**Differentiating between generic and actualized eventualities in Alashkert Armenian**

Alashkert Armenian (AA) distinguishes between two types of habituals within the imperfective aspect: actualized habituals and dispositions (generic habituals that do not need to be actualized). An aux-containing *k*-imperfective, (3), can describe an ongoing habitual event that is necessarily actualized, meaning (3) is true in *Context 1* but false in *Context 2*. Contrarily, an aux-less structure, (4), describes a generic habitual event that is not necessarily actualized, i.e., (4) is felicitous in *Context 2*, but not in *Context 1*.

(1) ***Context 1***: Ara eats fruits on a regular basis and we are wondering which fruits.

(2) ***Context 2***: Ara never ate apples, but this morning he learned that apples are good for health and decided to start eating apples.

(3) Ara-n xndzor **a**
Ara-NOM apple **AUX**
k-ud-a
IMPRF-eat-NONPST.3SG
1.'Ara eats apple' (*habitual*)
2.'Ara is eating an apple' (*progressive*)

(4) Ara-n xndzor k-ud-a
Ara-NOM apple IMPRF-eat-NONPST.3SG
'Ara has a disposition of eating an apple'
(*disposition*)

Similar facts have been reported in the literature from languages such as AAE (Green, 2000), Czech (Filip, n.d.), Hebrew (Boneh and Doron, 2008), and Tlingit (Cable, 2022). However, two properties of the AA data set it apart from these languages. First, while in these languages the distinction between habituals and dispositions is achieved by using different aspect/mood structures, in AA both are expressed with the *k*-imperfective. Second, the semantic difference between an aux-containing structure and an aux-less structure is not limited to the habitual vs disposition distinction, but also ongoing events vs ongoing states. Specifically, the *k*-imperfective with aux, (3), can also describe an ongoing event, as it is felicitous in *Context 3*.

(5) ***Context 3***: We are wondering what Ara is doing now.

Contrarily the non-aux structure is used to describe an ongoing state, (6). Importantly, *k*-imperfective with aux cannot describe an ongoing state, (8), or a disposition. Likewise, the aux-less *k*-imperfective cannot describe an ongoing event or habitual, i.e., (4) is infelicities in *Context 1* & *3*.

(6) Ara-n Ani-in
Ara-NOM Ani-ACC
g-avat-a
IMPRF-believe-NONPST.3SG
'Ara believes Ani'

(7)

| | |
|---|---|
| k-IMPRF+AUX | progressives and habituals |
| k-IMPRF | states and dispositions |

(8) #Ara-n Ani-in a g-avat-a
Ara-NOM Ani-ACC AUX IMPRF-believe-NONPST.3SG
Intended:'Ara believes Ani'

**Proposal:** We analyze this distinction as stemming from two different modalities associated with the imperfective aspect: *progressive* and *generic*. For the semantics of the *k*-imperfective, we propose that it is a stative aspect that maps predicates of states to a time interval, (9). This proposal is motivated by the fact that the *k*-imperfective cannot directly combine with an eventive predicate without the intersession of an aux. It can, however, combine directly with statives, e.g., (6).

(9) $[[\text{k-IMPRF}]]^{w,g,t} = \lambda P_{<\sigma,t>}.\lambda t'_i.\exists s.\ t' \subseteq T(s)\ \&\ P(s)$

Given the semantics of the *k*-imperfective in (9) and assuming the pronominal approach to tense (Partee, 1984, Kratzer, 1998) the truth conditions of the sentence (6) will be as (10):

(10) [[(6)]] is defined iff g(1)=t
$\exists$s. t$\subseteq$T(s) & Believe(s) & Experiencer(Ara, s) & Theme(Ani, s)

We locate the distinction between (3) and (4) in the operator that the *k*-imperfective scopes over. In the case of the aux structure (3), *k*-imperfective scopes over a PROG operator: [k-IMPRF[PROG VP]]. Building on Galton's (1984) approach, we define PROG as a stativizer that maps predicates of events to predicates of states. This approach solves a potential type mismatch between K-IMPRF aspectual head and its combined predicate. Adopting Green's (2000) analysis of AAE, we propose that the PROG operator quantifies over an event variable in its scope. To capture the property of habitual and ongoing events necessarily being actualized, the PROG operator binds an event variable in its scope. Given these two descriptions the semantics of PROG will be the following:

(11) $[[\text{PROG}]]^{w,g,t} = \lambda Q_{<\epsilon,t>}.\lambda s_{\sigma}.$ s exemplifies [$\text{PROG}_e$: Q(e)]

PROG denotes both ongoing events and habitual events. The distinction between them is achieved based on the verbal plurality, i.e., ongoing events are descriptions of single events and habitual events are descriptions of plural events (i.e., Ferreira, 2016, Krifka et al., 1995 Kratzer, 2003, 2007, Bach, 1986, Rothstein, 2008). Given this and the semantics of *k*-imperfective and PROG, the two possible truth conditions of (3) will be (12-a) and (12-b) for progressive and habitual readings respectively:

(12) [[(3)]] is defined iff g(1)=t

a. $\exists$s.g(1)$\subseteq$T(s) & s exemplifies [$\text{PROG}_e$: e is a singular event. Eat(e) & Agent(Ara, e), & Theme(apple, e)]

b. $\exists$s.g(1)$\subseteq$T(s) & s exemplifies [$\text{PROG}_e$: e is a plurality of events. Eat(e) & Agent(Ara, e), & Theme(apple, e)]

For aux-less structure, (4), the *k*-imperfective scopes over a generic operator Ø: [k-IMPRF[Ø VP]]. Building on Krifka et al., 1995, Chierchia et al., 1995, Ø introduces a generic property, a state, that is not restricted by time and location. The Ø operator also resolves the potential type mismatch between an eventive VP predicate and K-IMPRF. It takes an eventive predicate as its argument and introduces a state of disposition that holds without being restricted by location or time. This, in turn, will imply that in examples as (4) the property of eating an apple for Ara holds even if he has never eaten any apples yet.

(13) $[[\text{Ø}]]^{w,t,g} = \lambda Q_{<\epsilon,t>}.\lambda s'_{\sigma}.$ Gen(s', e). Q(e)

**Implications**.This analysis explains why the *k*-imperfective in Alashkert has two distinct structures distinguishing ongoing/habitual events from dispositions and states. Dispositions, reflecting generic habituals, hold true regardless of whether the event has ever occurred (Carlson, 1995; Green, 2000; Cable, 2022). In contrast, actualized habitual cannot be purely generic because they necessitate the event's occurrence. This distinction mirrors the difference between ongoing events and states, where states (as argued by Chierchia, 1995) are inherently generic, while ongoing events cannot be. Notably, Alashkert achieves this distinction through modal "flavors" or operators associated with the imperfective aspect, unlike other languages that might rely on separate aspect/mood structures. This finding sheds light on the versatility of the imperfective aspect and its operators, drawing valuable insights from an endangered and understudied language.

# References


Bach, E. (1986). The algebra of events. Linguistics and philosophy, 5–16.

Boneh, N., & Doron, E. (2008). Habituality and the habitual aspect. Theoretical and crosslinguistic approaches to t 110, 321–348.

Cable, S. (2022). Two paths to habituality: The semantics of habitual mode in tlingit. Semantics and Pragmatics, 15, 11–EA.

Carlson, G. N. (1995). Truth conditions of generic sentences: Two contrasting views. The generic book, 224–237.

Chierchia, G., et al. (1995). Individual-level predicates as inherent generics. The generic book, 125.

Ferreira, M. (2016). The semantic ingredients of imperfectivity in progressives, habituals, and counterfactuals. Natural Language Semantics, 24(4), 353–397.

Filip, H. (n.d.). Characterizing genericity and epistemic commitments.

Galton, A. (1984). The logic of aspect: An axiomatic approach. Clarendon Press.

Green, L. (2000). Aspectual be–type constructions and coercion in african american english. Natural Language Ser 8, 1–25.

Kratzer, A. (1998). More structural analogies between pronouns and tenses. Semantics and linguistic theory, 92–110.

Kratzer, A. (2003). The event argument and the semantics of verbs. Ms., University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

Kratzer, A. (2007). On the plurality of verbs. Event structures in linguistic form and interpretation, 269, 300.

Krifka, M., Pelletier, F. J., Carlson, G., Ter Meulen, A., Chierchia, G., & Link, G. (1995). Genericity: An introduction.

Partee, B. H. (1984). Nominal and temporal anaphora. Linguistics and philosophy, 243–286.

Rothstein, S. (2008). Structuring events: A study in the semantics of lexical aspect. John Wiley & Sons.