conceptual core of what manner modification is. We propose that an explanatory theory of manner modification needs access to the lexico-conceptual content of the verb.

We implement our view in a Frame model (Petersen, 2007; Löbner, 2014), which allows for explicit, fine-grained verbal decomposition. Formally, subtype creation would be the result of any change in an attribute of the event. The main task, therefore, is to define a narrower class of manner subtypes, a point already noted by Anderson & Morzycki (2015) when they speak of distinguished properties that have to be invoked for kind formation in the case of manners. We will offer some points for discussion as to how one might proceed in delineating distinguished properties. The core of the talk, however, makes the following two points. First, our perspective entails that manner modifiers are not a logical type (e.g., predicates of *k* (kinds) or *m* (manners)), but that manner modification is an operation on verb meanings, and that various types of lexical meanings can be involved in this operation. Second, and related to this, manner modification appears to be subsective rather than intersective. Hence, the logical format of joint predication (seen in all event-variable, *m*-variable, and kind-variable approaches) is not entirely suitable to make the workings of manner modification explicit.

With respect to the first issue, a point that comes up in connection with Maienborn's (2003) notion of event-internal modification is that there is still a difference between event-internal modification and manner modification. We note that some of Maienborn's internal-locative modifiers behave like manner modifiers, in that they correspond to a *how* question (compared to others that correspond to a *where* question, see the examples in (1)). Hence Maienborn's model is orthogonal to the perspective from manner modification, as it describes a procedure for finding a suitable predication target in the interpretation of the locatives, but at the same time overlaps with it. This underlines the point that manner modification is not a category but a function of certain modifiers: it is a way in which lexical material does duty in the modification of verbs and subtyping of events. Among other lexical classes, locative relations can thus also give rise to manner modification, depending on the way they are brought to bear on the event description.

Second, if modification is a subtyping operation, this suggests that manner modification should be subsective. Evidence for this comes from *like that* anaphora, which can pick up previously introduced manners or event-internal locations. This is shown in (2), where it is possible for *like that* to be anaphoric to a manner or event-internal location, and compose with a VP denoting an event of the same type. But, *like that* anaphora is markedly less acceptable with different verbs (see (3)). We argue that manner anaphora is odd in (3) due to the modifier forming dissimilar event-types. When the subtypes are of the same event-type, as in (2), anaphora is improved.

Appendix

- (1) a. The robbers escaped on their bicycles. (How?; *Where?)
b. Sign the treaty on the last page. (*How?; Where?)
- (2) a. Jack fell clumsily_i, and Jill (also) fell [like that]_i.
b. Jack slept [in a sleeping bag]_i, and Jill (also) slept [like that]_i.
- (3) a. ??Jack fell clumsily_i, and Jill spilled milk [like that]_i.
b. ??Jack slept [in a sleeping bag]_i, and Jill rolled down the hill [like that]_i.

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