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ASPECTUAL FEATURES OF EMOTIONAL PREDICATES

Abstract: The internal structure of the situations denoted by the predicates determines their *Lexical Aspect* (or *Aktionsart*). Based upon Z. Vendle's seminal work (Vendler 1957), verbs can be categorized into four aspectual classes: states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements. The main topic of this paper is to discuss the basic aspectual distinctions *states* vs. *activities* and diagnostic tests for aspectual classification of Bulgarian verbs. Our task is to apply verb-adverb selection tests whereby the two main types of predicates can be distinguished. Activity verbs denote homogeneous events that take time, but have no inherent temporal endpoint. Duration and lack of change are the main features of states. Following Dowty's tests for aspectual verb categories (Dowty 1979), we present the possibilities for manner and locative modifications of verbal predicates. Statives do not occur with agentive adverbs and locative adverbials, while activity verbs can be used with modifiers from these groups. The following hypothesis is tested: as part of the statives, emotion predicates should show the same behavior in respect to modification with adverbials and adverbs and thus differ from activity predicates. Our data prove that Dowty's lexical tests, grounded on modification with adverbs from certain groups, are applicable to Bulgarian.

Emotional predicates are also labelled as mental verbs, verbs of psychological state (psych-verbs), psychological predicates, or verbs of affect. They involve one of their arguments, typically animated, being marked as Experiencer – someone who can feel the emotion denoted by the verb. Subject theta-role selection is the basis for the traditional dichotomy of two subclasses: Subject Experiencer verbs (*fear/like* type) vs. Object Experiencer verbs (*frighten/please* type). Our data show that transitive and intransitive *fear*-type verbs express stative events, whereas *frighten*-type verbs denote a caused change of emotional state. Marking different arguments of emotional predicates as Experiencer is probably related to aspectual type changes.

Keywords: lexical aspect; statives; emotional predicates; experiencer; adverbial modifiers

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