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Progressives in typological perspective*

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The category of progressive is known for the notorious difficulties of definition it poses not only within individual languages, but for general theories of aspect as well. A particularly challenging problem is the fact that in any one language, there seem to be lexemes that block progressive marking (such as the verbs 'to know' and 'to understand' in English). On the basis of comprehensive lexical samples from five languages, this study attempts to shed some light on the semantic factors governing the acceptability of progressive markers. This results in a modified outlook on the progressive.

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1. Progressive marking and parts of speech

The category of progressive presents a considerable challenge both for cross-linguistic as well as for intra-linguistic approaches to aspect, as the lack of consensus in the literature with respect to global as well as language-specific definitions of the progressive indicates. An essential part of the problem is the fact that progressive markers show certain behavioural properties which have puzzled linguists over and over again, and which have given rise to a variety of explanatory models: presumably, in any one language, progressive markers are incompatible with specific lexemes. In English, the set of lexemes which block progressive marking includes the verbs 'to believe', 'to hate', 'to know' and 'to like', among others. Such blocking phenomena have not yet been the subject of systematic cross-linguistic study. Yet, it can be expected that a detailed cross-linguistic survey of 'blocker' lexemes leads to a better understanding of the phenomenon itself, as well as to a deeper insight into the nature of the controversial category of progressive. This assumption derives from the general observation that contexts in which a linguistic element *cannot* be used may

very well prove as valuable a diagnostic indicator of its nature as contexts in which it can be used. On the basis of a data corpus comprising five languages, some interesting regularities concerning the scope of progressive markers in the lexicon of individual languages can be detected. In short, this study will attempt to show that cross-linguistically, progressive markers display variable degrees of compatibility with the three semantic macro-classes of entity concepts, property concepts, and event concepts (which, at least in Indo-European languages, correspond to the traditional parts of speech noun, verb, and adjective), and that this typological variation is not random, but sensitive to specific components in the semantic makeup of individual lexemes. The languages investigated are Burmese (Sino-Tibetan), English (Indo-European), Indonesian (Austronesian), the Kölsch dialect of German (Indo-European), and Lakota (Siouan). The small size of this language sample contrasts with the complexity of the intra-linguistic samples used. The distribution of progressive markers has been systematically determined on the basis of a questionnaire that comprises several hundred basic lexical concepts.

The point of departure for this study is the observation that there are cross-linguistic differences in the compatibility of lexical items with the category of progressive, as noted in the following quotations:

> … one might expect different languages with progressive forms to agree on when these progressive forms can be used. Unfortunately, this is not the situation that we actually observe, since different languages in fact have different rules for determining when explicitly progressive forms can be used. (Comrie 1976:35)

> Verbs that are progressivizable in English are sometimes not progressivizable in other, unrelated languages … The opposite facts also hold: what cannot be progressivized in English can often be progressivized in other languages. (Frawley 1992:315)

However, the situation concerning variation in the lexicon with respect to the acceptability of progressive markers is even more complex than these quotations might indicate. Normally, only verbs are taken into account when the usage of the progressive is described in the extant literature. For instance, although the progressive in English has always been one of the favorite topics of investigation in aspect theory, not every author points out that the progressive is also compatible with many adjectives in English (for explicit mention of this fact, cf. Comrie 1976:36, Smith 1983:498, and Vlach 1981:274, among others). Example (1) illustrates progressive marking with adjectives in English:[1]

(1) John is being funny

However, not only verbs and adjectives are compatible with progressive markers. So far, little attention has been paid to the fact that nouns may also combine with progressive markers, as in example (2).[2]

(2) John is being a fool

In systematically including parts of speech other than event concepts (or 'verbals', cf. Section 3) in the present investigation, and thus creating a broader frame of investigation, this study hopes to shed more light on the elusive category of progressive, known for the notorious difficulties of description it poses, since "there are about as many proposals and terminological differences for the progressive as there are individuals who write on the subject" (Frawley 1992:312).

2. Attempts at defining the category of progressive

One of the major objectives of typological research is comparing language-specific categories to each other at a global level. It is often found that the functional scopes of language-specific categories which are superficially similar do not overlap completely; this is also true of the coding devices for the progressive (cf. Smith 1983:494–495). Nevertheless, such cross-linguistic comparisons are fruitful, as more typologically oriented studies such as Bybee and Dahl (1989) and Dahl (1985) point out. According to Bybee and Dahl (1989:77) and Dahl (1985:90), the progressive is a relatively frequent category since it occurs in about one third of the languages contained in the sample investigated by these authors. The five languages dealt with in the present study all have a grammatical category that qualifies for being labeled as progressive. Although the respective markers or constructions are not entirely equivalent in functional terms, they share a common semantic denominator, namely the function of expressing progressive aspect. In what follows, various pre-existing definitions of the progressive will be presented which are more or less suited for capturing this shared function of the respective marking devices in the five languages investigated.

The present study explicitly proceeds on the basis of a purely semantic definition of the progressive, which does not take morphological and distributional factors into account. In contrast to other semantic properties of the progressive, the claim that this grammatical category is a subcategory of imperfective

aspect (e.g., Bybee et al. 1994:127, Comrie 1976, Langacker 1987) seems to be generally acknowledged. The perfective-imperfective contrast is characterized as follows by Langacker (1987:81):

> A perfective process is so called because it is bounded; i.e., its endpoints are included within the scope of predication in the temporal domain. No such specification of bounding is made for an imperfective process; it profiles a stable situation that may extend indefinitely far beyond the scope of predication in either direction…

Much of the literature on the progressive is devoted to exploring its properties and distribution in a single language, namely English. As a consequence, attempts at providing a generally valid definition of the category of progressive tend to focus on the situation found in this language alone. This, in turn, creates considerable confusion because in English the construction used for expressing progressive aspect, i.e. 'to be … -ing', is particularly multifunctional, its occurrence being unpredictable and sometimes hard to motivate. Thus, "there are countless cases in which the peculiar force of the [English] progressive is at first glance difficult to grasp" (Hatcher 1951:254; see also Comrie 1976:32–40). Definitions of the category of progressive come in a variety of formulations. According to Bybee and Dahl (1989:55), the progressive indicates that a situation is "in progress at reference time". This is in line with Langacker's (1987:85) definition of the English progressive: "… -ing imposes a restricted immediate scope of predication, comprising an arbitrary sequence of internal states; i.e., the initial and final states are excluded." In the same vein, Smith (1983:482) argues that the basic function of the progressive is profiling an event/situation without its endpoints: "Progressive aspect presents an interior perspective, from which the endpoints of an event are ignored. Thus the progressive indicates a moment or interval of an event that is neither initial nor final." The partial definition of progressive adopted for the purpose of this study, which captures one of several invariants in the meaning ranges of the progressive markers in the five languages investigated, is as follows: the progressive presents a situation in such a way that the points of incipience and termination are out of focus. This function of the progressive is also pinpointed in the following quote: "… the progressive … presents an activity as in the midst of happening: as having already begun but not yet ended" (Hatcher 1951:258). It should be noted, however, that at least the English progressive can be used in an example like the following (which is due to Bernard Comrie), in which the points of incipience and termination are explicitly mentioned and, therefore, included in the scope of the overall predication:

(3)   I was working from 2 to 4

Consequently, it seems advisable to attenuate the above textbook definition of the progressive somewhat by saying that the progressive, when in potential opposition to non-progressive forms, does not explicitly include the points of incipience and termination, whereas the non-progressive forms do (Bernard Comrie, p.c.).

However, the semantic criterion of endpoint suppression is not sufficient for defining the category of progressive if the progressive is conceived of as being distinct from the category of imperfective. The progressive has also been associated with the notions of durativity and stativity in the literature. Thus, in addition to the aspectual function of explicitly reducing event space to the time stretch between endpoints, the progressive expresses notions such as extension in time and stability of a given state of affairs. As a matter of fact, the linguistic form that is identified as a progressive in the five languages investigated, in any case, displays the following two functional characteristics: on the one hand, the respective form suppresses reference to the endpoints of an event, on the other hand, it simultaneously indicates durativity, i.e. a certain extension in time. It has been stated before, and it will be argued again in Section 5, that the systematic conflation of these two functions of progressive markers is highly motivated.

In Section 4, where a relatively low permanence value will be fleshed out as an additional semantic component of progressive marking, it will become clear that the notion of durativity employed in the above definition will have to be modified to the extent that the duration involved can be quite limited, as in predications like "he is being silly". This is because the concept of low permanence negates the concept of duration, if duration is understood as equivalent to high permanence. However, the durativity value of a progressive construction will not drop to the point at which incipience and termination of a state of affairs almost coincide, as in the concept 'to flash'.

In the attempt to provide a definition of the progressive which is suited to capture the shared semantic function of the five language-specific marking formats dealt with in this study, and which, in particular, delimits the progressive from the semantically more comprehensive category of imperfective, Comrie's (1976:25) division of the semantic domain of imperfective is used as a basic grid. According to Comrie, imperfective aspect comprises two semantic subdomains, i.e. the categories of habitual and continuative. The continuative, further, is composed of the subcategories of non-progressive (henceforth, 'plain continuative') and progressive. The semantic feature [+durative] separates both

progressive and plain continuative from habitual aspect, since, ontologically speaking, habituals describe interrupted rather than lasting states of affairs. This leaves the two subcategories of the continuative, namely, progressive and plain continuative, to be teased apart. In this context, a semantic feature that dates back at least to Jespersen (1931:180), but which has often been neglected in subsequent research on the progressive, turns out to be helpful. This semantic criterion surfaces when the following examples from English are compared:

(4)   the cashier was counting his money

(5)   the cashier was counting his money when the gunman came in

Example (5) appears to be more "natural" or "complete" than example (4). This is because the use of the progressive implies that the event in question ("the cashier was counting his money") is viewed as simultaneous to a specific reference point in time. This reference point, in many cases, is a notionally independent event (such as "when the gunman came in"). Neither the corresponding non-progressive version of the clause "the cashier was counting his money", which is given in (6), nor its continuative counterpart, which is given in (7), carry an equally strong implication that the event in question is linked to a simultaneously occurring event such as "when the gunman came in" in example (5).

(6)   the cashier counted his money

(7)   the cashier kept on counting his money

Thus, the progressive can be characterized as "a grammatical device by means of which a speaker can show that he considers one Event to be significantly related to another Event as to point in time" (Allen 1966:209). With present tense progressive constructions, the temporal reference point is understood as being identical with the moment of utterance, i.e. 'now' (Jespersen 1931:178). In many cases, a reference point, which is expressed by means of the clause "when the gunman came in" in example (5), is not mentioned explicitly, but simply inferred from context (Jespersen 1931:180). For more recent approaches to the progressive which operate with the notion of reference point in time, cf. Bertinetto et al. (2000:527–538) and Dahl (1985:90).

The semantic definition of the category of progressive which serves as the "backbone" of this study can be summarized as follows. The progressive, for one, features a given state of affairs as ongoing — it suppresses reference to the points of incipience and termination of the state of affairs in question. Secondly, the progressive conveys the notion of a (typically) substantial duration

in time, which at least exceeds minimal time spans. Thirdly, the progressive indicates that a given state of affairs is viewed as simultaneous to a specific reference point in time.

A complicating factor in dealing with the category of progressive is that, as particularly the discussion of the English progressive in Section 3.1 shows, the semantic range of individual progressive markers may include more than the function of coding progressive aspect proper as outlined by this definition. The language-specific sketches of progressive usage given below provide statistical analyses which show to what extent progressive markers are compatible with lexical items in the languages investigated. It is important to note that the respective figures exclusively refer to the compatibility of individual progressive markers with lexical items *when these markers function as coding devices for progressive aspect proper*. This point will be picked up on again in the theoretical discussion in Section 4.

In diachronic terms, the dividing line between progressives and semantically related categories is permeable — for instance, progressives may develop into imperfectives (e.g. Dahl 1985). Thus, in Modern Eastern Armenian and Hindi, as well as in several Celtic languages, such as (spoken) Welsh and Scots Gaelic, the old progressive now fulfills the semantically more general function of coding imperfective aspect (B. Comrie, p.c.).

3.   The data

This study centres on the well-known fact that — possibly in any one language that has a progressive — there are lexemes which are incompatible with this grammatical category. Bybee and Dahl (1989:82) assume that lexemes that block the use of the progressive tend to be semantically constant across languages. According to these authors, the lexemic representations of the concepts 'to think', 'to believe', 'to hope', 'to feel', 'to doubt', and 'to promise' do not usually admit progressive marking.

Another group of lexemes, i.e. those which denote punctual events, such as 'to explode', show ambivalent behaviour with respect to progressive marking. Punctuals either block progressive marking, or they admit progressive marking, but then assume a repetitive meaning (cf. Brinton 1988:25, among others). The descriptive Sections 3.1 to 3.5 contain a number of examples for both types of punctuals. If the fact that one of the regular functions of the progressive — 'indicating durativity' — is taken into account, the reason why the progressive indicates repetition in combination with punctuals is quite straightforward.

The notions of punctuality and durativity together add up to an 'on-and-off' reading.

As the language-specific data presented below will show, blocking phenomena are not necessarily restricted to the concepts listed above. Property concepts (or 'adjectivals', cf. below) turn out to be an especially rewarding subject of investigation with respect to blocking phenomena because there is remarkable cross-linguistic variation as to the relative percentage of blocker lexemes within the class of property concepts.

The analysis of the five languages dealt with in what follows is, for the most part, based on an English questionnaire containing over 600 lexical concepts. This questionnaire is taken from Pustet (2003); in this study, it is used for compiling data on the distributional range of lexemes that combine with copulas in the lexicon of various languages. The innovative insight that can be gained from the data presented in this study is that languages may vary considerably with respect to the number of lexical items that can be combined with progressives. Some languages, such as Kölsch (cf. Section 3.2), are equipped with a relatively small set of lexemes that admit progressive marking, others, such as Burmese (cf. Section 3.5), impose practically no restrictions on the compatibility of progressives with lexical material. By focusing on languages which differ greatly with respect to the percentages of lexical items which are compatible with the progressive, this study intends to cover as wide a range of typological variation in this area as possible. A major problem in conducting the investigations described in what follows is that grammars and dictionaries are not a sufficient source of data in this case — such research must be carried out on the basis of consultant work with native speakers who are able to provide the extremely detailed information required. Consequently, without further extensive work with native speakers on additional languages, it is hard to determine the relative cross-linguistic frequency of occurrence of the five languages types dealt with in this paper. It might well be the case that the seemingly "exotic" scenario exemplified by Burmese, a language in which the progressive is compatible with almost any lexical item (cf. Section 3.5), is not that unusual at all.

The discussion of the data on progressive marking in this section makes use of a crude segmentation of the lexicon into the three major conceptual classes of *entity concepts*, *property concepts*, and *event concepts*. As is argued in Croft (1991) and Pustet (2003), this division of the lexicon covers the majority of lexical items contained in the vocabularies of, presumably, any language. Following Pustet (2003), the members of these three semantic classes will henceforth be referred to as *nominals*, *verbals*, and *adjectivals*, respectively. Needless to say, this terminology is inspired by the traditional segmentation of

the lexicon into nouns, verbs, and adjectives, which is, in turn, at least in part, based on considerations regarding the *morphosyntactic* properties of individual lexemes. Despite that, within the present study, the terminological labels of nominal, verbal, and adjectival have a purely *semantic* denotation. They are entirely independent of the various morphosyntactically based form classes that the lexical representations of the concepts included in the questionnaire can be ascribed to in individual languages. If contemporary lexical class typology, on morphosyntactic grounds, finds that certain languages do not distinguish between the traditional parts of speech noun, verb, and adjective the way Indo-European languages do, this does not have any impact on the conceptual distinctions languages make, i.e. on the distinctions they make at the semantic level. Any one language, presumably, has concepts that are equivalent to entity, property, and event concepts. Thus, a nominal (e.g. 'house') is a lexeme that designates an entity; an adjectival (e.g. 'tall') is a lexeme that designates a property; and a verbal (e.g. 'to run') is a lexeme that designates an event.

In comparing the frequency figures for progressivizable lexemes in each of the five languages investigated which are given in detail in Section 3, it will become clear that the language-specific lexical samples vary in size, although, with the sole exception of Lakota, all data have been compiled with the help of the questionnaire referred to above. The Lakota data had been collected on the basis of the Buechel (1970) dictionary years before the present study was conducted. Thus, the content of the Lakota sample, of necessity, diverges somewhat from that of the questionnaire. In addition, the sample sizes for all five languages differ to some extent. This is because in a given language, direct translations for some of the concepts included in the questionnaire may not be available, and because, conversely, there may be more than one possible translation for individual questionnaire entries. The latter turns out to be particularly true for Indonesian, a language which is equipped with an extremely complex vocabulary.

Such divergences in sample size, naturally, raise the issue of the direct comparability of the samples. In this regard, it should be recalled that the semantic ranges of individual linguistic items in any given pair of languages never overlap completely, which rules out direct comparability from the outset. The line of attack to pursue for lack of this analytical option is statistical comparison, which yields substantial results in the case of this study in that the percentages of lexemes that admit progressive marking vs. those that do not vary considerably from language to language. Moreover, even if the lexeme lists are not directly comparable, the language-specific subsets of progressivizable vs. non-progressivizable lexemes in the five languages investigated can still be checked

for semantic commonalities of a more general nature. With such a research program, adding the Lakota sample to the overall database appears justified; although the conceptual content of the Lakota sample diverges to some extent from that of the other samples, it can nonetheless be regarded as representative of the Lakota lexicon.

After establishing the language-specific vocabulary lists, each lexical item contained in the latter was tested for compatibility with the progressive. After the respective lexeme-plus-progressive marker combination had been established and, if applicable, checked for phonologically conditioned flaws, the native speakers were asked if they could imagine one or several contexts in which the structural configuration in question was acceptable. Testing as many contexts as possible was encouraged. In addition, semantically plausible contexts were provided by the investigator in cases in which grammatical examples were not easy to come by. For instance, the lexeme denoting the concept 'blue' in a given language may turn out to be compatible with a progressive more easily in the context 'the sky is ("being") blue' than in the context 'the shirt is ("being") blue'.

The data for each of the languages examined in this study, with the sole exception of Kölsch, come from a single speaker. The Kölsch sample has been compiled in cooperation with three native speakers, whose acceptability judgements, in some cases, did not agree. In such cases, lexemes were categorized as to compatibility with progressives on the basis of a majority decision, i.e. the acceptability judgement agreed on by two of the three informants was chosen as the basis of the categorization. There is no reason to expect that disagreement between speakers regarding the use of progressive forms can be observed in Kölsch only. For instance, the authors do not assume that native speakers of English will necessarily endorse all the examples and compatibility judgements regarding English reproduced in Section 3.1. However, occasional between-speaker disagreement should not distort too much the statistical correlations which emerge as the major result of this study.

With respect to methodology, it should, further, be noted that at least in some languages, predicates can sometimes be interpreted as progressive in the sense that they comply with definitions of progressive aspect, even though progressive marking is not present. Thus, a distinction can be made between purely semantic progressivity and overtly marked progressivity (cf. Bertinetto 1994). For instance, in Lakota, both the "bare" form *Ø-c^héya* '3SG-cry' and the form *Ø-c^héya-he* '3SG-cry-PRG', which contains the progressive suffix *-he*, can be used to express a state of affairs that would be rendered by the progressive construction 'he/she/it is crying' in English. This study exclusively investigates presence vs. absence of *overt* progressive marking.

3.1   Progressive in English

Claiming that the English progressive construction 'to be … -ing' is by far the most thoroughly described progressive marking device in the extant theoretical literature should not overstate the case. Despite this, the English progressive remains a bone of contention and a subject of exasperating dispute. By now, even specialists feel that discussions of the English progressive in the literature "are far too numerous to list" (Strang 1982:428). Consequently, there is a need to proceed selectively in summarizing research in this area, and thus, not every available publication dealing with the English progressive will be addressed below. Particularly comprehensive surveys of the English progressive include Allen (1966), Ljund (1980), Scheffer (1975), and Schopf (1974).

The 'to be … -ing' construction complies with the semantic definition of the progressive provided in Section 2. Since this definition is largely illustrated by means of examples involving the English progressive, there is no need for citing additional examples here. It should be clear from the discussion in Section 2 that the 'to be … -ing' construction functions to suppress reference to the points of incipience and termination of a given state of affairs, and that it expresses durativity; further, it indicates that this state of affairs is viewed as simultaneous to a reference point in time. In line with the first two components of this semantic characterization, Hornby (1954:89) emphasizes the fact that the English progressive conveys the notion of incompleteness, and Scheurweghs (1959:319) ascribes the meaning components of duration and continuity to the English progressive.

However, the 'to be … -ing' construction is a grammatical category which fulfills a variety of quite diverse functions (cf. Comrie 1976:33), expressing progressive aspect being only one of these functions. Hatcher (1951) shows how difficult it is to come to terms even with this sub-function of the 'to be … -ing' construction of marking the progressive, partly because the usage of the English progressive is often context-dependent. Thus, the verb 'to see' is not normally used with the progressive. However, in contextual environments such as in "Imagine: at last I'm seeing the Mona Lisa!" or "What's the matter? Am I seeing things?" the progressive in combination with 'to see' becomes acceptable (Hatcher 1951:271). The following quotation summarizes some of the functions the 'to be … -ing' construction has been associated with:

> Aspectual meanings for the [English] progressive include duration, limited duration, and incompletion, whereas non-aspectual meanings include contingency or mere occurrence, pure or 'overt' activity, and simultaneity. (Brinton 1988:7)

Another function of the 'to be … -ing' construction is expressing future tense (cf. Smith 1983:496, Vlach 1981:279–280). Thus, it is possible to say:

(8)   John is leaving town tomorrow
      (Dowty 1979:154)

The future tense reading of example (8) is not conditioned by the appearance of the time adverbial 'tomorrow', as example (9) demonstrates, in which the time adverbial is skipped without affecting the possibility of interpreting the resulting clause as coding future tense:

(9)   John is leaving town
      (Dowty 1979:159)

The semantic definition of the progressive which is given in Section 2 explicitly excludes the function of coding other categories of imperfective aspect, such as habituality. Thus, a morphological category that indicates habitual aspect does not qualify as a progressive proper. The English progressive construction 'to be … -ing' is, however, encountered in contexts in which habituality is expressed (e.g., Hatcher 1951:254), as in example (10).

(10)   he is always walking the dog in the morning

But such habitual readings of the 'to be … -ing' construction are possible only when habituality is expressed by additional specifications, such as 'always' and 'in the morning' in example (10). If these specifications are skipped, as in example (11), a non-habitual, plain progressive predication is obtained.

(11)   he is walking the dog

Thus, it must be concluded that the 'to be … -ing' construction is not an independent expression format of habitual aspect since it does not actively code habituality.

Of a total of 235 English non-nominal/non-adjectival lexemes investigated, the 15 lexical items listed in Table 1 are not compatible with the progressive.

In the literature dealing with aspect in English, considerable attention has been paid to the question of why these lexemes block progressive marking. Details will be discussed in Section 4. As a matter of fact, the blocker lexemes in English are similar to those found in the other languages investigated in this study with respect to their basic semantic profiles, as the following sections will reveal: blocker lexemes usually have a stative or a punctual meaning. One punctual lexeme is included in the above list: 'to sneeze'. The set of potentially punctual lexemes in Table 1 comprises 'to marry', 'to shatter', and 'to spill'.

Table 1. Blocker lexemes in English

to believe
to despise
to fear
to know
to marry
to need
to own
to resemble
to seem
to shatter
to smell (intr.)
to sneeze
to spill
to stink
to understand

Interestingly, the lexeme 'to shatter' becomes acceptable with the progressive in combination with a plural object, as the contrast between examples (12) and (13) shows:

(12) *he is shattering the window

(13)   he is shattering the windows

The reason for this variation in acceptability is, of course, to be sought in the fact that the plural object in example (13) implies a successive string of events extending over a longer stretch of time. That is, the windows in question are not being shattered at the same time, but rather, one by one. In other words, in example (13) the progressive indicates repetitive action.

Some of the 219 sampled non-nominal/non-adjectival lexemes which combine with the progressive do so only when they assume a specific meaning, or are used in a specific context. This class of lexemes includes 'to contain', 'to differ', 'to have', and 'to slip'. Examples (14) to (21) illustrate this.

(14) *the bottle is containing water

(15)   she is containing her anger

(16) *their opinions on the subject are differing somewhat

(17)   he is differing with her just to be spiteful

(18) *she is having a car

(19)   she is having reservations about her original decision now

(20)   *he is slipping on the icy driveway

(21)   his performance is slipping

To a certain extent, English admits progressive marking with adjectivals, and even with nominals. Of the 172 adjectivals investigated, 54 (31.4%), are compatible with the progressive. One of the major objectives of the present study is finding out to what extent selectional restrictions with respect to progressive marking are conditioned by inherent lexical semantics. For this reason, in the list given below, which summarizes the data on English adjectivals, a semantic classification is used which accommodates the bulk of adjectival lexemes contained in the sample. This classification is inspired by Dixon (1977); an extended version which covers nominal lexemes as well has been developed in Pustet (2001) for the purpose of classifying intransitive predicates in general. The small residue of adjectivals occurring in the sample which are not covered by the classification are included in the list as well.

> AGE:
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'new', 'old', 'young'
>
> BODY FEATURE:
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'blind', 'colour-blind', 'fat', 'female', 'left-handed', 'male'
>
> BODILY STATE/SENSATION:
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'alive', 'asleep', 'awake', 'dead', 'dizzy', 'hungry', 'pregnant', 'thirsty', 'tired', 'sick'
>
> COLOUR:
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'black', 'blue', 'bright', 'brown', 'dark', 'grey', 'green', 'red', 'spotted', 'white', 'yellow'
>
> CONSISTENCY:
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
> 'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'brittle', 'crispy', 'elastic', 'hard', 'liquid', 'soft', 'solid', 'stiff'

DIMENSION:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'big', 'broad', 'long', 'low', 'narrow', 'small', 'tall', 'thin', 'wide'

EMOTION:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: 'calm', 'jealous', 'nervous', 'sad'

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'afraid', 'angry', 'ashamed', 'furious', 'glad', 'happy', 'sorry'

EVALUATION:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: 'nice', 'pleasant', 'terrible'

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'bad', 'beautiful', 'difficult', 'easy', 'excellent', 'good', 'gorgeous', 'perfect', 'simple', 'valuable', 'wrong'

PERSONALITY FEATURE:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: 'aggressive', 'ambitious', 'arrogant', 'cautious', 'clever', 'courageous', 'crazy', 'cruel', 'greedy', 'intelligent', 'lazy', 'optimistic', 'proud', 'selfish', 'serious', 'shy', 'sincere', 'smart', 'stingy', 'stubborn', 'stupid', 'vain', 'vicious'

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'choleric', 'wise'

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: 'clear', 'tough'

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'greasy', 'raw', 'ripe', 'tender', 'wet'

RESEMBLANCE:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: 'different'

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'alike', 'equal', 'similar'

SHAPE:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'angular', 'bent', 'circular', 'flat', 'hollow', 'oval', 'round', 'sharp', 'slim', 'thick', 'triangular'

TEMPERATURE:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'cold', 'hot'

UNCLASSIFIED:

'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE acceptable: 'alone', 'American', 'bitter', 'cheap', 'Chinese', 'English', 'French', 'funny', 'late', 'loud', 'open', 'quick', 'quiet',

'slow', 'sour', 'strong', 'sweet', 'tame', 'true', 'weak', 'wild'
'to be … -ing' PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: 'able', 'acidic', 'bare', 'central',
'dangerous', 'dull', 'early', 'empty', 'enough', 'exact', 'expensive', 'free', 'full',
'heavy', 'infinite', 'last', 'lonely', 'necessary', 'ordinary', 'parallel', 'possible',
'powerful', 'pure', 'rare', 'real', 'savage', 'secret', 'sore', 'wealthy', 'worth'

Only the classes 'emotion', 'evaluation', 'personality feature', and 'physical con-
dition' contain lexemes that can be used with the progressive. In general, the
progressive forms, as compared to the simple forms, seem to imply a transitory
state, as can be seen in the following contrasting examples (see note 1):

(22)   Frank is stubborn

(23)   Frank is being stubborn

(24)   Frank is nice

(25)   Frank is being nice

'Is nice/stubborn' implies a lasting personality feature, while 'is being nice/
stubborn' only refers to behaviour at a certain occasion or within a limited
stretch of time.

In many — but not all — cases, the syntactic configurations in which adjec-
tivals combine with the progressive can be interpreted as implying the notions
volition or control, as opposed to their non-progressive counterparts. Thus, 'is
being nice/stubborn' can be paraphrased by 'chooses to act in a nice/stubborn
way'. However, in all cases in which a given adjectival exhibits a contrast be-
tween a simple and a progressive form, the progressive form regularly denotes
a transitory state. Therefore, permanence can be regarded as the basic semantic
dimension underlying the opposition between simple and progressive forms
with adjectivals. (For further discussion of the volition/control issue, cf. Sec-
tion 4).

The question that arises at this point is whether the English progressive
construction, when combined with non-verbal statives, such as the adjectivals
'stubborn' and 'nice' in the above examples, can be put on a par with verbal
progressives in semantic terms. In fact, with non-verbal statives, the English
progressive expresses all the meaning components that are included in the
definition of progressive aspect presented in Section 2. As for the criterion of
imperfectivity, or suppression of reference to the points of incipience and ter-
mination of states of affairs, in combination with the adjectival 'angry', as in
example (26), the progressive "is used of an event viewed imperfectly" (Ljung
1980:32).

(26) John was being angry (Ljung 1980:32)

Further, in combination with the progressive, non-verbal statives indicate that the states of affairs in question extend over a certain time period — they have to be interpreted as durative (cf. examples (22) to (26)). Progressives with non-verbal statives also portray a given state of affairs as simultaneous to a reference point in time. Thus, "the only interpretation open for …[example (27)] is that John displays — 'acts' — politeness at the moment of speech" (Ljung 1980:41).

(27) John is being polite (Ljung 1980:41)

Occasionally, the English progressive is acceptable with a given adjectival only in combination with a subset of its meanings. For instance, 'straight', when referring to physical shape, does not admit progressive marking (cf. example (28)). When denoting social activity and behaviour, however, 'straight' is compatible with the progressive, as example (29) demonstrates:

(28) *the line is being straight

(29) Frank is being straight with me

Other adjectivals that behave like 'straight' in that their metaphorical readings, which refer to social behaviour or emotional states, admit the progressive include 'bad', 'blue', 'cool', 'crooked', 'difficult', 'good', and 'smooth'.

In combination with adjectivals, progressive forms sometimes connote irony, as in the following examples.

(30) Frank is being different again
(might be said about a person who does not act according to the norms and expectations of a particular social group of which he or she is expected to be a conforming part)

(31) Frank is being very American tonight
(might be said about a person wearing a cowboy hat and a stars-and-stripes T-shirt)

In a sample comprising 364 English nominals, 13 lexical items have been identified which admit progressive marking: 'American', 'coward', 'friend', 'glutton', 'idiot', 'jerk', 'liar', 'man', 'miser', 'optimist', 'saint', 'villain', 'woman'. 'Is being an American' essentially receives the same interpretation as the adjectival predicate 'is being American' (cf. example (31)). 'Is being a man/woman' is acceptable in the extra-linguistic context of cross-dressing; i.e., with these two nominals, the progressive refers to a temporary state of affairs. English nominals which are compatible with the progressive are, mainly, members of the

semantic class 'personality feature'. As with adjectivals, the progressive form denotes non-permanence, while the simple form expresses permanence, as the following contrastive examples illustrate.

(32)   Frank is a coward

(33)   Frank is being a coward

(34)   she is a woman

(35)   he is being a woman tonight (potential context: cross-dressing)

In contrast to the progressive markers in the other languages investigated in this study, the English progressive construction is extensively documented with respect to its historical development as well. A relatively unrestricted compatibility of the 'to be … -ing' construction with the verbal inflectional categories available in English is observed in the most recent history of the language only (e.g. Strang 1982:440). Further, the progressive construction has increased its scope with respect to compatibility with inanimate subjects; this constellation is not documented in eighteenth-century English (Strang 1982:443). Today, there is a growing overall tendency of replacing corresponding non-progressive forms with progressives:

> …in cases in which the simple form can be used alongside the progressive, the latter tends to be chosen with increasing frequency — to the point that an originally marked or rare "progressive" comes to constitute the statistical norm. (Mair and Hundt 1995:118)

3.2 Progressive in Kölsch

Although neglected in most grammars of German, a progressive construction exists in many varieties of this language (Ebert 2000). In the dialect spoken in the Cologne area, which is known as Kölsch, progressive use is more widespread than in other varieties of German. The Kölsch progressive is formed by means of the locative preposition *am* 'at', the copula *sin* 'to be', and the verbal infinitive, as example (36) demonstrates. This construction type is typical for progressives in that it involves a locative marker (cf. Bybee and Dahl 1989:77–81). The *am* + *sin* + infinitive construction indicates that a state of affairs is ongoing — it is profiled as in progress under simultaneous exclusion of the points of incipience and termination —, and that it extends over a longer time span. In addition, it implies that a given state of affairs is viewed as simultaneous to some reference point in time. Thus, this construction qualifies as a progressive

marking device by all semantic criteria included in the definition provided in Section 2.

(36) *et   Mari:che is   am   kri:che*
      DEF Mary   COP.3SG.PRS LOC cry.INF
      "Mary is crying"

In Kölsch, only verbals combine with the progressive construction — adjectivals and nominals never do. However, not every verbal is compatible with the progressive. Of a total of 225 non-nominal/non-adjectival lexemes investigated, 27 do not admit progressive marking. The group of these lexemes, which are listed in Table 2, includes several verbals, i.e. lexical items denoting events.

Table 2. Blocker lexemes in Kölsch

a:nfange	'to start' (tr./intr.)
a:nkumme	'to arrive'
afhaue	'to escape'
besetze	'to own'
blejve	'to stay'
bruche	'to need'
enthalde	'to contain'
erkenne	'to recognize'
explode:re	'to explode'
fallelosse	'to drop'(tr.)
fö:le	'to feel'
han	'to have'
hänge	'to hang' (intr.)
jä:nhan	'to like'
jleuve	'to believe', 'to trust'
kri:jje	'to receive'
le:fhan	'to love'
levve	'to live'
losse	'to allow'
rüsche	'to smell' (intr.)
sich ungerschäjde	'to differ'
sitze	'to sit'
stinke	'to stink'
verstonn	'to understand'
wi:dunn	'to hurt' (tr.)
wisse	'to know'
wulle	'to want', 'to wish'

The above list comprises mostly lexemes which convey a stative meaning, although it also contains three actives, namely *afhaue* 'to escape', *a:nkumme* 'to arrive', and *wi:dunn* 'to hurt' (tr.). However, these lexemes are at least potentially punctual; they may feature events of very short duration. However, the set of blocker lexemes in Kölsch also includes two indisputably punctual lexemes: *explode:re* 'to explode' and *fallelosse* 'to drop' (tr.); *a:nfange* 'to start' (tr./itr.) can probably also be included in the group of punctuals. Thus, the lexemes included in Table 2 can be divided into three semantic groups: stative, active/potentially punctual, and punctual. All lexemes can be ascribed to one of these groups. However, it should be noted that three of the stative concepts contained in Table 2, namely *kri:jje* 'to receive', *erkenne* 'to recognize', and *verstonn* 'to understand' may also denote punctual events.

There are six special lexemes in the Kölsch sample, namely *blitze* 'to flash' (as lightning), *entdecke* 'to discover', *finge* 'to find', *ni:se* 'to sneeze', *platze* 'to burst', and *verjesse* 'to forget'. These at least potentially punctual lexemes are acceptable with the *am* + *sin* + infinitive construction, but in the progressive form they invariably denote a repetition of the featured event over a longer stretch of time.

3.3 Progressive in Lakota

The Lakota progressive suffix *-hą* fulfills all three of the semantic criteria contained in the definition of progressive aspect given in Section 2: it profiles a state of affairs as in progress under exclusion of the points of incipience and termination, it indicates that it extends over a longer time span, and it portrays a state of affairs as simultaneous to a specific reference point in time. Examples (37) and (38) illustrate the use of the progressive marker *-hą*, which figures as *-he* or *-hį* in certain morphonologically defined contexts.

(37) *ománi-hą*
      walk about-PRG
      "he is wandering about"

(38) *wóta-he   ki icʰų́hą tʰimá wa-híyu*
      eat.ITR-PRG LK while inside 1SG.AG-come
      "while he was eating I came in"

Historically, the Lakota progressive marker *-hą* derives from the verb *hą́* 'to stand'. In addition to coding progressive aspect, the suffix *-hą* also functions to express the meanings of continuative (cf. Boas and Deloria 1941:60) and

repetitive. However, the productivity rates of the three functions of the suffix *-hạ* differ. For the greater part of the lexical items investigated in this study, only one or two of the three functions are available. Examples (39) and (40) illustrate the usage of the continuative marker *-hạ*; in example (41), *-hạ* functions to code repetitive aspect.

(39) *makʰócʰe ki   wí ki   aʾókawi̜ya-he   kštó*
      earth   DEF sun DEF turn around-CNT   ASS.F
      "the earth keeps on rotating around the sun"

(40) *hécʰel tohą́yą ní   yé ki wówaši ecʰų́-hi̜-kte*
      as   when live go LK work.N do-CNT-FUT
      "he will keep on working for as long as he lives"

(41) *istó ki   wotí̜-he kštó*
      arm DEF stiff-REP ASS.F
      "his arm gets stiff again and again"

Of a total of 320 non-nominal/non-adjectival lexemes investigated, 14 are not compatible with the progressive marker. These lexemes are reproduced in Table 3.

As in English and Kölsch, the list of non-nominal/non-adjectival blocker lexemes contains a large number of statives. Potentially punctual active lexemes contained in the list include: *ksúyeya* 'to hurt' (tr.), *xmúya* 'to cast a spell on', 'to curse', and *yúza* 'to marry'. One active, non-punctual lexeme, namely *ówehąhą* 'to joke', presumably blocks progressive marking because it has absorbed the

Table 3. Blocker lexemes in Lakota

aʾí	'to take to'
ayúštą	'to let go'
hą́	'to stand'
ímna	'to be fed up with'
íyakʰapʰa	'to exceed'
iyóhi	'to be enough for'
iyókʰihe	'to be connected', 'to be next to'
kaɣí	'to respect'
ksúyeya	'to hurt' (tr.)
oʾíyokipʰi	'to be pleased with', 'to like'
okáxniya	'to understand'
ówehąhą	'to joke'
xmúya	'to cast a spell on', 'to curse'
yúza	'to marry'

Table 4. Lakota verbals expressing repetition with the progressive

akísni	'to recover' (with progressive: 'to recover involving ups and downs')
anátʰipa	'to cramp' (with progressive: 'to cramp repeatedly')
átaya	'to meet' (with progressive: 'to meet repeatedly')
glí	'to arrive at home' (with progressive: 'to arrive at home again and again')
kažúžu	'to pay' (with progressive: 'to pay at regular intervals')
katʼá	'to kill' (with progressive: 'to kill again and again')
kʰáta	'to have a fever' (with progressive: 'to have fever spells')
kʰiwítaya	'to get together' (with progressive: 'to get together repeatedly')
nabláza	'to burst' (with progressive: 'to burst over and over')
yupšų́	'to spill (accidentally)' (with progressive: 'to spill repeatedly')

suffix *-hą* in its basic lexical form, and the progressive marker cannot be attached to a lexical item more than once. It is, however, unclear why the lexeme *aʼí* 'to take to', which can also be classed as active and non-punctual, does not allow progressive marking.

Some lexemes assume a repetitive meaning, or convey the notion of events happening in intervals of some sort, when combined with the progressive marker, as Table 4 shows, which contains mostly punctuals.

Unlike Kölsch, Lakota admits progressive marking with certain adjectivals as well. Of the 186 adjectivals sampled, a total of 28 (15.1%), are compatible with the suffix *-hą* in progressive function:

AGE:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *ką* 'old', *tʰéca* 'new'

BODY FEATURE:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *hušté* 'lame', *ksízeka* 'strong', 'tough'
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *bloká* 'male', *cʰatká* 'left-handed', *cʰépa* 'fat', 'obese', *cʰežáka* 'to have the legs far apart permanently', *cʰuwínuya* 'hump-backed', *ištábleza* 'having good eyes', *ištáɣuɣa* 'blind', *ištákpa* 'blind on one eye', *ištáxmįxmį* 'cross-eyed', *kašʼį́* 'to swayback', 'to be curved downwards', *núɣekpa* 'deaf', 'hard of hearing', *nuxcą́* 'deaf', *wašáka* 'strong', *xloɣéca* 'thin', 'skinny', *zi(b)zípela* 'thin', 'skinny'

BODILY STATE/SENSATION:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *hústaka* 'weak in the legs', *hų́kešni* 'weak', *ípuza* 'thirsty', *itómni* 'dizzy', *kʰáta* 'to have a fever', *kʰúža* 'sick'

-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *akíxʼą* 'hungry', *aʼóyį* 'sleepy', *bléza* 'conscious', *blihéca* 'lively', 'active', *cʰuwíta* 'to feel cold', *hóyita* 'hoarse', *iglúšʼaka* 'pregnant', *ípʰi* 'full' (from eating), *ištóxli* 'blear-eyed', *iyóšniža* 'dazzled by the light', *kʰošká* 'to have venereal disease', *našlí* 'to have a rash', *páya* 'drunk', 'high', 'ecstatic', *útʰų* 'injured', *wacʰíbleza* 'conscious', *watúkʰa* 'tired', *wayązą* 'sick', *xaxą́* 'sore', *xli(xlí)* 'full of sores', *xwá* 'sleepy', 'drowsy', *yuɣó* 'tired', *zaní* 'healthy', 'well'

COLOUR:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *gléɣa* 'spotted', 'checkered', *glešká* 'speckled', 'spotted', *gléza* 'striped', *ɣí* 'brown', *sápa* 'black', *šá* 'red', *tʰó* 'blue', 'green', *xóta* 'grey', *zí* 'yellow', 'pale'

CONSISTENCY:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *cocó* 'muddy', 'sticky', 'slushy' *kpą(kpą́)la* 'finely ground', 'crumbled', *nųšnų́žela* 'not as hard or soft as should be', *pʰąpʰą́la* 'soft', 'tender', *wįšwį́žahą* 'flexible', *wotį* 'stiff', *zigzíca* 'elastic'

DIMENSION:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *bubú* 'big and clumsy', *cíkʼala* 'little', 'small', *cístila* 'tiny', 'very small', *yąɣą́la* 'thin', *hą́ska* 'long', 'tall', *kʰázela* 'shallow', *ptécela* 'short', *zi(b)zípela* 'thin'

EMOTION:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *gnaškį́yą* 'wild', 'crazy', 'frantic', *iyókišica* 'sad', 'sorry', 'grieved', *nawízi* 'jealous'
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *cʰątéšica* 'sad', *cʰątéwašte* 'happy', 'glad', 'cheerful', 'joyful', *cʰątíhąke* 'worried', 'sad', 'downcast', *išʼošʼo* 'anxious', *itʰámya* 'wanting to die', *iyókipʰi* 'happy'

EVALUATION:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *cʰó* 'attractive', 'pretty', *oxʼą́wįxalaka* 'cute', *šíca* 'bad', *wašté* 'good', *waštécaka* 'good-natured', 'friendly', 'nice', *xópa* 'attractive', 'beautiful', 'handsome'

PERSONALITY FEATURE:
-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *ocʰį́šica* 'mean', *ohítika* 'brave', *oxʼą́šica* 'mean', *oxʼą́wašte* 'good-natured', 'friendly', 'nice', *psąpsą́ka* 'inclined to act silly in

front of boys', *xleté* 'wild', 'crazy', 'daring', *wacʰígnugnuni* 'forgetful', 'absent-minded', *wayázagla* 'hypochondriac', *wicʰášašni* 'tricky', 'mischievous', 'humorous', *wíšteca* 'bashful', 'shy', *wítą* 'proud'

-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *cʰatéhahala* 'fickle', 'unsteady', *cʰatésuta* 'strong-minded', 'strong-willed', *cʰatétʾįza* 'courageous', 'brave', *cʰatéʾųšika* 'easygoing', 'manipulable', *ksápa* 'wise', 'clever', 'smart', *ocʰázewakʰąla* 'quick-tempered', *úcihišni* 'lazy', *wacʰátognaka* 'generous', *wacʰíhahala* 'impatient', 'quick-tempered', *watátąka* 'particular', 'picky', *waxtíka* 'weak', 'touchy', *wayúpʰika* 'skilful', *witkó* 'foolish', 'crazy', *xcoxcó* 'clumsy', *xpáka* 'clumsy', 'unskilled'

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –

-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *blecáhą* 'broken', *gnahą́* 'fallen off' *ɣú* 'burnt', *kpukpá* 'murky', *napí* 'greasy', 'rich' (food), *natʾíza* 'tense', 'inflated', *nazíca* 'stretched', *oxá̆* 'moldy', *oyáya* 'moldy', *pʰáželą* 'soft', *pišpíža* 'wrinkled', *píža* 'loose', 'wrinkled', 'deflated', *ptuɣáhą* 'chipped', 'with surface peeled off', *púza* 'dry', *pųpų́* 'rotten', *weɣáhą* 'broken', *xci(xcí)* 'chipped', 'with a torn edge', *xįxį́* 'wrinkled', *xlixlíla* 'muddy', 'murky', *xpuxpú* 'scaly', 'flaky', 'chipped', *xųwį́* 'rotten', *yuxʾí* 'chapped', 'scabby', 'scaly', 'rough from dirt'

SHAPE:

-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –

-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *blaská* 'flat', *gmigmá* 'round', *ksá* 'to be in the state of having something cut off', *kšą́* 'bent', 'crooked', *kʰoglí* 'sharp', 'to have a cutting edge', *nųxnų́ya* 'to have a bump/bumps', *obláya* 'level', 'plain', *oblétʰų* 'square', *okʰížata* 'forked', *oškókpa* 'hollowed out', 'dented', *owótʰąla* 'straight', *oxlóka* 'to have a hole', *pažóžo* 'to have a bump/bumps', 'lumpy', *psųpsų́la* 'long and rounded', *pʾipʾí* 'not level', 'uneven', *pʰéstola* 'pointed', *wįžáhą* 'bent', *xaká* 'branching', 'having many prongs or branches', *xloyéca* 'hollow', *xmį́* 'crooked', *xuɣáhą* 'dented', *xʾakpá* 'concave', *yuxáxa* 'to have prickly or thorny things sticking out', 'to have branches', *žáka* 'V-shaped', 'forked', *žáta* 'Y-shaped', 'forked'

TEMPERATURE:

-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *cʰusní* 'cool' (weather), *osní* 'cold' (weather)'

-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *kʰáta* 'hot', 'warm', *sní* 'cold'

UNCLASSIFIED:

-hą PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *cʰą(l)níyą* 'abusive because of jealousy' *hų́kešni* 'slow', *ų́šixʾą* 'economical', *wápʰi* 'lucky'

-hą PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *axwáyela* 'quiet', *aˀókʰimą* 'folded over', *henála* 'gone', 'used up', *hohóla* 'loose', 'unsteady', *kapˀóžela* 'light', 'not heavy', *opˀó* 'misty', *oskúya* 'sour after deteriorating', *oxˀą́kʰo* 'quick', 'fast', *ožúla* 'full', *pʰá* 'bitter', 'sour', 'tangy', *pʰé* 'sharp', *pˀó* 'foggy', *úšika* 'poor', 'miserable', 'pityful', *wašákala* 'cheap', *wašéca* 'rich', *waxpánica* 'poor', *wicákʰa* 'true', *xˀ̨hí* 'slow', *žicá* 'rich'

As a first approximation to the question of whether lexical semantics interacts with the acceptability of progressive markers, it can be stated that the semantic classification imposed on the sample of Lakota adjectivals does in fact bring out certain correspondences between the semantic content of a given class of lexemes and its inclination towards admitting progressive marking, since there are specific classes in which progressive marking occurs much more frequently than in others. The classes 'age', 'colour', 'consistency', 'dimension', 'evaluation', 'physical condition', and 'shape' never allow progressive marking. The classes 'body feature', 'bodily state/sensation', and 'emotion' display a weak inclination towards admitting progressive marking. The classes 'personality feature' and 'temperature', on the other hand, are extremely susceptible to progressive marking.

The crucial question that arises at this point concerns the meaning difference between the simple and progressive forms of adjectivals that combine with *-hą*. In the case of the classes 'bodily state/sensation', 'emotion', and 'temperature', the meaning difference appears to be minimal or even nonexistent — the progressive form merely emphasizes that the respective event persists for a while. This durative connotation is also present when the progressive marker is attached to members of the semantic class 'body feature'. However, with members of the classes 'body feature' and 'personality feature' the contrast between simple and progressive forms expresses a more drastic difference in meaning. While the simple forms indicate an inherent, unchangeable quality, the progressive forms denote a transitory state. Thus, in combination with the progressive marker *-hą* lexemes such as *hušté* 'lame' and *ksízeka* 'strong', 'tough', which would normally be interpreted as permanent bodily characteristics, assume a temporary, momentary reading. Here the use of the progressive implies that the respective state of affairs will be subject to eventual termination. Lexemes such as *ohítika* 'brave', *xleté* 'wild', 'crazy', 'daring', and *wíšteca* 'bashful', 'shy', which per se designate permanent personality features, receive an analogous interpretation in combination with the progressive marker *-hą*; they are conceived of as denoting a transitory, or momentary, state of mind.

One of the sampled adjectivals admits progressive marking only in a specialized semantic context: *kʰáta* 'hot', 'warm', 'to have a fever' cannot normally be used with the progressive. If, however, *kʰáta* refers specifically to the weather, progressive marking is possible. This is also the case when the adjectival expresses the bodily state 'to have a fever'. In this semantic context, however, the suffix *-hą* expresses repetition, since it must be understood as conveying the idea of having fever spells.

In contrast to adjectivals, nominals never combine with the progressive in Lakota.

3.4 Progressive in Indonesian

Like the progressive markers found in the languages discussed above, the Indonesian progressive marker *sedang* indicates that a state of affairs is ongoing — it is profiled as in progress under simultaneous exclusion of the points of incipience and termination, that it extends over a longer time span, and that it is viewed as simultaneous to a reference point in time (cf. Macdonald and Darjowidjojo 1967:164, Sneddon 1996:198). Thus, the element *sedang*, whose usage is illustrated by example (42), fulfills all three of the semantic criteria which are constitutive of the category of progressive according to the definition given in Section 2.

(42) *dia sedang makan*
      3SG PRG   eat
      "he/she is eating"

Unlike the progressive markers in English and Lakota, *sedang* does not serve to express semantic categories other than progressive aspect. The diachronic source of the element *sedang* is unknown.

Of the 325 non-nominal/non-adjectival lexemes investigated, only 20 block progressive marking (cf. Table 5). As in the other languages discussed so far, blocker lexemes in Indonesian either designate states or punctual events.

Punctuals contained in this list include *berkejap* 'to blink', *bersin* 'to sneeze', *menemukan* 'to find', 'discover', and *mengejapkan* 'to blink' (the eyes). *Memperbolehkan* 'to allow', *kawin* 'to marry', *lupa* 'to forget' (intr.), *melupakan* 'to forget' (tr.), and *menikah* 'to marry' can be classed as potentially punctual. The only lexical item in the above list that cannot be classed as either stative, punctual, or potentially punctual is *mengombak* 'to waver', 'to move like waves', 'to undulate'. Four of the blocker lexemes admit progressive marking when they are used to convey a specific meaning. In combination with the progressive marker *sedang*,

Table 5. Blocker lexemes in Indonesian

berbeda	'to differ'
berisi	'to contain'
berkejap	'to blink'
bersin	'to sneeze'
hidup	'to be alive'
jatuh	'to fall'
kawin	'to marry'
lupa	'to forget (intr.)'
mau	'to want'
melupakan	'to forget (tr.)'
memperbolehkan	'to allow'
menemukan	'to find', 'to discover'
mengandung	'to contain'
mengejapkan	'to blink (the eyes)'
mengerti	'to understand'
mengombak	'to waver', 'to move like waves', 'to undulate'
menikah	'to marry'
menyerupai	'to resemble'
tahu	'to understand', 'to be aware', 'to be well-informed'
terletak	'to lie', 'to recline'

berbeda 'to differ' assumes the reading 'to disagree'; *jatuh* 'to fall' assumes the reading 'to go out of business'; *kawin* 'to marry' assumes the meaning 'to make love'; and *mengandung* 'to contain' assumes the reading 'to be pregnant'.

The sample includes one punctual lexeme that must be interpreted as repetitive when combined with the progressive: *mengejapkan* 'to blink'.

Of the 236 adjectivals contained in the sample, 126 (53.4%), are compatible with the progressive marker *sedang*.

AGE:
sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –
sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *anak-anak* 'young', *baru* 'new', *kakek-kakek* 'old and male', *lama* 'old', *muda* 'young', *nenek-nenek* 'old and female', *tua* 'old'

BODY FEATURE:
sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *buta* 'blind', *gemuk* 'fat', *kuat* 'strong', 'powerful', *kurus* 'thin', 'skinny', *langsing* 'slim', 'skinny', *lemah* 'weak', *pincang* 'crippled', 'injured'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *betina* 'female', *buta warna* 'colour-blind', *hermaprodit* 'hermaphroditic', *kidal* 'left-handed', *laki-laki* 'male', *perempuan* 'female'

BODILY STATE/SENSATION:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *capek* 'tired', *hamil* 'pregnant', *haus* 'thirsty', *hidup* 'alive', *lapar* 'hungry', *lelah* 'tired', *mengandung* 'pregnant', *pusing* 'dizzy', *sakit* 'sick', 'sore', *sehat* 'healthy', *tidur* 'asleep'
sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *bangun* 'awake', *mati* 'dead', *meninggal* 'dead'

COLOUR:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *abu-abu* 'grey', *biru* 'blue', *gelap* 'dark', *hijau* 'green', *hitam* 'black', *kuning* 'yellow', *merah* 'red', *putih* 'white', *terang* 'bright'
sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *belang* 'spotted', *coklat* 'brown', *pirang* 'blond'

CONSISTENCY:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *halus* 'smooth', *kaku* 'stiff', *kasar* 'rough', *keras* 'hard', 'tough', *kokoh* 'solid', *liat* 'tough', *licin* 'smooth', 'slippery', *lunak* 'soft', 'tender', *padat* 'solid'
sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *cair* 'liquid', *elastis* 'elastic', *empuk* 'soft', *lembut* 'soft', 'tender', *mudah pecah* 'brittle', *renyah* 'crispy'

DIMENSION:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *besar* 'big', *dalam* 'deep', *lebar* 'broad', 'wide', *luas* 'wide', *rendah* 'low', *sempit* 'narrow', *tajam* 'sharp', *tebal* 'thick', *tinggi* 'tall', *tipis* 'thin'
sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *kecil* 'small', *panjang* 'long', *pendek* 'short', *raksasa* 'huge'

EMOTION:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *bahagia* 'happy', *cemburu* 'jealous', *deg-degan* 'nervous', *gemetar* 'nervous', *malu(-malu)* 'shy', 'embarrassed', 'ashamed', *marah* 'angry', 'furious', *menyenangkan* 'pleasant', *menyesal* 'sorry', *sedih* 'sad', *senang* 'glad', *susah* 'sad', *takut* 'afraid'
sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *bangga* 'proud of'

EVALUATION:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *bagus* 'good', 'beautiful', 'gorgeous', *bernilai* 'valuable', *buruk* 'bad', 'ugly', *cantik* 'beautiful', *enak* 'nice', *indah* 'gorgeous', *jelek* 'bad', 'ugly', *salah* 'wrong', *sukar* 'difficult', *sulit* 'difficult'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *benar* 'right', 'correct', *berharga* 'valuable', *betul* 'right', 'correct', *bintang* 'popular', *gampang* 'simple', *manis* 'nice', *mudah* 'easy', 'simple', *sederhana* 'simple', *sempurna* 'excellent', 'perfect'

PERSONALITY FEATURE:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *ambisius* 'ambitious', *berani* 'courageous', 'disrespectful', *bodoh* 'stupid', *egois* 'selfish', *ganas* 'vicious', *gila* 'crazy', *hati-hati* 'cautious', *jahat* 'cruel', 'vicious', *keji* 'vicious', *keras kepala* 'stubborn', *malas* 'lazy', *mudah marah* 'choleric', *optimis(tik)* 'optimistic', *pelit* 'stingy', *rakus* 'greedy', *sungguh-sungguh* 'serious', *tolol* 'stupid'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *bajingan* 'villainous', *bijaksana* 'wise', *merusak* 'destructive', *pandai* 'clever', 'intelligent', 'smart', *pemalas* 'lazy', *pemalu* 'shy', *pemarah* 'choleric', *pemberani* 'courageous', *penakut* 'timid', *pengecut* 'cowardly', *pintar* 'smart', *sombong* 'arrogant', *tulus* 'sincere', *ular* 'cunning'

PHYSICAL CONDITION:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *basah* 'wet', *gundul* 'bare', *kering* 'dry', *kosong* 'empty', *kotor* 'dirty', *masak* 'cooked', 'done', 'ripe', *penuh* 'full', *rusak* 'broken', 'out of order', *telanjang* 'naked'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *asli* 'pure', *berlemak* 'greasy', *bersih* 'clean', *mentah* 'raw'

RESEMBLANCE:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *seimbang* 'equal'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *beda* 'different', *mirip* 'alike', 'similar', *sama* 'same', *serupa* 'similar'

SHAPE:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: –

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *bengkok* 'bent', 'crooked', *berlubang* 'hollow', 'to have a hole', *bersudut* 'angular', *bujur sangkar* 'square', *bulat* 'round' (3-dimensionally), *bulatan* 'sphere-like', *bulat telur* 'oval', *bundar* 'circular', 'round' (2-dimensionally), *kerucut* 'conical', *kotak* 'square', *kubus* 'cubical', *lurus* 'straight', *oval* 'oval', *pesok* 'dented', *piringan* 'disk-shaped', *rata* 'flat', *segitiga* 'triangular', *titik* 'dot-like'

TEMPERATURE:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *dingin* 'cold', *hangat* 'warm', *panas* 'hot', *sejuk* 'cool'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: –

UNCLASSIFIED:

sedang PROGRESSIVE acceptable: *agresif* 'aggressive', *asam* 'sour', *bahaya* 'dangerous', *bebas* 'free', *berbahaya* 'dangerous', *berhati-hati* 'cautious', *buas* 'wild', *cukup* 'enough', *gratis* 'free', *jarang* 'rare', *jinak* 'tame', *kaya* 'wealthy', *kesepian* 'lonely', *langka* 'rare', *mahal* 'expensive', *murah* 'cheap', *pahit* 'bitter', *pararel* 'parallel', *pelan* 'slow', *perlu* 'necessary', *ragu(ragu)* 'in doubt', *sendirian* 'alone', *sepi* 'quiet', *tenang* 'quiet', 'calm', *terlambat* 'late', *tumpul* 'dull', *tutup* 'closed'

sedang PROGRESSIVE not acceptable: *batu* 'made of stone', *berat* 'heavy', *besi* 'made of iron', *biadab* 'savage', *biasa* 'ordinary', *cepat* 'quick', *dini* 'early', *emas* 'golden', *gas* 'gas-like', *gurun* 'desert-like', *jelas* 'clear', *kiri* 'left', *kudus* 'holy', *kuningan* 'made of brass', *lucu* 'funny', *mungkin* 'possible', *nyata* 'real, *(orang) Cina* 'Chinese', *(orang) Tionghoa* 'Chinese', *pagi* 'early', *penting* 'necessary', *penyendiri* 'lonesome', *perak* 'made of silver', *persis* 'exact', *primitif* 'savage', *pusat* 'central', *rumput* 'grass-like', *tanah liat* 'made of clay', *tengah* 'middle', *terakhir* 'last', *yatim piatu* 'orphaned'

In Indonesian, the tendency to use the progressive with adjectivals is more pronounced than in Lakota and English. Progressive marking is possible with members of the classes 'body feature', 'bodily state/sensation', 'colour', 'consistency', 'dimension', 'emotion', 'evaluation', 'personality feature', 'physical condition', 'resemblance', and 'temperature'.

In combination with members of the classes 'bodily state/sensation', 'emotion', and 'physical condition', progressive forms do not seem to bring about a major change in meaning, as compared to the simple forms.

As in English, members of the class 'personality feature' are interpreted as transitory states when combined with the progressive:

(43)   *dia pelit*
       3SG stingy
       "he/she is stingy"

(44)   *dia sedang pelit*
       3SG PRG   stingy
       "he/she is being stingy"

By using or not using *sedang* with lexemes expressing body features, a semantic distinction with respect to permanence is expressed. Lexemes which admit progressive marking assume a temporary meaning in combination with *sedang*, as the contrast between examples (45) and (46) illustrates.

(45) *dia lemah*
     3sg weak
     "he/she is weak (generally)"

(46) *dia sedang lemah*
     3sg PRG   weak
     "he/she is feeling weak (temporarily)"

This strong dependence of progressive marking with body features on the parameter of permanence further manifests itself in the fact that lexemes which can never be interpreted as temporary, such as *buta warna* 'colour-blind' and *kidal* 'left-handed' never combine with *sedang*.

Members of the class 'colour' are acceptable with the progressive mainly when referring to meteorological conditions. Thus, *abu-abu* 'grey', *biru* 'blue', and *hitam* 'black' combine with *sedang* when denoting the colour of the sky, the implication being that the state of affairs in question will not last. In combination with *putih* 'white' the progressive may indicate a situation in which snow is involved as the source of white colour. With an analogous transitory connotation, *hijau* 'green', *kuning* 'yellow', and *merah* 'red' can be used with the progressive to describe the colour of traffic lights. Similarly, members of the class 'consistency' may designate a situation which is due to weather conditions when combined with the progressive. Thus, *licin* 'smooth' assumes the meaning 'slippery' when referring to a wet road. The evaluatives *bagus* 'beautiful', *buruk* 'bad', *enak* 'nice', and *jelek* 'bad' become acceptable with the progressive when used to describe the weather; *cantik* 'beautiful' in and of itself denotes inherent physical beauty. When combined with the progressive, however, *cantik* 'beautiful' receives a temporary interpretation: *sedang cantik* can be said about a woman who is not really beautiful but becomes attractive after applying makeup. All members of the class 'temperature' contained in the list given above are acceptable with the progressive when referring to weather conditions. Another strong argument in favor of the general hypothesis that the usage of the Indonesian progressive marker *sedang* is controlled by the semantic parameter of permanence can be derived from the behaviour of the lexeme *mati* 'dead' When referring to the physical death of animate beings, this lexeme never admits progressive marking. When describing a situation in which a light went out because of a power outage, however, this lexeme admits the use of *sedang*: death is irrevocable, but a situation brought about by power outage will be subject to termination.

None of the 243 nominals contained in the Indonesian sample admits progressive marking.

3.5 Progressive in Burmese

In none of the five languages sampled is the scope of the progressive marker in the lexicon as high as in Burmese. Like the progressive marking devices in the other languages included in this survey, the particle *ne*, which is discussed in Okell (1969:369), indicates that a state of affairs is profiled as in progress under simultaneous exclusion of the points of incipience and termination, that it extends over a longer time span, and that it is viewed as simultaneous to some reference point in time.

(47) *θu gà əloʊˀloʊˀ ne ba ði*
     3SG TOP work PRG PLT POS
     "he/she is working"

Historically, the Burmese progressive marker *ne* derives from the verb *ne* 'to live'. In addition to coding progressive aspect, the element *ne* fulfills the alternative functions of expressing continuative aspect (cf. example (48)) and a modal meaning which can be glossed by the English adverb 'unexpectedly' (for details, see below).

(48) *gəba gà ne go ḷipaˀ ne ði*
     earth TOP sun OBJ rotate CNT POS
     "the earth keeps on rotating around the sun"

Only four lexical items out of a total of 225 non-nominal/non-adjectival lexemes investigated block progressive marking:

Table 6. Blocker lexemes in Burmese

eĩdaʊ̃pjù	'to marry'
pjɪˀθwá	'to leave'
ṣoʊ̃	'to end', 'to die'
ṣɛˀ	'to continue' (intr.)

pjɪˀθwá 'to leave', *ṣoʊ̃* 'to end', 'to die', and *eĩdaʊ̃pjù* 'to marry' can be classed as potentially punctual. *ṣɛˀ* 'to continue' can be classed as stative.

    Four additional lexemes assume a repetitive meaning when combined with the progressive. All of these are either punctual or potentially punctual:

Table 7. Punctual/repetitive verbals in Burmese

paʊˀ	'to burst'
paʊˀkwɛ'	'to explode'
pjɪˀ	'to throw'
twὲ	'to find', 'to discover', 'to meet'

For instance, in combination with *pjɪˀ* 'to throw', the progressive indicates a successive chain of throwing actions, as in the case of a person who throws bottles out of the window one by one.

Burmese is an exceptional language in that all adjectivals admit progressive marking; at least none of the 149 adjectivals included in the Burmese sample proved to be incompatible with the progressive marker *ne*. In combination with the progressive, adjectivals receive a transitory interpretation. Thus, the sequence *ni ne* 'progressive + red' in example (49) can be rendered by 'is currently red'. The English adverb 'currently' is quite appropriate for conveying the notion of a state of 'redness' that is ongoing and not yet terminated, but is expected to be terminated after a while, in this example.

(49) *mí   pwaĩˀ ni   ne   ba   ði*
      traffic light   red PRG PLT POS
      "currently the traffic light is red"

Likewise, the adjectivals *pja* 'blue' and *ʃʰe* 'long' receive a temporary reading when combined with the progressive marker *ne*:

(50) *kaʊ̃ˀgĩ gà   pja ne   ba   ði*
      sky   TOP blue PRG PLT POS
      "currently the sky is blue"

(51) *θὺ zəbĩ ʃʰe   ne   ba   ði*
      3SG hair long PRG PLT POS
      "currently his/her hair is long"

Thus, the following statement holds: whenever a context can be found in which a Burmese adjectival conveys a transitory meaning, it admits progressive marking. This is also true of adjectivals which convey permanent meanings in their base form; some of the numerous examples included in the survey are: *jo ˀpʰjaʊ̃* 'sincere', *θā* 'strong', *gaʊ̃'ma* 'stubborn', and *mjĩˀ* 'tall'.

Interestingly, when combined with adjectivals, the particle *ne* may also assume the alternative reading 'unexpectedly'. This translation of *ne* would be appropriate in examples (49) to (51) as an alternative to 'currently'. This is also

true for all the other adjectivals contained in the Burmese sample, as well as for Burmese nominals and verbals.

Thus, the seemingly arbitrary restrictions imposed on the usage of the progressive markers in the other four languages investigated in this study are suspended in Burmese. Adjectivals and verbals are not the only parts of speech which can be freely combined with the progressive in this language; to a considerable degree, even nominals admit progressive marking. Whenever a suitable context can be found for interpreting a given nominal predicate as transitory, *ne* can be used to express the notion of non-permanence. However, in general, nominals lend themselves to interpretation as transitory concepts to a lesser degree than do adjectivals. As a consequence, Burmese discourse provides very few examples of nominals in the progressive. As with adjectivals, the particle *ne* may also function to convey the notion of 'unexpected occurrence' with nominals. Thus, in examples (52) and (53) *ne* may be translated both as 'currently' and as 'unexpectedly'.

(52) *i   əʂaʊʔəoũ gà   pʰoũdzítšaǔ pʰjɪʔ ne   ba   ði*
      this building TOP monastery   COP PRG PLT POS
      "currently/unexpectedly this building is a monastery"

(53) *θu gà   joũ   pʰjɪʔ ne   ba   ði*
      3SG TOP rabbit COP PRG PLT POS
      "currently/unexpectedly he is a rabbit" (this example could be used in a mystical context in which shapeshifters are involved)

4.   The hypothesis

In all five languages investigated, there exist lexemes which are incompatible with the progressive. Nominals combine with the progressive in two languages only — in English and Burmese. The five languages differ most significantly in the treatment of the adjectival section of the lexicon with respect to the use of progressive markers. The respective percentages of adjectivals that combine with the progressive in all five languages investigated are summarized in Table 8.

Table 8. Progressive marking with adjectivals

Kölsch	Lakota	English	Indonesian	Burmese
0.0%	15.1%	31.4%	53.4%	100%

Bertinetto (1994:403) postulates a similar cross-linguistic cline in terms of the amount of stative lexemes which are compatible with the progressive on the basis of Italian (low compatibility of statives with the progressive), English (higher compatibility of statives with the progressive), Brazilian Portuguese, and Japanese (very high compatibility of statives with the progressive in both languages).

At this point, it must be emphasized once more that the compatibility rates of progressive markers with lexical items in the five languages investigated which are given in Table 8 exclusively refer to the distributional scope of progressive markers *in progressive function*. At least in English, Lakota, and Burmese, the elements which code progressive aspect serve to code additional semantic categories (such as future tense and continuative aspect). In such languages, a lexeme that is not compatible with the element that indicates progressive aspect may be compatible with this element when it expresses a category other than progressive. For instance, the Lakota adjectival *blaská* 'flat' can be used with the suffix *-hą*, which codes progressive aspect as well as the categories of continuative and repetitive. However, in conjunction with *blaská* 'flat', this suffix never conveys a progressive meaning — only continuative and repetitive interpretations are possible. On these grounds, it could be surmised that in languages with multifunctional progressive markers which exhibit high rates of compatibility of progressive markers with lexical items, the high lexical scope of the progressive is due to the additional compatibility options offered by non-progressive uses of progressive markers, since the respective figures can be added on to the distributional figures obtained for progressive markers in progressive function. This line of argumentation, however, grips only in the context of an empirical method which investigates the compatibility of lexical items with multifunctional progressive markers without taking the semantic versatility of the latter into account. In the present study, lexical compatibility rates have been determined for progressive markers in progressive function only.

Another potential objection to the overall analysis of the data presented in Section 3 is that a constellation in which a progressive marker combines with statives, i.e. with adjectivals and nominals, could actually be interpreted as a distinct, non-progressive construction type. For instance, in Spanish, the copula *estar* is a component of the progressive construction, as in *estar cantando* 'to be singing', but it is also employed as a predicate marker in plain stative predicates such as *estar cansado* 'to be tired'. There are numerous Spanish adjectivals which combine with both *estar* and the alternative copula *ser* in the formation of plain stative predicates. By and large, the choice of *ser* vs. *estar* implies a contrast with respect to permanence vs. non-permanence, e.g. *ser pálido* 'to be

permanently pale' vs. *estar pálido* 'to be temporarily pale'. The data on English, Indonesian, Lakota, and Burmese, i.e. on those languages in the survey which have two expression formats for stative predicates, one of them being structurally identical to the progressive marking device used with verbals, could be analyzed analogously: with verbals, the marking device in question is classed as a progressive, with adjectivals and nominals it is classed as a special predicate marker which imparts the connotation of non-permanence. That way, the possibility that progressives can occur with adjectivals and nominals is effectively, and conveniently, eliminated from the scope of investigation.

Doing so, however, invites the objection that in the context of a more theoretical, cross-linguistic approach to progressivity, structural identity of constructions paired with an extremely high degree of functional affinity, if not to say functional likeness, cannot be ignored — each of the combinations of stative lexemes with progressive markers included in the database also fits the definition of progressive given in Section 2. Thus, creating a rigid distinction between "real" progressives and non-permanent statives on the basis of lexical class membership might merely amount to artificially separating what belongs together. Ultimately, there is no conclusive answer to the question of whether progressive marking devices found in combination with verbals on the one hand, and those occurring with adjectivals and nominals, on the other, should be analyzed as constituting a single category in the languages investigated or not, but denying the obvious parallelisms might turn out to be more counterproductive to linguistic theorizing than acknowledging them. After all, conflation of progressive proper with stative predicate marking appears to be a cross-linguistically frequent phenomenon, which would imply that there is a strong connection at the cognitive level.

Further, it could be hypothesized that the pronounced cross-linguistic variation in the distribution of progressive markers that emerges as the empirical result of this study could be due to differences in the semantic content of language-specific lexemes that are given as translations of a single concept in the survey. For instance, it is imaginable that adjectivals, or certain classes of adjectivals, in language A have a semantic property or properties that the corresponding translations of these lexical items in language B do not have. This semantic property or properties might, in and of itself, influence the degree of compatibility of the lexemes in question with the category of progressive, which in turn might result in the skewed distributional figures in Table 8. The problem with this explanatory model, however, is that such semantic properties, if existent, are too subtle to be tracked down in the language samples investigated. An alternative hypothesis is presented in what follows.

The quantitative differences in the lexical scope of progressive markers shown in Table 8 notwithstanding, there are some qualitative similarities between the semantic profiles of adjectivals that admit progressive marking vs. those that do not in the three languages that distinguish these two types of adjectivals, i.e. Lakota, English, and Indonesian. In none of the three languages does the progressive combine with members of the semantic class 'age' and 'shape'. The class 'emotion' includes lexemes which are compatible with the progressive in all three languages. The class 'personality feature' contains more lexemes that combine with the progressive than lexemes that do not in all three languages. Most importantly, however, there is a common semantic denominator for the function of the progressive with adjectivals in all five languages investigated: in each case, if there is a contrast between simple and progressive forms, the progressive form expresses a transitory situation that is conceived of as ongoing. At least for English, the relevance of the semantic parameter of permanence especially for the contrast between adjectival predicates in the progressive vs. simple form has been widely acknowledged in the extant literature (e.g. Comrie 1976:36). According to Hornby (1954:89), the present tense progressive in English

> indicates an activity or state that is still incomplete but whose termination may be expected, … not a permanent activity or state. There is always a limitation, an expectation that there was or will be an end to the activity or state.

Similarly, Scheurweghs (1959:319) states that "progressive forms are mainly used to imply an aspect of duration and continuity and to show that a happening is thought of as being in progress and occupying a limited time". Permanence, in turn, is more or less coextensive with the semantic parameter of time-stability (Givón 1979:321–323, 1984:51–52), which provides a criterion for differentiating the traditional parts of speech noun, verb, and adjective, or rather, the conceptual classes of nominals alias entity concepts, verbals alias event concepts, and adjectivals alias property concepts as established in Section 3, on purely semantic grounds. Nominals are inherently time-stable. An entity to which the property expressed by a nominal, such as 'horse', is ascribed will, in general, never lose that property, at least not in a world that operates by the physical laws that govern the everyday environment of human beings. There are, admittedly, exceptions to this generalization, most notably within the semantic class of nominals denoting age, such as 'cub', 'kitten', 'puppy', 'tadpole', 'youth' (i.e. 'young man'), occupations ('president', 'secretary', 'teacher'), and social relations ('friend', 'partner', 'wife') etc. States of affairs designated by such lexemes are subject to change over time (unless the entities in question

cease to exist before such change takes place). Verbals, on the other hand, mostly denote situations which are not time-stable. For instance, the situation referred to by the verbal 'to eat' is subject to eventual termination. Adjectivals occupy an intermediate position between nominals and verbals with respect to their time-stability value. The property expressed by the adjectival 'good' can be expected to persist for a while; it will probably "last" longer than a situation referred to by a prototypical verbal, but it is more likely to be terminated — or at least it can be terminated more easily — than a situation denoted by a prototypical nominal. Of course, adjectivals which express lasting properties, such as 'dead', do exist as well. But in terms of statistical distribution, the time-stability or permanence scale maps onto the distributional facts observed for progressive markers in the five languages investigated. Verbals are most likely to combine with the progressive, adjectivals less so, and nominals least likely. Thus, it can be argued that progressive marking is sensitive to the semantic parameter of permanence at two independent levels of language description: at the level of direct comparison between simple and progressive forms of individual lexemes, and at the level of overall distribution of lexemes which are compatible with the progressive in the lexicon of a given language.

In the extant literature on aspect, some alternative hypotheses concerning the function of the progressive with adjectivals are offered. In particular, Dowty (1979:165–166) suggests that the English progressive adds the meaning components of volition or control to adjectival predicates. This hypothesis may or may not describe the situation in English accurately — but it certainly does not characterize the differences in meaning between simple and progressive forms of adjectival predicates exhaustively in Lakota, Indonesian, and Burmese. The notions of volition and control presuppose thinking, consciously acting beings, i.e. animate protagonists. In Lakota, Indonesian, and Burmese, however, there exist numerous adjectivals that take inanimate subjects and can still be used with the progressive, as the discussion in Sections 3.3, 3.4, and 3.5 demonstrates. In these contexts, the semantic factors of volition and control cannot possibly be involved. Instead, in these cases — as well as in cases in which English adjectivals are combined with the progressive — the semantic parameter of permanence plays a decisive role in differentiating simple and progressive forms with respect to semantic content: if there is a noticeable contrast in meaning, the progressive version always indicates shorter duration than the simple form.

In addition, it should be noted that even in English, an interpretation of the progressive with adjectivals in terms of volition or control is not always convincing. Example (54) does not necessarily have to be understood as describing a volitional or controlled state of affairs.

(54)   Frank is being inefficient

Frank may be trying hard to be efficient, and thus is not actively or purposely inefficient. The specific meaning conveyed by the phrase "is being inefficient" is that of a momentary situation that might be subject to eventual termination. The simple form, on the other hand, is interpreted as ascribing an innate and possibly lasting property.

(55)   this method is inefficient

Using Dowty's volition/control hypothesis as a general explanatory model for the cross-linguistic regularities observed in this study also faces difficulties when its application is extended beyond the adjectival domain. Even in English, with certain verbs, the association of the progressive with volition and control is not conclusive:

> … while the majority of verbs that normally take the progressive … do indeed refer to concrete, physical activity, this is not true of all: *I am losing my appetite* refers to an inner process just as truly as *my back aches.* (Hatcher 1951:268)

Certain facts about the non-adjectival domain of the lexicon, however, provide further support for the permanence hypothesis. In many cases in which there is a contrast between simple and progressive forms of lexical items, the meaning difference can be described in terms of a permanence distinction. For instance, the progressive forms of the English verbs 'to live' (cf. example (57)) and 'to stand' (cf. example (59)) denote a less permanent state of affairs than the corresponding simple forms (cf. examples (56) and (58)) (Comrie 1976:37, Langacker 1987:86–87).

(56)   'I live at 6 Railway Cuttings' (Comrie 1976:37)

(57)   'I'm living at 6 Railway Cuttings' (Comrie 1976:37)

(58)   'a statue of George Lakoff stands in the plaza' (Langacker 1987:86)

(59)   'a statue of George Lakoff is standing in the plaza' (Langacker 1987:86)

The fact that the progressive may serve to indicate transitory situations in combination with certain non-adjectivals is also acknowledged by Dowty (1979:173–175).

Further, in all five languages investigated, there exist non-adjectival lexemes which block progressive marking. These lexemes are basically similar in their semantic content in that they either denote states of being or convey a punctual meaning; some of these lexemes are prototypical verbals, i.e. lexemes

denoting event concepts. These "problematic" lexemes have been discussed extensively in the literature. Numerous attempts to account for their particular behaviour have been made. Chung and Timberlake (1985:215) argue: "The progressive asserts that an event is dynamic over the event frame. By definition, then, processes but not states can appear in the progressive." This model seeks to motivate the behaviour of blocker lexemes through a semantic incompatibility of intrinsic lexical stativity with the progressive. However, given the fact that there are statives which do combine with the progressive, one cannot help but question the widely held assumption that the stativity model is the solution to the problem. English is equipped with various statives which admit progressive marking, some examples being 'to lie', 'to rest', 'to sprawl', 'to sit', and 'to stand' (cf., for instance, Dowty 1979:173–180, Mourelatos 1981:202, Smith 1983:497–498). This is also true for the other four languages investigated in this study. To further confuse matters, depending on the language considered, such concepts, as well as other types of stative concepts such as those included in the language-specific lists of blocker lexemes presented in Section 3 (cf. Tables 1, 3, 4, 7, 9), may not be the only stative concepts whose lexemic representations combine with the progressive in a given language — adjectivals are stative concepts par excellence, and, as Section 3 shows, the percentage of adjectivals that admit progressive marking in a given language may be extremely high. Thus, the stativity model fails to adequately account for the behaviour of lexemes that block progressive marking. For an analogous line of argumentation which culminates in the rejection of the stativity hypothesis, cf. Bertinetto (1994:402–403).

Is the permanence model, which motivates the usage of progressive markers fairly well with respect to adjectivals, as the preceding discussion suggests, a viable alternative to the stativity model? Given the fact that most of the blocker lexemes identified in the five languages investigated which are not punctuals imply duration, this question might have to be answered in the affirmative. Thus, concepts like 'to contain', 'to know', 'to like', 'to own', and 'to resemble', which are contained in the lists of blocker lexemes in more than one of the sampled languages, denote decidedly more lasting situations than the prototypical representatives of concepts with a low permanence value, such as 'to eat'. Actually, the permanence value of these concepts may be taken as being equal to that of prototypical adjectival concepts such as 'tall'.

One more fact about the cross-linguistic sample, however, remains to be dealt with: there is a high degree of cross-linguistic variation in the content of the lists of lexemes that block progressive marking, especially in the adjectival section of the lexicon. A convincing model of the interaction of lexical

semantics with progressive marking should account for this observation. Why would a given concept block progressive marking in language X, but not in language Y? Is the specific combination of this concept with the category of progressive felt to be semantically odd in language X, but not in language Y? Or is the prohibition of the combination of some lexeme with the progressive in language X due to an arbitrary selectional restriction that is not semantically based, but rather constitutes a mere rule of grammar? The Burmese data reveal that in a suitable context, any lexeme may be compatible with the progressive. And in purely ontological terms, there shouldn't be anything odd about a verbal concept of whatever kind, an adjectival concept of whatever kind, or a nominal concept of whatever kind being presented in the 'progressive state', i.e. as being at a point in time between incipience and termination. Semantically speaking, any lexeme might qualify for progressive marking — as Bybee and Dahl (1989:81) point out, progressive blocking is not a matter of absolute semantic prohibition. The fact that it is possible to translate combinations of specific lexemes with the progressive which are admissible in language X but not in language Y into language Y supports this assumption. Thus, although the Indonesian predicate phrase *sedang biru* PROGRESSIVE + 'blue' cannot be rendered by the syntactic configuration "is being blue" into English, it can, at least roughly, be translated into English by resorting to an adverb such as 'currently'. This can be taken as indicating that the *semantic* constellation 'to be blue as a state of affairs which has a certain duration and whose points of incipience and termination are not in focus' does make sense in English as well. As a consequence, progressive blocking can be interpreted as a phenomenon that is imposed by the grammatical rules of individual languages, rather than as the result of strict semantic incompatibilities.

However, as noted above, there is an undeniable correlation between the susceptibility of lexical items to progressive marking and lexical class membership. This correlation, in turn, can be linked to the semantic dimension of time-stability or permanence: verbals are most likely to admit progressive marking, adjectivals less so, and nominals are least likely to be compatible with the progressive. As a consequence, it can be hypothesized that progressive marking is, after all, sensitive to intrinsic lexical semantics. Considering the relationship between the semantic category of progressive and the permanence parameter in greater detail makes this connection appear more plausible. If the explicit function of the progressive is profiling the period between incipience and termination of a given state of affairs, imposing the notion of progressivity on the latter is appropriate only if the semantic make-up of the particular state of affairs in question per se provides the semantic components of distinct points

of incipience and termination. In cases in which these endpoints are missing in the scenario set up by intrinsic lexical semantics, there is no such thing as the "intermediateness" between the endpoints that a progressive is supposed to profile, and, as a consequence, there is nothing to be profiled. Thus, with concepts which designate permanent states of affairs, i.e. whose semantic makeup lacks an intrinsic point of incipience as well as an intrinsic point of termination, such as 'left-handed', progressive marking is pointless. The intrinsic semantic profiles of individual lexemes imply the presence of endpoints to different degrees. Most verbals have "built-in" endpoints, nominals usually do not have "built-in" endpoints, and typical adjectivals can be positioned in between these extremes in that endpoints are not explicitly included in the semantic package, but can be added onto it more easily than in the case of nominals. Given this, the fact that the progressive regularly conveys a transitory meaning in combination with adjectivals and nominals can also be accounted for: a stretch of time that is intermediate between endpoints can be profiled only if such endpoints are present. That is, progressive marking with lexemes that convey time-stable meanings, i.e. with nominals and adjectivals, of necessity, also has the effect of superimposing a non-permanent reading on the latter.

Thus, in discourse, the three major parts of speech are not equally likely to qualify for transitory readings. Consequently, the selectional restrictions observed with progressive markers and individual lexemes in the languages investigated can be interpreted as the result of semantic tendencies, rather than as the result of absolute semantic incompatibility. The semantic scale 'verbal concept >> adjectival concept >> nominal concept' does not prescribe a specific behaviour with respect to the acceptability of progressive markers; it merely stimulates such behaviour. This fact is central to comprehending why there is such pronounced cross-linguistic divergence in the acceptability of progressive markers with lexical items.

As pointed out above, in cases in which progressive marking is not admissible, adverbs or other alternative coding devices are available if a situation is to be presented as ongoing and non-terminated. The English adverb 'currently' is an example of such a coding alternative. In all five languages investigated adverbs can be found which are functionally equivalent to the English adverb 'currently'. Adverbs, further, are lexical units; a true progressive, on the other hand, is a part of grammar. Grammatical categories are, per se, more grammaticalized than lexical categories (cf. Heine et al. 1991, Hopper and Traugott 1993, Lehmann 1982, Traugott and Heine 1991). In short, the closer to the maximally transitory pole of the permanence scale a given lexeme is located, the more likely it is to admit a grammatical, rather than a lexical, progressive marker.

The above model, which seeks to identify the mechanisms at work in shaping language-internal and cross-linguistic distributional patterns of progressives can, further, be embedded into the comprehensive framework of markedness theory as established by Croft (1991). In all five sampled languages the progressive is a marked category since it contrasts with a zero-marked category of non-progressive. To this structural aspect of the markedness of progressives corresponds a distributional aspect of markedness: the distributional scope of the progressive in the five languages is, in any case, smaller than that of the non-progressive which is compatible with any one lexical item contained in the samples. This claim may not apply to Burmese at first glance, since any one lexical item in this language (with the sole exception of the lexemes listed in Table 6), presumably, combines with the progressive if a semantically suitable context is at hand. However, if discourse frequency counts were conducted in addition to the purely lexicon-based counts reported on in the present study, it would certainly become clear that in all sampled languages, including Burmese, especially with nominal and adjectival predicates, progressive marking occurs less frequently than non-progressive marking. According to Croft (1991:58–59), lexical items that lack some inflectional possibilities that other lexical items are endowed with in certain syntactic functions — such as predicate function — can be considered more marked than the latter with respect to the syntactic function in question. With regard to categories of predicate inflection such as tense, aspect, modality, and person, nominals are, cross-linguistically speaking, more marked than adjectivals and verbals, since nominals are less likely to admit inflection for these categories than adjectivals and verbals are; further, adjectivals are more marked than verbals with regard to compatibility with inflectional categories such as tense, aspect, modality, and person, since verbals combine with the latter more readily than adjectivals do. Croft's general predictions are borne out by the observable facts regarding the behaviour of the aspectual subcategory of progressive in the five sampled languages: all in all, verbals are more compatible with progressives than nominals and adjectivals are, and verbals are more compatible with progressives than adjectivals are.

In the attempt to explain the divergences in the lexical scope of progressive markers at the cross-linguistic level which are disclosed in this study, it might, alternatively, be argued that the translations of the concepts contained in the English questionnaire used for the language-specific lexical surveys might not always be exact semantic equivalents of the English test lexemes. The high compatibility of progressives with lexical material in languages like Indonesian and Burmese might in fact be due to certain semantic features which increase

the compatibility of the respective lexemes with the category of progressive. This issue concerns adjectivals in the first place, since cross-linguistic variation as to compatibility with progressive markers is most pronounced in the adjectival domain of the lexicon. For instance, the basic lexical form for certain (or maybe all) adjectival concepts in a given language might be a process or achievement (e.g. 'to become red') rather than a state (e.g. 'to be red'). On semantic grounds, particularly processes should be more readily compatible with progressive aspect than states. In defense of the permanence hypothesis proposed above, it has to be pointed out that the semantic profiles of the lexemes which ended up in the samples compiled for the present study have been investigated in great detail in the context of the lexical surveys conducted in Pustet (2003). As it turned out, within the adjectival and nominal domains of the lexicon, cross-linguistic variation in the basic semantic content of individual lexemes is so minimal that it can be neglected as a factor that conditions pronounced cross-linguistic divergences in the compatibility rates of lexical items with progressive markers.

In the same vein, the objection might be raised that languages whose parts-of-speech class systems are different from those encountered in Indo-European languages with respect to morphosyntactic structure, the semantic properties of individual lexical items might deviate from those of their Indo-European counterparts as well. As a matter of fact, on the basis of their morphosyntactic behaviour, adjectivals can be classed with verbals in all three non-Indo-European languages sampled in this study, i.e. Burmese, Indonesian, and Lakota. Such structural conflation of adjectivals with verbals, however, in no way implies that the *semantic* properties of adjectivals in these languages are more "verbal" than in Indo-European languages. The morphosyntactic properties of lexical items do not have any impact on their semantic properties, as more recent typologically oriented approaches to the parts-of-speech issue, in particular Croft (1991), show.

Returning once more to the initial question of whether the traditional stativity model is adequate for motivating intra-linguistic as well as cross-linguistic facts about the distribution of progressive markers, it could be argued that the permanence model is not necessarily superior to the stativity model, since neither semantic parameter produces absolute predictions as to the acceptability of progressive markers. However, the permanence model is much better suited to account for the observed gradual decrease of the acceptability of progressive marking, which runs parallel to the semantic scale 'verbal concept >> adjectival concept >> nominal concept', because the parameter of stativity does not translate into such a scale. Adjectivals are as stative as are nominals;

consequently, on a hypothetical stativity scale, adjectivals and nominals are equal in rank. Thus, the stativity model fails to explain the fact that in statistical terms, adjectivals lend themselves to progressive marking to a lesser degree than verbals do, but to a higher degree than nominals do, and thus occupy an intermediate position between nominals and verbals in this respect.

Additional support for the above model comes from the facts presented in Dixon (1977). Dixon shows that in cross-linguistic terms, adjectivals, on purely structural grounds, occupy an intermediate position between nominals and verbals since their morphosyntactic properties, in many languages, are more or less identical to either those of the nominal or those of the verbal class. The structural variability of adjectivals Dixon reports on is reflected in the findings of the present study, in which, with respect to the structural criterion of compatibility with progressive marking, the adjectival class, all in all, turns out to be the area of greatest cross-linguistic variation.

5.   Conclusions

The more comprehensive outlook on the progressive gained from the five-language sample discussed in Section 3 allows for certain refinements to traditional approaches to the category of progressive. At least in the five languages investigated, the behavioural properties of progressive markers are found to converge to an astonishing degree. In each of the five languages, progressive markers are incompatible with specific lexemes which tend to show cross-linguistic similarities as to their semantic content. In all five languages, some of the lexemes that block progressive marking are punctuals. In any of the five languages which admit progressive marking with adjectivals, i.e. in all sampled languages except Kölsch, the progressive adds the meaning component of limited duration or non-permanence to adjectival predicates.

The function of progressivity proper is to feature states of affairs in the period between inception and termination, but specifically excluding the points of inception and termination (unless the latter are explicitly mentioned, as in example (3)). The relevance of the notion of endpoint for a general approach to the concept of progressive cannot be overestimated, for two reasons: first, it makes the systematic cross-linguistic variation concerning the lexical scope of progressive markers more understandable, as the discussion in Section 4 suggests. Second, the additional function that is regularly ascribed to progressives, that of imparting the meaning component of duration, can be regarded as systematically linked with the basic meaning of the category of progressive

— as a matter of fact, it may be thought of as a necessary corollary of the latter. Profiling the period between the incipience and termination of a state of affairs obviously makes sense only if the temporal interval between endpoints is of sufficient length. But in the case of punctuals, incipience and termination nearly coincide. As a consequence, many punctuals either block progressive marking, or assume a repetitive, and thus, in a certain sense, durative meaning. It has to be pointed out, however, that in all five languages investigated, there are both punctuals which block progressive marking altogether, or must be interpreted as repetitive when combined with the progressive, and punctuals which are compatible with the progressive without a resultant change in meaning. Thus, just like permanence, punctuality is not a semantic criterion that strictly prohibits the use of progressive forms.

If the progressive with its basic meaning components of endpoint suppression and durativity is considered a logically coherent semantic package, the observed similarities between the sampled languages regarding their behaviour with respect to the use of progressive markers are not too surprising.

But, as the detailed discussion of the progressive markers in individual languages in Sections 3.1 to 3.5 shows, progressive markers may also serve to code semantic categories other than that of progressive. For instance, the English progressive construction 'to be … -ing' may also indicate categories such as future tense (Haegeman 1982) and habituality. In Japanese, the element *-te-(i)ru*, which is used for coding the progressive, may assume a resultative meaning as well (Hinds 1986:299–304), as in the following example.

(60) *demo nee, natsuyasumi   wa uchi ni*
    but   EMPH summer vacation TOP home to

    kaet-teru   no   ne,   inaka   no hoo ni
    return-PRG NOM EMPH country LK way to
    "during the summer vacation [my brother] went back home, to the
    country [and he is still there]" (Hinds 1986:300)

A state of affairs marked by a 'resultative progressive' is interpreted as having consequences for the time after the point of its termination, as in the case of *kaet-* "to return" in the above example. The event 'to return', in and of itself, has been completed, but the state of affairs achieved through it, in this case being at home, still persists. The occurrence of a progressive as an expression format for resultative meanings could, at least theoretically, be motivated by assuming a semantic over-extension of the meaning component of durativity which is implicit in the semantic makeup of the progressive, beyond the point

of termination of a given state of affairs. Note that in the above example, the notion of progressivity proper, i.e. the function suppressing reference to endpoints, is lacking. For an in-depth discussion of the *-te-(i)ru* form in Japanese, cf. Ogihara (1998).

An analogous explanation might also be applicable to cases in which progressive forms are employed to refer to future events, as in the English example (8), which is repeated here for convenience:

(61)   John is leaving town tomorrow
       (Dowty 1979:159)

Just like the resultative reading of the Japanese progressive marker *-te-(i)ru*, the existence of the English 'futurate progressive' could be attributed to a temporal over-extension of the basic durative meaning expressed by progressives. In this case, the following semantic scenario can be imagined: via progressive marking, the time span featured in the overall predication is extended to include not only the actual realization of a given state of affairs, but also the time span preceding its realization, i.e. the preparation phase. The addition of the preparation phase to the temporal scope featured in the predication as a whole has the effect that the actual realization of the state of affairs in question is shifted into the future. Note that a futurate extension of progressive meaning also extends the functional scope of the respective grammeme or construction beyond the conceptual realm of imperfectivity. Of course, not every progressive marking device also has futurate connotations. In the five languages investigated, this phenomenon is encountered in English only.

The hypothesis of the basic parallelism between resultative and futurate extensions of progressive markers is supported by Shirai (1998). According to this study, in the case of the resultative reading of the Japanese progressive, the featured time span is extended to include the point of termination of a given event and the time following it, while in the case of the futurate reading of the English progressive the featured time span is extended in such a way that it includes the point of incipience of a given event and the time preceding it.

Likewise, the occurrence of habitual readings of progressive markers, as in the English example (10), which is repeated below, may be interpreted as the result of a temporal over-extension of the durative meaning component of progressive forms: habituality amounts to infinite repetition and thus, in some sense, denotes a lasting state of affairs.

(62)   he is always walking the dog in the morning

Thus, in sum, it could be hypothesized that all the semantic functions of grammatical elements or constructions that serve to express progressivity proper which have been listed above and which may, at first glance, appear unrelated, ultimately arise from the basic function of imposing a time frame on states of affairs that suppresses reference to their endpoints. This function implies durativity; on the basis of the meaning component of durativity, in turn, semantic extensions as diverse as those of resultative aspect, future tense, and habitual aspect may develop.

While this developmental scenario might accurately characterize the course of events in certain languages, there is, of course, no reason to believe that the progressive meaning of a given polysemous element or construction always is historically more basic than its non-progressive meanings. For instance, it is imaginable that a progressive function may develop out of the category of resultative. However, the task of describing the historical processes surrounding the emergence and further development of progressives defines an independent, and fairly complex, research program of its own. Thus, diachronic issues have not been dealt with in greater detail in this study; they will be left to future research instead. In this regard, suffice it to say that on the grounds of the language data presented in this study, the semantic parameter of permanence can be expected to be a decisive regulating factor in the spread of emergent progressive markers in the lexical inventory of any language. In particular, the following hypotheses can be proposed. Since the degree of 'terminability' of a given state of affairs determines its semantic compatibility with the notion of progressivity, members of the set of lexemes whose meaning implies a maximal degree of terminability, i.e. prototypical verbals, will be the first to become acceptable with progressive markers. Later, lexemes with an intermediate terminability value, i.e. prototypical adjectivals, might gradually join the group of progressivizable lexemes. Only when a fair share of lexemes with a high or intermediate terminability value have proceeded to the point at which they admit progressive marking, members of the group of lexemes whose meaning implies a minimal degree of terminability, i.e. prototypical nominals, may become acceptable with progressive markers as well. For one of the languages investigated in this study, namely English, sufficient historical data exist which allow for a verification of this hypothesis. As a matter of fact, the progressive construction, which originates in the verbal domain, occurs with English adjectivals from the 15th century onwards, while documentation of the progressive with nominals is not available before the 19th century (I. Milfull, p.c.). Thus, the varying rates of compatibility of progressive markers with lexical material exemplified by the five languages investigated in this study

might be nothing more than manifestations of different developmental stages in the interaction of the semantics of progressive aspect with lexical semantics, more precisely, with the permanence principle.

Notes

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1. It could be argued that in examples (1), (2), (23), and (25), strictly speaking, the "target" of progressive marking is the copula 'to be', in its inflected form 'being', rather than the respective predicative adjectivals. This observation may be true as far as the syntactic structure of the complex predicates in question is concerned, but it does not apply at the semantic level. Copulas are, by definition, elements which lack lexical meaning — at least in examples (1), (2), (23), and (25), the copula does not express any lexical content. Thus, in these examples, the semantic targets of the modification of the predicate by the progressive are, in fact, the lexical predicate nuclei 'funny', 'fool', 'stubborn', and 'nice', respectively.

2. For a relatively detailed account of progressive constructions with nouns in English, cf. Ljung (1980:31–45).

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