

Two Aspectual Puzzles in Saisiyat: an Argument for [co] Agreement

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Peter Ara Guekguezian

*Department of Linguistics,
University of Southern California*

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Contact: guekguez@usc.edu



Goals of Presentation

- I provide new data on tense and aspect from **Saisiyat**, a highly endangered Austronesian language of Taiwan
- I advocate for a version of the **Extended Now** theory of the perfect laid out in Iatridou et al (2001)
- I propose an account driven by agreement and licensing of the syntactic feature **[coincidence]** (**[co]**)
 - Covert heads need to have their [co] value licensed by an overt head

Two Aspectual Puzzles

- I focus on two puzzles with the aspectual markers [ila] and [ina]
- First puzzle: [ila] results in ambiguity between a **Universal (U-) Perfect** and an **Inchoative**
- Second puzzle: many predicates that might be expected to give culminative readings with [ina] give **terminative** readings instead
 - These predicates give **culminative** readings with [ila] instead

[ila] Ambiguity

- Scenario: Ataw has fallen sick on Monday and remains sick for the rest of the week, (1) is appropriate on both Monday (when he becomes sick) and on Friday (when he is still sick)
 - (1) Ataw ‘ayaeh ila
Ataw sick ILA
“Ataw fell sick” (**Inchoative**) or
“Ataw has been sick (and still is)” (**U-Perfect**)
- This ambiguity appears with many predicates (e.g., ‘(be) fat’, ‘(be) skinny’, ‘sleep’, ‘walk’, ‘hit the dog’)

Perfective [ina]

- The aspectual marker [ina] is a **perfective**, indicating that a state or event occurred in the past and is now finished

(2) Ataw ina ‘ayaeh

Ataw INA sick

“Ataw was sick (once but no longer is)”

(3) Ataw ina m-anra:an

Ataw INA AF-walk

“Ataw walked (once but no longer does)”

[ina] -> Terminative

- However, many predicates that are usually telic in other languages can give **terminative** readings with [ina]
 - Telic predicates typically give culminative readings with perfective viewpoint
- (4) Ataw ina r<om>ae'oe' ka pinobaeh
Ataw INA <AF>drink KA wine
“Ataw drank (some) wine (but did not finish)”
- (5) Ataw ina ‘<oem>leb kateSnenan
Ataw INA <AF>close door
“Ataw (tried to) close the door (unsuccessfully)”

[ila] -> Culminative

- With [ila], these predicates usually give **culminative** readings (though a U-Perfect reading is often available, if not salient)

(6) Ataw r<om>ae'oe' ila ka pinobaeh

Ataw <AF>drink ILA KA wine

“Ataw drunk up the wine”

(7) Ataw ‘<oem>leb ila kateSnenan

Ataw <AF>close ILA door

“Ataw closed the door (successfully)”

Puzzle One: [ila] is Perfect

- One of [ila]’s two readings is a U-Perfect, so I assume that [ila] has perfect semantics
- Three main types of perfect:
 - U-perfect: “Mary has been sleeping since noon”
 - Experiential: “Mary has seen the Eiffel Tower”
 - Resultative: “Mary has lost her glasses”
- The Experiential and Resultative are versions of the Existential (E-)Perfect

Theories of the Perfect

- The three major theories of the perfect focus on different readings
 - **Anteriority**: event time occurs **before** a reference time point, which itself stands in relation to the evaluation time (e.g., Hornstein 1990)
 - **Result State**: the relevance at evaluation time of a **result state** issuing from the end of the event (e.g., Parsons 1990)
 - **Extended Now**: the evaluation time is considered to **extend** into the past, within or throughout which time span the event occurs (e.g., McCoard 1978)

Perfect Time Span

- I adopt the version of the Extended Now theory outlined in Iatridou et al (2001), which relates the event time with respect to the **Perfect Time Span (PTS)**
 - The right boundary (RB) of the PTS is evaluation time, while the left boundary (LB) is set by a temporal adverbial (either overt or covert)

PTS + Viewpoint: U- vs. E-Perfect

- Combining the PTS with **Viewpoint** derives the difference between the U- and E-perfects
 - Imperfective Viewpoint: event time is a **superset** of the PTS, so the event obtains throughout, giving the U-Perfect
 - Perfective Viewpoint, event time is a **subset** of the PTS, so the event obtains for some of the PTS, giving the E-Perfect

Account So Far: Puzzle One

- [ila] is a perfect marker that sets up the PTS: the **ambiguity** is due to different Viewpoint aspects
 - (3) Ataw 'ayaeh ila + Imperfective -> U-Perfect
 - (4) Ataw 'ayaeh ila + Perfective -> E-Perfect

PTS:	LB -----	RB (=EvalT)
Perfective:	(----)	E-Perfect
Imperfective:	(-----)	U-Perfect

Account So Far: Puzzle One

- Unresolved question #1: why is the second reading of [ila] an **Inchoative**, and not (seemingly) an E-perfect? E.g.,
 - Why is (4) “Ataw fell sick” and not “Ataw has been sick (once)”

Puzzle Two: Telicity and VPs

- Languages vary as to how to encode **telicity**:
 - Some (e.g., English, Romance) usually encode telicity in the VP, by the **composition** of the verb and its object DP (Krifka 1989, 1992)
 - Others (e.g., Russian, Mandarin, Tagalog) usually encode telicity by **independent syntactic heads** (e.g., aspectual morphology; Kratzer 2003, Tai 1984, Travis 2000)
- I posit that Saisiyat also encodes telicity by an independent syntactic head

Atelic VPs + Telic Head

- I propose that most VPs in Saisiyat are **atelic**, and thus yield terminative and not culminative readings with the perfective [ina]
- Telicity is encoded by a **covert Aktionsart** head
 - [ila] requires the presence of this head to give a culminative reading (as opposed to a U-perfect)
- I argue that the inchoative reading of [ila] is also due to this covert **telic** head
 - Telic morphology can derive inchoatives from atelic predicates (Smith 1991 for Russian and Mandarin, Filip 1997 for Czech)

Account So Far: Puzzle Two

- [ila] is a perfect marker, [ina] a perfective
- Most VPs in Saisiyat are atelic by default; telicity is marked by a covert head
 - [ina] with atelic VPs gives a **terminative** reading
 - [ila] with the telic marker gives an **inchoative** or **culminative** reading, depending on the semantics of the predicate

Account So Far: Puzzle Two

- Unresolved question #2: what regulates when the covert telic head can appear? E.g.,
 - Why are culminative and inchoative readings (mostly) restricted to occurring with [ila], and not with [ina] or the lack of an aspectual marker?

[ina] + [ila]: Experiential Perfect

- When [ina] and [ila] co-occur, they give an **Experiential** E-perfect reading

(8) Ataw ina ‘ayaeh ila

Ataw INA sick ILA

“Ataw has been sick (once)”

(9) Ataw ina r<om>ae’oe’ ila ka
pinobaeh

Ataw INA <AF>drink ILA KA wine

“Ataw has drunk some/the wine (once)”

[ina] + [ila]: Experiential Perfect

- The E-perfect reading is the expected outcome of combining the perfect [ila] with perfective [ina] in PTS theory
- Unresolved question #3: why is this E-perfect an Experiential, rather than an Inchoative (as when [ila] occurs without [ina])?

Generalization: [ila] and [ina]

- Different predicates combining with either [ila] or [ina] (or both)

Predicate: Aspect Marker:	‘sick’, ‘sleep’, ‘walk’, ‘hit the dog’ (inherently atelic)	‘drink the wine’, ‘close the door’ (inherently telic???)
[ila]	Inchoative; Universal Perfect	Culminative; Universal Perfect*
[ina]	Terminative	Terminative**
[ina] + [ila]	Experiential Perfect	Experiential Perfect

- * The U-Perfect reading is harder to observe for these predicates than with the others
- ** A culminative reading is possible with these predicates, but is not necessary

Coincidence: [+/-co]

- I adopt the idea of a **coincidence** relationship encoded in syntax (Hale 1984)
 - Central coincidence ([+co]): one linguistic object is **at** or **(with)in** another
 - Non-central coincidence ([-co]): one linguistic object is **not in/at** (e.g., **away from** or **toward**) another

Coincidence: [+/-co]

- I build on the proposal of Demirdache and Uribe-Etxebarria (2000, 2003, 2007) to extend coincidence into the temporal and aspectual domain
 - [+co]: Present Tense; Progressive Aspect
 - [-co]: Past and Future Tense; Retro- and Prospective Aspect

Coincidence and Aspect

- While I do not follow the specifics of this proposal, I utilize the insight that tenses and aspects are [+/-co] relations between time (*Zeit-*)phrases
- I suggest that coincidence (specifically, **containment**) in the domain of aspect is equivalent to boundedness
 - ‘contains’ = ‘is a **superset** of’ = ‘is not bounded by’
 - ‘does not contain’ = ‘is a **subset** of’ = ‘is bounded by’

Coincidence and Aspect

- Viewpoint Aspect (relates event to reference time)
 - Event not bounded by reference time: imperfective [+co]
 - Event bounded by reference time: perfective [-co]
- Aktionsart (structures event internally)
 - Event not bounded in structure: atelic [+co]
 - Event bounded in structure: telic [-co]

Adding [co] to Account

- Perfect [ila] with [+co] Viewpoint: U-Perfect
- Perfect [ila] with [-co] Viewpoint: E-Perfect
 - Viewpoint heads can be covert
- Perfective [ina]: [-co] Viewpoint
 - Perfect [ila] with perfective [ina]: E-Perfect
- The covert telic head bears a [-co] feature
- Predicates (atelic by default) bear a [+co] feature

[co] Agreement and Licensing

- I propose that the [co] feature of covert heads must be licensed by the matching feature of an overt head
 - [ila] is underspecified for [co] (i.e., it can be [+co] or [-co]) and licenses both [+co] and [-co] covert heads
 - In the absence of an overt aspectual marker, neither covert [-co] Viewpoint or Aktionsart can appear
 - Covert [+co] Viewpoint is licensed by the overt [+co] predicate

Experiential vs. Resultative Perfect

- [ina] and the covert [-co] Viewpoint head have different semantics
 - [ina] asserts that the event time **interval** is a proper subset of the reference time interval
 - Covert [-co] Viewpoint asserts that an event **boundary** (not the entire interval) is a proper subset of the reference time
 - This head must combine with [-co] telic Aktionsart, so it can take an event boundary argument

Experiential vs. Resultative Perfect

- Inchoatives and Culminatives are Resultative E-perfects, the outcome of combining [ila] with the covert [-co] Viewpoint head

PTS:	LB ----- RB (=EvalT)	
∅[-co]:	B(--Result State--)	Resultative
Ina[-co]:	(-----)	Experiential
∅[+co]:	(-----)	Universal

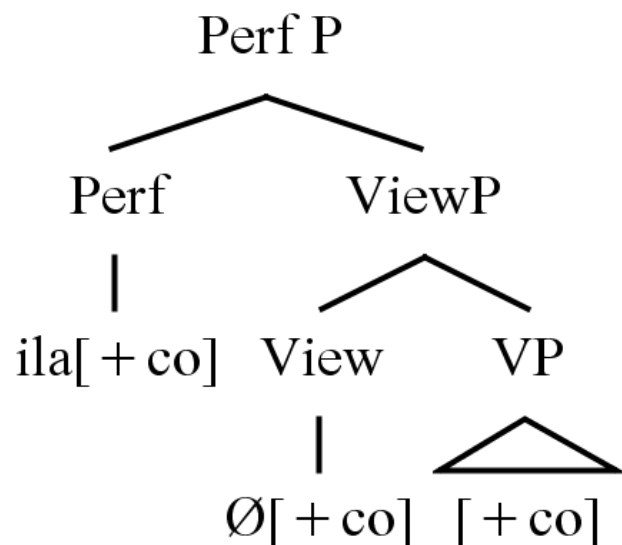
Complete Account of Readings

- The ambiguity of [ila] is due to lower [+/-co] covert aspectual heads

Perfect	Viewpoint	Aktionsart	Reading
ila[+co]	∅[+co]	[+co] (from VP)	Universal Perfect
ila[-co]	∅[-co]	∅[-co]	Resultative Perfect (Inchoative/Culminative)
∅	ina[-co]	[+co] (from VP)	Terminative
ila[+/-co]	ina[-co]	[+co] (from VP)	Experiential Perfect

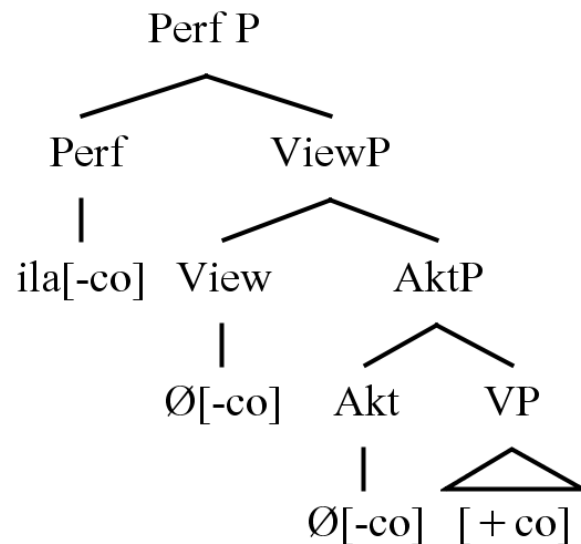
[ila]: Universal Perfect

- Perfect [ila] with [+co] covert Viewpoint and [+co] predicate: U-Perfect reading
 - ‘has been sick/walking/drinking wine’



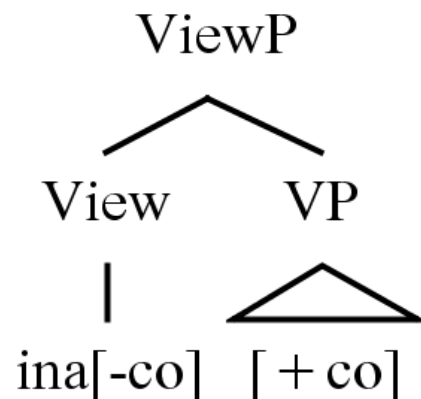
[ila]: Resultative Perfect

- Perfect [ila] with [-co] covert Viewpoint and Aktionsart: Resultative E-Perfect reading
 - Inchoative: ‘has fallen sick/started to walk’
 - Culminative: ‘has drunk up the wine’



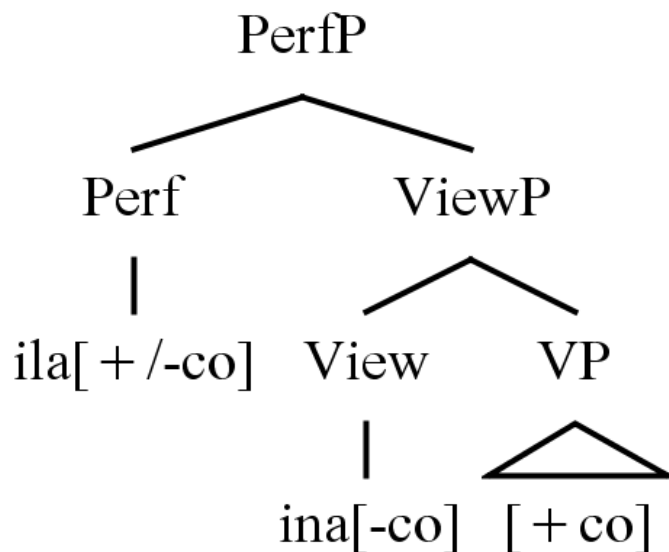
[ina]: Terminative

- Perfective [ina] with [+co] predicate:
Terminative reading
 - ‘was sick/walked/drank wine (once)’



[ina]+[ila]: Experiential Perfect

- Perfect [ila] with perfective [ina] and [+co] predicate: Experiential E-Perfect
 - ‘has been sick/walked/drank wine (once)’



Summary of Contributions

- This account of two aspectual puzzles in Saisiyat has made several contributions to the theory of aspect:
 - Provided evidence in support of the **Perfect Time Span** theory from an underdescribed language
 - The Perfect Time Span is needed to account for the **ambiguity** between Universal and Existential perfects

Summary of Contributions

- Extended the Perfect Time Span theory to account for the **Resultative** Perfect (cf. Pancheva 2003)
- Extended the theory of **coincidence** in the aspectual domain to include Aktionsart
- Demonstrated the efficacy of using **[co] feature agreement and licensing** between aspectual heads