

Multi-layered Imperfective Marking in Ese Ejja: From Aktionsart to Periphrasis

Marine Vuillermet DDL/Université Lyon2
marinevui@yahoo.fr

0. Introduction

- DEF: “***Imperfective (...)*** as the contrast partner of perfective (...) [and] as the **most general and abstract meaning label...** An imperfective situation may be one viewed as **in progress at a particular reference point**, either in the past or present, or one viewed as **characteristic of a period that includes the reference time**, that is, a habitual situation. (Bybee & al. 1994: 125-6)
- The purpose of this paper is
 - to show the rich inventory of the expression of the imperfective in Ese Ejja through **derivational** and **inflexional morphosyntactic devices** and **syntactic constructions**
 - to look at the various semantic values those encode:

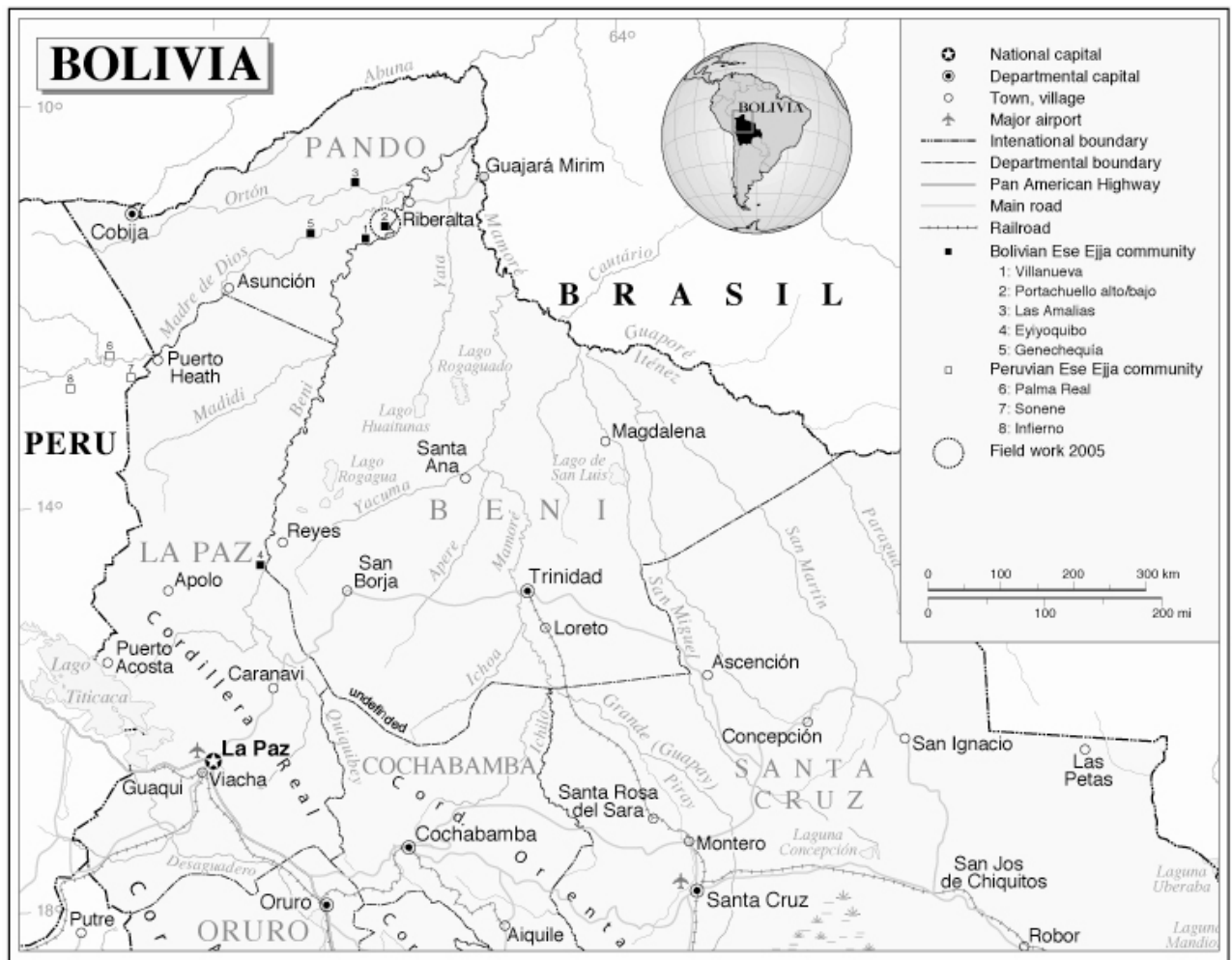
§1. AKTIONSPORT Derivational morphology	ITERATIVE (depreciative)
§2. TAM suffixes Inflexional morphology	CONTINUATIVE
	HABITUAL
	DURATIVE
	PRESENT
§3. Double absolute construction Syntax	GENERAL PROGRESSIVE?

Table 1 : Imperfective morphemes in Ese Ejja: levels and semantic values

The Ese Ejja language

- Ese ejja [ese?exa], a Tacanan language
- app. **1500** speakers in the Amazonian part (**Bolivia & Peru**), **high vitality** in Bolivia (intergenerational transmission preserved)
- language currently under description
 - 3 fieldtrips (2005, 2007 et 2008)¹ in the **Bolivian lowlands**
 - data: **spontaneous texts** and elicited sentences, fieldnotes, elicitation material (wordless book: Mayer 1969), (video: Ishibashi & al. 2006)

¹ 2007 fieldtrip was financed by Hans Rausing Program (SOAS, University of London) and 2008 fieldtrip by ELF (Endangered Language Funds) and AALLED (African Latino-American EnDangered Languages at the French National Research Institute).



Map 1 : Ese Ejja communities in Bolivia and Peru

Essentials of Ese Ejja grammar

- Ergative alignment marked by
 - case marking: ERG = $-(y)a$, ABS = \emptyset
 - verbal indexation of 3d person Agent (sg/pl) 3.ERG = $-ka$

(4) Transitive : $A^2 = \text{ERG}$, $P = \text{ABS}$

$$Y \quad \text{majoya} \quad \text{Macario-}a \quad \text{daki-}\emptyset \quad \text{wiyajya-ka-naje} \quad \text{e-besa-xi.}$$
 and then M.-ERG clothes-ABS take.off-3ERG-PST PURP-bath-PURP
 ‘And then Macario took off his clothes.’ (KyBiñ.005)

(5) Intransitive : $U = \text{ABS}$

$$U \quad U \quad U \quad U \quad V$$

$$\text{Macario-}\emptyset \quad \text{Enawipa-}\emptyset \quad \text{Shomako-}\emptyset \quad \text{tres esho'i-}\emptyset \quad \text{jaa'okeki-naje} \quad \text{besa-a.}$$
 M.-ABS E.-ABS S.-ABS three child-ABS go.down-PST bath-BUT.MOUV
 ‘Macario, Peter and Romuald, the three children went down to bath.’ (KyBiñ.004)

- Verb-final UV/APV word order

² U = Unique argument of a transitive verb, A = prototypical Agent argument of a transitive verb, P = prototypical Patient argument of a transitive verb.

- « pro-drop » language (pronouns used for discourse purposes)

(6) *Ba-ka-ani.*

look.at-3-IPFV

[he] is looking at [them]. (SWAF.076)

Out of context: (s)he/they is/are looking at me/us/you/him/her/them

1. Imperfective at the derivational level: ITERATIVE Aktionsart

- Grammaticalization of *majamaja* ‘dance’

(7) **Lexical source**

Ejapa-a mya-ka-je dewe ekwana majamaja-je.

E-ERG play-3-FUT flute 1INCL dance-FUT

‘Ejapa will play the flute, (and) we will dance.’ (PBai.004)

(8) **Grammaticalization into aktionsart**

a. *Ejyaxi-a ke-jo sanino tewe bana-majamaja-ka-(a)ni.*

father-ERG field-LOC watermelon black sow-dance/ITR-3.ERG-PRS

Lit: He sow-dances watermelon.

‘(His) father keeps sowing black watermelon (seeds).’ (soo_bax.003)

b. *Ino-wo'o o-ja chii-a ino wo'o xeshe-majamaja-ka-(a)ni-jojo.*

thread-red 3-GEN father-ERG thread red buy-dance/ITR-3.ERG-PRS-because

Lit: his father buy-dances red thread.

‘(her name is) ‘Red-Thread’ because her father keeps buying red thread.’ (soo_bax.147)

- Semantics :

- **Iterative**: a specific action is repeated.
- Nuances of **pejorative** overtone:
 - used for topics such as names (often insults in Ese Ejja), drunk people...
 - of the dance itself?

- **Aktionsart** refer to two different notions (Comrie 1976):

- (lexical aspect as different stems (*talk* vs *chat*)...)
- derivational morpheme** on a same stem (*trotter* vs *trottiner*)

-2	-1	V	+1	+2	+3	+4
(valency)	(noun inc.)	ROOT	(valency, AKTIONSART)	indexation	(ASPECT MARKER)	Mood / TENSE MARKER
		Wosho put.on	-mee -koo -CAUS -INCH	-ka -3.ERG		-pwa RPST
<i>He had me put (that) on for the first time.</i>						
Xa- REFL-	daki clothes	xeshe make	-ki -REFL		-ani -sit/HAB	-naje -PST
<i>They used to make clothes.</i>						
←			→			
+derivational			+inflexional			

Table 2 : Ese Ejja simplified verb template

- Morphology : + **derivational**
 - **Slot +1** in the verbal template: precedes *-ka* morpheme for 3rd person Agent
 - Same position (slot1) as
 - **Manner morphemes** (adverbial type):
 - wowi-tay* ‘talk-bad’
 - jyaokya-jya* ‘throw-DEPR’
 - iya-bame* ‘fold-well’
 - wana-bame* ‘put-well’...
- (9) a. *Daki wana-bame-ka-(a)ni.*
 clothes put-well-3ERG-PRS
 ‘She is putting clothes into order.’ (soo_V3.016)
Lit: she put-well clothes.
- b. *Iya-bame-ka-(a)ni.*
 fold-well-3.ERG-PRS
 ‘She is folding (clothes).’ (mil_V3.016)
- **Valency morphemes:** *-mee* ‘CAUS’ (10), *xa-...-ki* ‘REFL’
- (10) *Wosho-mee(-koo)-ka-pwa.*
 dress-CAUS(-INCH)-3ERG-RPST
 ‘He had me dressed (a yellow bag) (for the first time).’ (KaEki.053)

2. Imperfective in inflexional morphology: TAM suffixes

2.1. Grammaticalization of deictic motion verb: *poki* ‘go’ as a CONTINUOUS

(11) Lexical source

Ekwana Marina-nixe poki-naje.
 1INCL M-COM go-PST
 ‘We went with Marine.’ (Sdes.001)

(12) Grammaticalized into TAM suffix

- a. *Chako-chako³-ka-poki-xi.*
 work-RED-OBL.EXT-go/CONT-OBL.EXT
 ‘One has to work constantly.’ (KaVid.044)
- b. *Ma ona-a, etii-kya-a wowi-ka-poky-ani-naje dexe-jo.*
 this 3INDEF-ERG elder-PL-ERG say-3ERG-go/CONT-sit/HAB-PST man-LOC
 ‘This, the elderly people used to keep saying about the man.’ (KaBem.006)

- Semantics :

- **Continuative:** (Bybee&al. 1994: 127) «...includes progressive meaning –that a dynamic situation is ongoing- and **additionally specifies** that the agent of the action is **deliberately keeping the action going**. Continuative is the meaning of “keep on doing” or “continue doing”.»

³ Reduplication *only* allows for turning the transitive verb stem *chako* into an intransitive one (as a kind of anticausative), and DOES NOT imply any continuous activity.

- Morphology : + **inflexional**
 - Slot +3 in the verbal template: follows *-ka* morpheme for 3rd person Agent.

2.2. Polygrammaticalisation of the four posture verbs: HABITUAL, DURATIVE, PRESENT

<i>ani</i>	'sit'
<i>jaa</i>	'lie'
<i>neki</i>	'stand' (> <i>-ki</i>)
<i>ba'e</i>	'float' (no contact with the ground: in a hammock, in water, in the air...)

Table 3 : Ese Ejja posture verbs

- Particularities (see Vuillermet (2008) for more details):
 - Semantics:
 - 'classic' posture verbs + 'interloper' (typical for Amerindian languages, see Grinevald 2006)
 - 'be' (as a locative verb), 'live'
 - Morphology: bare form for **present** tense
(present tense marker NEEDED for any other verbs)
 - Grammaticalization :
 - **existential** constructions, **possessive** constructions, periphrastic expression of the **source** (15f)
 - **habitual** (13), **durative** (14), **present** (15)

(13) HABITUAL

- a. ...*ajyo onaya xa-daki-xeshe-ki-ani-naje*,
Q.LOC 3INDEF.ABS REFL-clothes-get-REFL-**sit/HAB**-PST
a'e onaaya ixya-ka-(a)ni-naje.
Q 3INDEF.ERG eat-3ERG-**sit/HAB**-PST
'...with what they **used to make** their clothes, what they **used to eat**...' (KaBab.004)
- b. *Oya tata-jo ani-ani⁴ epoxa-jo...*
3.ABS foliage-LOC sit-**sit/HAB** day-LOC
'She (the viper) is **used to sitting** in foliage, the whole day.' (KaPey.020)
- c. *Jama-ya pa etii-kyana ba'e-ani-naje ba'e-poki(a)-naje*.
so-FOC EVID elder-PL float-**sit/HAB**-PST float-go/CONT-PST
'This is the way our ancestors **used to live**, they kept living.' (KaBab.038)
- d. *Yawajo-ka ekwana dojoka-neki-(a)pwa bishe-xe*.
long.ago-CONTR 1INCL go.downriver-**stand/HAB**-RPST canoe-PERL
'But long ago, we **used to go downriver** by canoe.' (KaEki.045)
Ctx: This old style, tiresome way of traveling is compared with the actual way of travelling (motor boat + hitch-hiking)

⁴ Note that only posture verbs can stand on their own in a present tense situation, i.e. without TAM markers. This morpheme can thus not be analysed as a present.

- Semantics :
 - similar to *poki-* ‘CONT’: parallel in (15c), but cooccurrence in (12b)
 - **Habitual** (‘customary’, ‘usitative’): available for present and past tense.
Comrie (1976:27-28) “Describes a situation which is characteristic of an **extended period of time**, so extended in fact that the situation referred to is viewed **not as an incidental property of the moment**, but, precisely, as a **characteristic feature of a whole period**.”
 - *-neki* ‘stand/HAB’ involves [+volitional / +effort] (13d) in contrast with the **more neutral/default** *-ani* ‘sit/HAB’, with no necessary control / volition on the activity.
- Morphology: prefinal slot (precedes tense marker) = + **inflexional**

(14) DURATIVE

- a. *Oja familia pa-(a)ni-naje-tii meka-xe...*
 3.POS family cry-**sit/DUR**-PST-INTS night-PERL
 ‘Her family had been crying all night long.’ (KiWey.018)
Ctx: An old woman died and her family is mourning her.
- b. *Oxaña Ese Ejja e-xa-neki-chicha-ki-neki-naje*
 all EE TAM-REFL-stand-gather-REFL-**stand/DUR**-PST
ba-ka-neki-naje
 look.at-3ERG-**stand/DUR**-PST
 ‘All Ese Ejjas had gathered, they were all watching.’ (KiWey.028)
Ctx: it is the burrial of the precited old woman; although the sun is very hot, people stand there watching.

- Semantics:
 - **Durative**: insists on event duration.
 - *-neki* ‘stand/DUR’ involves [+volitional] in contrast with the more neuter *-ani* ‘sit/DUR’, with no control / volition on the activity (see ‘cry’ in 14a).
- Morphology: same prefinal position (precedes tense marker): + **inflexional**

(15) PRESENT

- a. *Esho'i-ø taaa-(a)ni, akwi-byaxe neki.*
 child-ABS shout-**sit/PRS** tree-on **stand.PRS**
 ‘A child is shouting (*lit*: shouting-sitting), standing on a log.’ (SWAF.001)
- b. *Esho'i taaa-ki.*
 child-ABS shout-stand/**PRS**
 ‘A child is standing on a log shouting.’ (epWAF.018)
- c. *Akwixaxa sexa-ka-ki.*
 fruit pick.up-3.ERG-stand/**PRS**
 ‘(he) is standing picking up fruit.’ (Lev_V2.001)
- d. *Ojaya meneno ese-xe kwaya-ki-ani.*
 3POS venom tooth-PERL go.out-DIR-**sit/PRS**
 ‘Its venom goes out through the teeth.’ (KaPey.011)

- e. *Eshawa-jo xashawabaky-ani.*
spirit-LOC believe-**sit/PRS**
'We believe in spirits.' (socre_097)
- f. *Ebyo-ney-se [eki-jo ani] kwaya-ky-ani.*
first-INTS-1EXCL.ABS house-LOC sit.PRS go.out-DIR-**sit/PRS**
'First of all we go out [of the house].' (KaAch.006)
Lit: we are in our house, we go out of it.
Ctx : the speaker describes step by step how they go downtown.

- Semantics :
 - –*ani* 'sit/PRS' = default posture to mark the present tense
 - Not only a **progressive** (in 15a-c only)
 - Not only an **habitual** (in 15f)
 - **Present** : includes **generic** (15d), **stative** (15e), **progressive** (15a-c)
- Morphology:
 - final slot +4 (tense slot, like future, near or remote past) = + **inflexional**
 - –*ki* < *neki* : reduced form only for the PRESENT (not for durative nor for habitual)
 - no overt present tense marker for the posture verbs (only)

3. Imperfective at the syntactic level: general PROGRESSIVE periphrases

- 2 constructions (see Vuillermet 2009):
 - *po-ani* 'COP.INTR-sit/PRS' (16a)
 - *kwe-ki* 'come-stand/PRS' (16b)

(16) a. *Dexa-∅ weshe-∅ ixya po-ani.*
man-**ABS** banana-**ABS** eat **COP.INTR-sit/PRS**
'The man is (at) eating a banana'. (LevV2.004)

b. *Owe kwiixi-∅ puente-jo ena-∅ ba kwe-ki,*
one man-**ABS** bridge-LOC water-**ABS** look.at **come-stand/PRS**
owe epona-∅ xaexeky-ani puente-xe.
one woman-ABS cross-sit/PRS bridge-PERL
'A man on/from a bridge is looking at the water (when) a woman crosses the bridge'.
(NilV2.047)
Lit: A man is-coming-standing-looking at water... Ctx: The man is still.

- Note :
 - **Rare constructions** : 3 occurrences out of the 30 spontaneous texts
 - Very systematic answers to the video **stimuli** (Ishibashi & al: 2006)

stimulus	ERG/ABS	double ABS	antipassive	Total speakers
man EAT (banana)	3	3	1	7
man READ book	2	6		8

Table 4: Distribution of the 2 types of constructions among speakers

- Semantics :
 - **type of progressive**, highly marked – progressive periphrases are typologically common (Bybee & al. : 1994 ; Dahl : 2000)
 - Sometimes obligatory? in (16b) used to stop the sequentiality –typical for imperfective Hopper (1979, 1982), Mitko (1999, in Pusch 2003)
 - Constraints: activity verbs only ?
- Reminder : ergative alignment in Ese Ejja. But in (16):
 - **no ergative alignment**: no case nor indexation
 - **intransitive** copula (although a transitive one does exist) or **deictic motion** verb ‘come’
 - **non flexible word order?** P immediately precedes the verbe in all examples... but similarly structured WANT-construction do have a flexible word order.

(17) a. *Jackson-Ø oya exawi eshe ixya po-ba'e.*
 J-ABS 3.ABS banana raw eat COP.INTR-float/PRS
 ‘Jackson is (at) eating a raw banana (floating in the arms of his mother)’.
 (SoRad.006)

b. *Papeni-Ø ba po-jaa.*
 book-ABS look.at COP.INTR-lie/PRS
 ‘(He) is at reading a book (lying)’ . (LevV2.004)

c. *Jamaya xeya-ka eya ekwe wo ba pwa⁵-je.*
 so now-CONTR 1.ABS 1.POS fowl look.at COP.INTR-FUT

mekawaxe e-dojo-xi Riberalta wasixe.
 tomorrow PURP-take.away-PURP R. to

‘But now I will be at (in the activity of ?) watching my fowl to take them to Riberalta tomorrow.’ (SoRad.006)

⁵ This is the same copula, which has a morphologically conditioned alternance *po* ~ *pwa*. A 3rd variant *kwa* comes from a dialectal variation.

4. Conclusion

- Great inventory of devices used in Ese Ejja to express imperfective
 - various forms at various levels
 - can combine or be used to rephrase

ITERATIVE (depreciative)	<i>[Vb.stem]-majamaja</i> 'V-dance/ITR'	Derivational morphology: AKTIONSART
CONTINUATIVE	<i>[Vb.root]-poki</i> 'V-go/ITR'	Inflectional morphology : TAM suffixes
HABITUAL	<i>[Vb.root]-ani</i> 'V-sit/HAB' <i>[Vb.root]-neki</i> 'V-stand/HAB'	
DURATIVE	<i>[Vb.root]-ani</i> 'V-sit/DUR' <i>[Vb.root]-neki</i> 'V-stand/DUR'	
PRESENT	<i>[Vb.root]-POST.vb</i> 'V-POST.V/PRS'	
GENERAL PROGRESSIVE?	<i>[Vb] kwe-ki</i> 'V come-stand/PRS' <i>[Vb] po-ki</i> 'V COP.INTR.sit/PRS'	

Table 4 : inventory of imperfectives, their source and grammatical domain

- Fine grained conceptualisation of imperfective to be used to enrich the typology of values of the imperfective feature.

REFERENCES

- Bybee, J. L., Perkins, R. D. and Pagliuca, W. **1994**. *The evolution of grammar: Tense, aspect, and modality in the languages of the world.*, University of Chicago Press.
- Comrie, B. **2001 [1976]**. *Aspect: An introduction to the study of verbal aspect and related problems*, Cambridge textbooks in linguistics, Cambridge University Press, 142 p.
- Dahl, Ö. (ed) **2000**. *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe*, Empirical Approaches to Language Typology, Mouton de Gruyter, Berlin/20-6.
- Grinevald, C. **2006**. "The expression of static location in a typological perspective". In M. R. Hickmann, S. ed., *Space in languages: Linguistic systems and cognitive categories*, John Benjamins, Amsterdam/Philadelphia, pp. 351-365.
- Hopper, P., J. **1979**. "Aspect and foregrounding in discourse". In T. Givón ed., *Syntax and Semantics, 12: Discourse and Syntax*, Academic Press, New York, pp. 213-241.
- 1982**. "Aspect between discourse and grammar: An introductory essay for the volume". In P. Hopper, J. ed., *Tense-Aspect : Between semantics and pragmatics*, Benjamins, Amsterdam.
- Ishibashi, M., Kopecka, A. and Vuillermet, M. **2006**. *Trajectoire : matériel visuel pour élicitation des données linguistiques*.
- Mayer, M. **1969**. *Frog, where are you?*, Dial Books.
- Mitko, J. **1999**. "Zur Herausbildung einer formalen Aspektopposition auf der temporalen Nullstufe: être en train de + Infinitiv als teilgrammatikalisierte Verlaufsform des Gegenwartsfranzösischen". In J. Lang and I. Neumann-Holzschuh (eds), *Reanalyse und Grammatikalisierung in den romanischen Sprachen*, Niemeyer, Tübingen, pp. 75-95.
- Newman, J. (2002). *The Linguistics of Sitting, Standing, and Lying*. Amsterdam/Philadelphia, John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Pusch, C. **2003** "La grammaticalisation de l'aspectualité. Remarques sur les périphrases à valeur progressive en français". In *Verbum. Revue de Linguistique*, Vol. 25:4, pp. 495-508.
- Vuillermet, M. **2008**. "Ese ejja posture verbs do not just sit there: An inquiry into other ways they stand out". *Workshop for American Indigenous Languages*, University of California Santa Barbara, May, 23-24th..
- 2009**. "Ese Ejja (Tacanan) double absolute construction: Double the trouble for the progressive?" *Society for the Study of the Indigenous Languages of the Americas, LSA*, San Francisco, (8th-11th January).

GLOSES:

ABS	absolute	LOC	locative
COP	copula	MOT	motion
CONTR	contrastive	NML	nominalizer
ERG	ergative	OBL.EXT	external obligation
EXCL	exclusive	PERL	perlative
FUT	future	POS	possessive
GEN	genitive	PRS	present
INCL	inclusive	PST	past
INDEF	indefinite pronoun	RED	reduplication
ITR	iterative	RPST	remote past