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FURTHER EVIDENCE FOR A COMPOSITIONAL  
NATURE OF ASPECTS

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Vendler's (1967) classification of Verbs (as Activities, Accomplishments and Achievements) based on the Temporal Adverbials they take and thus on the Aspectual notion that Verbs have a  $\pm$  durative existence in time, has been further examined by Verkuyl (1971), whose main thesis is that "the durative and non-durative Aspects... appear to be composed of a verbal subcategory on the one hand and a configuration of categories of a nominal nature on the other."

Along these lines, Dowty (1972) shows the relevance of the Locative of Destination and of the nature of the "direct object" (in terms of Definite/Indefinite/Singular/Plural etc. Nouns) following them, to the determination of the Aspectual nature of Verbs.

Basically adhering to this view and examining the division of "proper" Verbs into Activities,

Accomplishments and Achievements, the purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the following:

- A) Activities, Accomplishments and Achievements can not be distinguished only in terms of defining their "direct object" or "locative of destination" or in general the Noun Phrase following them as simply a matter of Definite/Indefinite/Singular/Plural Noun;
- B) the elements constitutive of the NP and mainly their position inside the NP bear relevance to the problem;
- C) the presence of Temporal Adverbials considered basic to the distinction between different types of Verbs is basic also to distinguish the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective together with allowing the distinction between different types of states;
- D) in Sentences with Activity, Accomplishment and Achievement Verbs and Temporal Adverbials the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective entails a change of state, while the state denoted by the Pre-Nominal Adjective does not;
- E) in such Sentences the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective carries Tense and Aspect as much as Verbs, while the state denoted by the Pre-Nominal does not.

## Activities, Accomplishments and Achievements

### Activity Verbs:

According to Vendler, Activity Verbs are distinguished from Accomplishments on the basis that while the latter allow both Adverbial phrases with in and with for ('in an hour', 'for an hour'), the former allow only for-phrases. The verb 'to walk' being considered an Activity Verb, it is worthwhile — for the purposes of this research — to consider its behavior in sentences of the type

- (1) John ha camminato (per) la vallata  
(John walked in the valley)

where 'walk' is followed by a locative phrase exemplified by 'in the valley'. If we introduce in Sentence (1) the 'Temporal' Adverbial represented by 'in an hour' we get, as predicted, the unacceptable sentence

- (2)\* John ha camminato (<sup>nel</sup>per) la vallata in un'ora  
(John walked in the valley in an hour)

such a sentence being acceptable only in the context of John not being able to walk and then eventually succeeding in doing it.

Now, if in the NP represented by 'in the valley' we introduce an Adjective like 'desert', we get:

- Pre-Nominal: (3)\* John ha camminato (<sup>nel</sup>per) la desero

ta vallata in un'ora

(John walked in the desert valley  
in an hour)

Post-Nominal: (4) John ha camminato (<sup>nel</sup><sub>per</sub>) la valla-  
ta deserta (<sup>fra=in</sup><sub>in</sub>) un'ora

(John walked in the valley desert  
in an hour)

i.e., Sentence (3) with a Pre-Nominal Adjective is as unacceptable as Sentence (2) without an Adjective, while Sentence (4) with a Post-Nominal Adjective is acceptable. Thus while the presence of a locative phrase represented either by the structure (N) or (Adj.+N) does not modify the general statement that the Activity verb 'to walk' does not allow in-phrases, a locative phrase with the structure (N + Adj) does allow it.

In order to account for these facts it is thus necessary either to modify the above restriction on Activity Verbs or to specify that such a restriction holds in the case of

- (a) Activity Verb;
- (b) Activity Verb + locative phrase of the form: N
- (c) Activity Verb + locative phrase of the form:  
Adj + N

In the case of Sentence (4), which is thus excluded from the restriction on Activities, we get the following:

{John (has) walked in the valley} {desert in an hour}

i.e., the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective is within the scope of the in-phrase, which thus entails a change, from a state 'non-desert' to a state 'desert', occurring during the time denoted by the in Adverbial, i.e., it takes an hour for the state 'desert' to begin to exist. If we now try to see the relation between the time in which such a change of state occurs and the time in which the terminative/cessative phase of 'walking' occurs, we can only say that the two times can or cannot coincide.

In fact all the following interpretations are possible:

1. John walked in the valley now desert.
2. John as just walked in the valley, desert a while ago.
3. John walked/has walked for an hour in the valley, desert for an hour (where the time denoted by an hour) refers to the same stretch of time)

It is moreover worth noticing that while the scope of the 'Temporal' Adverbial is the state denoted by the Adjective when the Adjective is in Post-Nominal position, its scope remains the Main Verb when the Adjective is in Pre-Nominal position (this accounting for the fact that the Adjective placed Prenominally does not

affect the meaning of the Main Verb).

If we now proceed to examine the Activity Verb 'to walk' in the environment of a for-phrase, we will notice different readings are yielded according to whether the Verb is followed by a locative phrase of the form 'in (Adj) N' or of the form 'in N + Adj' (where the Adjective in parentheses means that its presence or absence does not alter the entailments of the Verb), i.e., sentences

(5) Ha camminatto (<sup>nel</sup><sub>per</sub>) la vallata per un'ora

(he has walked in the valley for an hour)

and

(6) Ha camminato (<sup>nel</sup><sub>per</sub>) la deserta vallata per un'ora

(he has walked in the desert valley for an hour)

have both the same reading as to the scope of the 'Temporal' Adverbial 'for an hour', i.e. both sentences can be represented as

$$\left\{ \text{He has walked in the (desert) valley for an hour} \right\} = \left\{ \left\{ \text{He has walked for an hour} \right\} \left\{ \text{in the desert valley} \right\} \right\}$$

i.e., the 'Temporal' Adverbial 'for an hour' denotes the time in which the 'walking' occurred; in the case of sentence 7:

(7) Ha camminato nel la vallata deserta per un'ora

(He has walked in the valley desert for an hour)

instead, we have also the following representation:

{ He has walked in the valley } { desert for an hour }

i.e., in this reading we no longer have the entailment that the 'walking' occurred during the period denoted by the Temporal Adverbial but that the state denoted by the Adjective is in existence during the time referred to by the for-phrase, i.e., such a state was not in existence before and after such a time. But to say that a state(p) is not in existence during time X means that another state, which can be called generically (non-p) is in existence at a time different from the one denoted by the for-phrase: in this sense the state (p) entails a change.

Moreover, while Sentences (5) and (6) can be read as "at any time during time X it is the case that John walked in the (desert) valley", Sentence (7) allows the further reading of "it is the case that he (has) walked in the valley for an unspecified interval of time; at any time during the interval represented by the for-phrase it is the case that the state 'desert' holds". The reading of 'having walked for an unspecified interval of time' is ruled out for both Sentence (5) and (6) as is proved by the unacceptability of Sentence (6a):

(6a)\* Ha camminato per un tempo indeterminado per  
la (deserta) valle per un'ora

(He (has) walked for an indeterminate time

in the (desert) valley for an hour)

vs.

(7a) Ha camminato per un tempo indeterminado nella  
valle deserta per un'ora

(He has walked for an indeterminate time in  
the valley desert for an hour)

Thus while in the environment of a locative phrase of the form 'in (Adj) N' Vendler's restriction on the Activity Verb 'to walk' holds at least for Italian, such a restriction in the environment of 'in+N+Adj' does not hold, this pointing again to the necessity of specifying which elements, and in what position, can be constitutive of a following NP for the restrictions on the Main Verb to hold.

Though basically the same objections can be made to Dowty's criticism of Vendler's treatment of Activity Verbs, it is however worth some attention, as Dowty's examples bring in further evidence for the point which we are trying to make here.

Dowty objects to Vendler's analysis of Activity Verbs on the basis that if we take the Verb 'to walk' in the context of a locative of destination such as 'to the park' (and of an Adverb of extent such as 'a mile', not considered here, however, due to the difficulty of finding suitable Adjectives), we see that it meets all the requirements of Accomplishment Verbs, i.e., it also



allows in-phrases, i.e., the Sentence

(8) John walked to the (dark) park in an hour  
(the introduction of the Prenominal Adjective is mine),  
is perfectly acceptable, as are the Sentences:

9. It took John an hour to walk to the(dark)park
10. John finished walking to the (dark) park
11. John stopped walking to the (dark) park

(Dowty, p. 27). Now if we consider the Italian equivalent of Sentence (8) with Pre-Nominal Adjective, i.e., "John ha camminato fino all'oscuro parco in un'ora" we see that such a Sentence entails (9), thus agreeing with Dowty's analysis; if however we consider the same Sentence but with a Post-Nominal Adjective its entailment is different, i.e. "it took John an unspecified interval of time to walk to the park; it takes an hour for the state 'dark' to begin to exist", i.e., in this case and in relation to the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective we get the same entailment as for Sentence (4) above.

Similarly for Sentence (10) which, with a Prenominal Adjective, entails termination of the single or repetitive activity of 'walking', whereas with a Post-Nominal Adjective, as in

- (10b) Ha finito di camminare fino al parco oscuro  
(He (has) finished walking to the dark park)

there is the further information about the 'always/often/sometimes/still/again/now/yesterday' etc. being-in-

existence of the state 'dark'; i.e., a 'timed' existence of the state not entailed by the Prenominal Adjective. The correctness of this analysis can find a proof in the unacceptability of such Sentences as

(10a)\* Ha finito di camminare fino all'oscuro parco sempre

(He has finished walking to the dark park always)

(10a')\* Ha finito di camminare fino all'oscuro parco spesso

(He has finished walking to the dark park often)

(10a'')\* Ha finito di camminare fino all'oscuro parco a volte

(He has finished walking to the dark park sometimes)

(10a''')\* Ha finito di camminare fino all'oscuro parco ancora/di nuovo

(He has finished walking to the dark park still/again)

(10a'v)\* Ha finito di camminare fino all'oscuro parco ora

(He has finished walking to the dark park now)

(10a<sup>v</sup>)\* Ha finito di camminare fino all'oscuro parco ieri

(He has finished walking to the dark park yesterday)

vs. the acceptability of such "Sentences" but with a Post-Nominal Adjective:

- (10b) Ha finito di camminare fino al parco oscuro sempre
- (10b') Ha finito di camminare fino al parco oscuro spesso
- (10b'') Ha finito di camminare fino al parco oscuro a volte
- (10b''') Ha finito di camminare fino al parco oscuro di nuovo/ancora

The unacceptability of Sentences (10a)—(10a''') is due to the fact that as the Adverbials are within the scope of the Verb 'to finish' there is incompatibility between their frequency reading and the terminative reading of '(has) finished'. The Sentences (10a'v) and (10a<sup>v</sup>) are, instead, acceptable as the meanings of 'finish' and of the Adverbials 'now/yesterday' which refer to the time in which termination occurred, are compatible with each other. This analysis which places the Temporal Adverbials within the scope of the Verb 'finish' and not within the scope of the Verb 'to walk' when such Adverbials are Sentence-final is confirmed by the acceptability of:

"Ha finito di camminare sempre/spesso/a volte/di

nuovo fino al parco"

(He has finished walking always/often/sometimes/  
again to the park)

where the Adverbial is within the scope of the Verb 'to walk' and the whole Sentence entails that a repetitive activity has come to an end.)

Moreover it is worth noticing that the unacceptability of Sentences (10a) — (10a''') and (10d)\* 'ha finito di camminare fino al sempre/a volte/spesso/di nuovo oscuro parco' vs. the acceptability of Sentences (10b) — (10b''') exemplified by

(10b) Ha finito di camminare fino al parco oscuro  
sempre/a volte/spesso/di nuovo

(He has finished walking to the park always/  
often/sometimes/again dark (in the contexts  
examined above)

and vs.

(10c) Ha finito di camminare fino al parco sempre/  
a volte/spesso/di nuovo oscuro

(He has finished walking to the park always/  
sometimes/often/again dark)

significantly shows that the state denoted by the Pre-nominal Adjective refuses the frequency reading which is however admitted by the Post-Nominal Adjective; while in

relation to the Temporal Adverbials 'now/yesterday' they are both allowed with Pre-and Post-Nominal Adjectives but yield different readings, i.e., with the Pre-Nominal they denote the time in which termination of the activity represented by the Verb 'to walk' occurred; with a Post Nominal they denote the time in which the state denoted by the Adjective occurs/occurred.

Thus here again the presence of the Post-Nominal Adjective brings about modifications in the entailments of the verb 'to walk' in the environment of a 'locative of destination', such as 'to the park', which thus needs to be further specified as to the position of the elements forming it; at the same time it shows the relevance of the in/for-phrases (and of the frequency Adverbials) to its interpretation. The Pre-Nominal Adjective, on the contrary, being outside the scope of these Adverbials, is also outside any interpretation connected with them.

#### Accomplishments:

Taking into consideration the Accomplishment Verb 'to paint' followed by the 'direct object' Noun Phrase 'a picture' we see that such a structure allows both for-time-X and in-time-X Adverbials irrespective of the presence or absence of an Adjective in the NP. It is however noticeable that while both

(11) Ha dipinto un quadro per un'ora

(He (has) painted a picture for an hour)

and (11a) Ha dipinto un interessante quadro per un'ora

(He has painted an interesting picture for an hour)

have the same entailment as expressed in Dowty (p.22) ,  
"if John painted an interesting picture for an hour ,  
then, it is not the case that he painted an interesting  
picture at any time during that hour" (but that he was  
painting during that hour), i.e., the introduction of  
an Adjective in Pre-Nominal position does not alter the  
entailment of the structure Main Verb plus 'Direct  
Object', Sentence

(11b) Ha dipinto un quadro interessante per un'ora/  
per un certo periodo

(He (has) painted a picture interesting for  
an hour/a certain period)

has different entailments, i.e., it is the case that Y  
painted a picture and that the state denoted by the  
Adjective "interesting" is in existence for the time  
denoted by the Temporal Adverbial.

If we compare the entailments of (11) /  
(11a) with that of (11b) we see that only in the latter  
but not in the former Sentence the scope of the Temporal  
Adverbial is the state denoted by the Adjective thus

responsible for the different reading of (11b), where the time spent painting the picture is left unspecified, i.e., a state generically expressible as 'p' is in existence 'for time X', i.e. for the time expressed by the Temporal Adverbial; a state 'non-p' is in existence during time X and  $X_{+i}$  (where  $X_{-i}$  refers to the time previous to that denoted by the Temporal Adverbial and time  $X_{+i}$  refers to the time after the time denoted by the Temporal Adverbial; i.e., state 'p' at time X results from a change from a state 'non-p' at time  $X_{-i}$  and  $X_{+i}$ ).

Thus while it is true that the treatment of Accomplishment Verbs (and of other types of Verbs as well) needs to take into account the nature of the direct object' it is also true that such a nature cannot be defined only in terms of 'Definite/Indefinite/Singular/Plural' Nouns (as in Dowty, p.30) as to such types of Nouns the further specification of the structure of the NP in relation to the presence of Pre- or Post-Nominal Adjectives must be Added.

Up to now can draw the conclusion that while the presence of a Pre-Nominal Adjective does not alter the entailments of the Main Verb, the presence of a Post-Nominal Adjective does alter them and must therefore be specifically ruled out from treatments of Verbs such as the ones we are examining.

The relevance of this need for further specification as to the nature of the NP-direct object

is also proved by considering McCawley's analysis of such Sentences as (McCawley 1971 and in Dowty p.24):

(13a) 'The sheriff of Nottingham jailed Robin Hood for 4 years' held to be ambiguous between a repetitive reading and a reading in which '4 years' delimits the duration of the resulting state which the single act of jailing produced, such ambiguity being a criterion for distinguishing Accomplishment Verbs as 'jail' in the above example from Activity Verbs such as 'ride' in the Sentence

(14a) 'The sheriff of Nottingham rode a white horse for 4 years' which is held to have only the repetitive reading (in this case '4 years' is said to delimit the time over which the act of riding repeatedly took place). Now the fact that in Sentence (13a) there is no Adjective while there is one in Sentence (14a) in itself shows that the presence or absence of Adjectives is not considered relevant. Let's see then what happens in Italian where the Adjective can be placed either Pre-or Post-Nominally:

(13a') Lo sceriffo di Nottingham imprigionò il bravo Robin Hood per 4 anni

(the sheriff of Nottingham jailed the good Robin Hood for 4 years)

(13a'') Lo sceriffo di Nottingham imprigionò Robin Hood bravo per 4 anni

(the sheriff of Nottingham jailed Robin Hood



good for 4 years)

The first thing to be pointed out is that while (13a') is ambiguous between a repetitive reading and a single event reading in the same terms as (13a), Sentence (13a'') in the reading relevant here, neither allows any delimitation of the duration of the resulting state produced by the single act of jailing; in fact in (13a'') as the Adverbial 'for 4 years' has as its scope the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective, it merely delimits the duration of the state denoted by 'good'

Similarly Sentence (14a) allows in Italian both versions with Pre-Nominal and Post-Nominal Adjective:

(14a') Lo sceriffo di Nottingham cavalcò un  
bianco cavallo per 4 anni

and (14a'') Lo sceriffo di Nottingham cavalcò un  
cavallo bianco per 4 anni (the context in  
which (14a'') could be used is, for instance, the context  
of a horse whose colour from snow-white became grayish,  
after a certain period, as a result of its aging, for  
example: we still refer to its colour as white in spite  
of the appearance of a grayish shade. This is however  
made clearer if we substitute for the Adjective 'white'  
other Adjectives such as 'bravo/coraggioso/furioso/abūli  
co/lento/piacevole/rissoso/scarno/agile/enorme/etc.). In  
(14a') we have only the repetitive reading as in (14a),

but in (14a'') both the repetitive and the single event reading are allowed, the scope of the Adverbial '4 years' being here again the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective 'white'. A proof of this analysis can be found in the unacceptability of Sentence (14a''') and in the acceptability of Sentence (14a''''):

(14a''')\* Lo sceriffo di Nottingham un'unica volta cavalcò un bianco cavallo per 4 anni  
(the sheriff of Nottingham only once rode a white horse for 4 years)

(14a''''') Lo sceriffo di Nottingham cavalcò un un'unica volta/spesso un cavallo bianco per 4 anni  
(the sheriff of Nottingham only once/often rode a horse white for 4 years)

Again for both Sentences (13a'') and (14a'') the Post-Nominal Adjective being within the scope of the Adverbial 'for time A' entails a change of state in relation to time  $X_{-i}$  and  $X_{+i}$ ; i.e. a change from state (non-p) at time  $X_{-i}/X_{+i}$  to a state (p) at time X (where X is the time denoted by the Adverbial).

Before dealing with Achievement Verbs in order to check the correctness both of the need for further specification as to the position of the elements inside the NP following the Main Verb and of the hypothesis of the Post-Nominal Adjective as entailing a change of state in the context of 'Temporal' Adverbials,

let's analyse the Accomplishment verb 'to paint a picture' with 'almost' and Pre-/Post-Nominal Adjectives:

(15a) Ha quasi dipinto un roseo volto  
(He has almost painted a pinkish face)

(15a') Ha quasi dipinto un volto roseo  
(He has almost painted a face pinkish)

Sentence (15a) has got the same entailments of

(15) Ha quasi dipinto un volto  
(He has almost painted a face)

i.e., (i) He did begin to paint a (pinkish) face and he almost but not quite finished it; (ii) he wanted to paint a (pinkish) face but then he changed his mind and painted something else.

Sentence (15a') has the following entailments: (i) he painted the face; he wanted to paint it pinkish but then he changed his mind and painted it green/yellow/red or generically non-pinkish; (ii) he painted the face; he painted it almost but not quite pinkish. If we compare the entailments of (15a) with 'those of (15a') we see that in (15a) the scope of 'almost' is the Verb 'to paint' while in (15a') it is either the state denoted by the Adjective or the Verb 'to paint' and the state denoted by the Adjective:

(15a) [he almost painted] [a pinkish face]

(15a') [he painted the face] [almost pinkish]

In either case the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective entails a change of state either in relation to the state which actually came in existence (i.e. green or 'non-pinkish') or in relation to the state nearest to it in colour (i.e., pink).

Achievement Verbs:

This type of Verb is said (a) to be characterized by being unacceptable with for-Adverbials, with the 'spend-an-hour' (to do X)-periphrasis, as complements of 'finish' and 'stop' and as observed by Ryle with such Adverbials as 'attentively, studiously, vigilantly, etc"; (b) to allow instead in-Adverbials, the 'take-an-hour'-periphrasis and the Adverbial 'almost' which however does not produce the ambiguity found with Accomplishment Verbs; (c) to be further distinguished from Accomplishments on the basis of their different entailments with the in-Adverbials; i.e., the Sentence

(16) John noticed the painting in a few minutes does not entail that John was noticing the painting throughout the period of 'a few minutes' and in this respect the Achievement Verb 'to notice' distinguishes itself from the Accomplishment Verb 'to paint'.

Such an analysis, however, is criticized by Dowty on the basis that if there is an indefinite or

mass Noun direct-object they behave differently (p.30). Before dealing with Dowty's criticism let us consider the behaviour of the Achievement Verb 'to notice' in Italian:

(16a) Ha notato il quadro in 5 minuti

(16a') Ha notato l'interessante quadro in 5 minuti

(16b) Ha notato il quadro interessante in 5 minuti

(16b) in the context, for example, of an abstract painting that at first leaves one indifferent and then, maybe because it has been explained, becomes 'interesting' ); i.e., when the Achievement Verb 'to notice' is followed by a 'definite' Noun Phrase represented by the structure Noun/Adj.+Noun/Noun+Adj. it allows in-Adverbials.

(17a)\* Ha notato il quadro per 5 minuti

(17a')\* Ha notato l'interessante quadro per 5 minuti

(17b) Ha notato il quadro interessante per 5 minuti

(17b) in the context of someone who considers the painting 'interesting' as soon as he sees it, but then, maybe because he sees better ones, no longer considers it 'interesting', preferring others); i.e., when the Achievement Verb 'to notice' is followed by a 'definite' Noun Phrase with the structure Noun/Adj.+Noun, it does not allow 'for time X' Adverbials; when the same Verb is followed by a Noun Phrase of the form Noun+Adj., 'for time X'-Adverbials are allowed, i.e., while the presence or absence of Pre-Nominal Adjective is irrelevant as to

the acceptability or unacceptability of Sentences with the Verb in question, the presence or absence of Post-Nominal Adjective is not. Moreover the Post-Nominal Adjective while yielding an acceptable Sentence in (17b) vs. (17a) and (17a'), yields different entailments in Sentence (16b) vs. (16a) and (16a'), i.e., (16a') and (16a) entail that it took Y time X to notice Z (where Z=N/Adj.+N) vs. (16b) which entails that Y noticed Z (where Z=N) and that it takes time X for the state denoted by the Adjective to become effective. Moreover, while in (16a') no change of state is entailed, such change of state is entailed by (16b) where the in-phrase gives the Adjective its 'border-crossing' meaning (for the notion of border-crossing cf. M. Jessen, Edinburgh Working Papers).

If we now consider Sentences (17a'), and (17b), we find that the first two are unacceptable because the scope of the Durational Adverbial 'for 5 minutes' is the Main Verb 'to notice' and there is incompatibility between the 'momentary'/punctual meaning of such a Verb and the durative meaning of the Adverbial; such incompatibility is not yielded in (17b) because the scope of the Durational Adverbial is no longer the Main Verb but the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective 'interesting'. In the latter Sentence the Durational Adverbial denotes the time X in which the state denoted by the Adjective is in existence thus entailing a change

of state in relation to the state generically expressed as (non-interesting) and holding at time  $X_{-i}/+i$ .

In this respect Sentence (17b) with an Achievement Verb and Post-Nominal Adjective is not different from Sentences (14a'') and (11b) with the Accomplishment Verbs 'to ride' and 'to paint' respectively. While proving in these Sentences the Post-Nominal Adjective as a change-of-state vs. Pre-Nominal\* change-of-state, this also proves that in dealing with Achievement Verbs, too, it is necessary to specify the NP-direct-object not only in terms of Definite/Indefinite/Singular/Mass/Plural Noun but also in terms of the position of a possibly present Adjective.

It is moreover worth considering in relation to the Achievement Verb 'to notice' that such Sentences as

(18) Ha notato quel quadro per anni

(He (has) noticed that painting for years)

(18a) Ha notato quell'interessante quadro per anni

(He (has) noticed that interesting painting for years)

with the structure (Adj.)+Def.N, if unacceptable in the single-event reading, are nevertheless acceptable in the repetitive reading in the context for example of a particular interesting painting being shown in many exhibitions and of a person who goes to these exhibitions

and every time finds himself noticing that particular interesting painting which every time comes to his attention because of its colours, shape, position, subject, etc. In such contexts, it is in fact quite normal to utter in Italian the Sentence:

'in tutte le esposizioni che ho visto ho sempre notato la Pietà'

(in all the exhibitions I've seen I have always noticed 'La Pietà')

In this case the difference between Pre- and Post-Nominal Adjectives is that the latter but not the former allows (in the reading relevant here) the single event reading, i.e., single event reading of the Verb 'to notice' in

(18b) Ho notato quel quadro interessante per anni  
(I (have) noticed that interesting painting for years)

with Post-Noun Adjective, vs. only repetitive reading of the Verb 'to notice' for (18a) with Pre-Nominal Adjective.

In such contexts as the one just described the unacceptability of the Achievement Verb 'to notice' as complement of 'finish/stop' fails: in

(19/19a) Ha finito di notare quel (piacevole) dipinto  
to  
(He (has) finished noticing that beautiful painting)



we have termination of the repetitive act of noticing,  
while in

(19b) Ha finito di notare quel quadro piacevole  
(He (has) finished noticing that beautiful  
painting)

we have similarly termination of the repetitive act of  
noticing the painting plus the entailment that the state  
'beautiful' is 'now/then' in existence. This is made  
clearer if we allow the Durational Adverbial 'for years'  
in (19/19a) and in (19b):

(19a') Ha finito di notare quel piacevole dipinto  
per anni  
(He (has) finished noticing that beautiful  
painting for years)

(19b') Ha finito di notare quel dipinto piacevole  
per anni  
(He (has) finished noticing that painting  
beautiful for years)

in (19a') we have termination of the repetitive act of  
noticing the (beautiful) painting: the for-Adverbial  
denotes the time in which such a repetitive act took  
place; in (19b') we have termination of the repetitive  
act of noticing the painting: the for-phrase denotes the  
time in which the state denoted by the Post-Nominal  
Adjective is/was in existence, i.e., in (19b') the time  
in which the repetitive act of 'noticing' occurred is

left unspecified. The same applies to the Verb 'to notice' as complement of 'stop'.

We can thus conclude this analysis of the restrictions said to hold for Achievement Verbs with the remark that the verb 'to notice' taken as an example of Achievements, in the above contexts takes neither the 'spend-an-hour' -perihhrasis nor the 'attentively/studiously/vigilantly, etc.' -Adverbials irrespective of whether the NP-direct-object has the form N or (Adj) N (Adj) as proved by the unacceptability of

- (20/20a)\* Ha passato un'ora a notare il (bel) quadro  
(He (has) spent an hour noticing the  
(beautiful) painting)
- (20b)\* Ha passato un'ora a notare il quadro bello  
(He (has) spent an hour noticing the  
painting beautiful)
- (21/21a)\* Ha notato attentamente il (bel) quadro  
(He (has) noticed attentively the  
(beautiful) painting)
- (21b)\* Ha notato attentamente il quadro bello  
(He (has) noticed attentively the painting  
beautiful)

it does however take in-Adverbials: in this case the position of the Adjective must be taken into consideration as yielding different entailments; it does also

take for-Adverbials and it can be a complement of 'finish' and 'stop' in particular contexts but in both cases here again the position of the Adjective yields different entailments. Having pointed this out, let us now see Dowty's treatment of Achievement Verbs (pp. 30-31): according to his analysis while the Achievement Verbs 'discover' and 'meet' disallow the Durational Adverbials 'for 6 weeks' and 'all summer' in Sentences like

(22)\* John discovered the buried treasure in his backyard for 6 weeks

(23)\* John met an interesting blonde on the beach all summer

they allow such Adverbials with 'Indefinite Plural' or 'Mass Noun' as in:

(24) John discovered  $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{fleas on his dog} \\ \text{crabgrass in his yard} \end{array} \right\}$  for 6 weeks

(25) John met interesting blondes on the beach all summer

Sentences (22)-(25) are particularly relevant in this context, as they show the presence of the Adjective and/or the so-called Past Participle. In Italian Sentence 22 can be rendered as

(22a) John ha scoperto il sepolto tesoro nel suo giardino per 6 settimane

i.e., with Pre-Nominal Past Participle: in such a Sentence we can have only the repetitive reading as the Durational

Adverbial 'for 6 weeks' has as its scope the Main Verb 'discovered'. Such a Sentence is in fact acceptable in the context, for example, of a treasure which has been repeatedly hidden and repeatedly discovered (we are not considering the possibility of having the locative phrase 'in his yard' as the scope of the Durational Adverbial 'for 6 weeks' as not relevant for the present discussion).

But Sentence (22) can also be rendered in Italian with a Post-Nominal Past Participle as:

(22b) John ha scoperto il tesoro sepolto nel suo giardino per 6 settimane

which allows for the single-event reading as well as the scope of the Adverbial 'for 6 weeks', i.e., in the reading relevant here; the state denoted by the Past Participle; i.e., to the English Sentence (22) there correspond two versions, one with Past Participle in Pre-Nominal position with a repetitive reading and the other with Post-Nominal Past Participle, with both the repetitive and the single-event reading as the scope of the Durational Adverbial is not the Main Verb but the state denoted by the Past Participle, i.e., the Durational Adverbial refers to the time in which the state 'buried' has been in existence. Similarly for Sentence 23, rendered in Italian by

Pre-Nominal (23a) John ha incontrato un'interessante bionda sulla spiaggia tutta l'estate

and

Post-Nominal (23b) John ha incontrato una bionda in-

teressante sulla spiaggia tutta l'estate  
(here again as in (22) we do not consider the case of the Durational Adverbial having as its scope the locative phrase as irrelevant for the present discussion).

In (23a) we have only the repetitive reading while in (23b) we have both the repetitive and the single-event readings as the scope of the Durational Adverbial is in this case the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective, (and not the Main Verb as in (23a), i.e. the Durational Adverbial refers to the time in which the state 'interesting' is/was in existence).

Thus again in the case of the Achievement Verbs 'discover' and 'meet' followed by a Definitive/Indefinite singular Noun Phrase (as direct object) the structure of the NP as (Adj) N or as N+Adj. has to be taken into account, the crucial elements being the position of the Adjective and the scope of the Adverbial. The same holds for Sentence (25) which is rendered in Italian as:

Pre-Nominal: (25a) Ha incontrato interessanti bionde tutta l'estate

entails a repetitive reading of the Verb 'meet' vs.

Post-Nominal (25b) Ha incontrato bionde interessanti tutta l'estate

allowing both the repetitive and the single-event reading of the Main Verb 'meet'. This is confirmed by the

unacceptability of Pre-Nominal:

(25a')\* Ha appena incontrato interessanti biondi tu  
tta l'estate

vs. the acceptability of

(25a'') Ha ripetutamente incontrato interessanti bi-  
onde tutta l'estate

and of Post-Nominal

(25b') Ha appena incontrato bionde interessanti tu-  
tta l'estate

and

(25b'') Ha ripetutamente incontrato bionde interes-  
santi tutta l'estate

i.e., in (25a) the scope of the Adverbial is the Main Verb while in (25b) the scope of the Adverbial is the state denoted by the Post-Nominal Adjective.

On a similar basis we can argue that if it is true that the Sentence

(25)\* John discovered that quaint little village for  
years

is unacceptable also in the repetitive reading because of the nature of the Noun 'direct object' vs. the acceptability of

(26) Tourists discovered that quaint little village  
for years

(Dowty, p.31) it is however equally true that (25) is

acceptable in its Italian version with Post-Nominal Adjective:

(26b) Ha scoperto quel paesino strano per anni  
irraggiungibile  
inaccessibile  
stupendo  
sconosciuto, etc

and that (26) yields different readings according to whether it is rendered by:

Pre-Nominal (26a) I turisti hanno scoperto quello  
strano paesino per anni

or by Post-Nominal:

(26b) I turisti hanno scoperto quel paesino strano  
per anni.

i.e. in (26) and (26a) the repetitive reading of the verb 'discover' ranges over the period denoted by the Durational Adverbial 'for years'; in (26b) both the repetitive and the single event reading of 'discover' are allowed: the repetitive reading ranging over an unspecified period of time as the Durational Adverbial 'for years', having as its scope the Adjective 'strange', denotes only the time in which such a state has been in existence.

We can thus conclude with the following: the basis for the distinction between the above mentioned types of Verbs is the presence vs. the absence of in-for Adverbials (Vendler) together with the analysis of the direct-object Noun Phrase in terms of Definite/Indefinite/

Singular/Plural Noun (Dowty); it is however necessary to point out that

- (a) the presence of the in-for Adverbials is distinctive when the Noun Phrase direct-object or locative of destination has the form N or Adj.+N;
- (b) in-for Adverbials are non-distinctive between the different types of Verbs when the Noun Phrase direct-object or locative of destination has the structure N+Adj.;
- (c) with the Verbs allowing a specific Adverbial with both the structures Adj.+N and N+Adj., the different position of the Adjective yields different entailments and must therefore be distinguished;
- (d) the Post-Nominal Adjective in the Sentences examined above entails a change of state vs. the Pre-Nominal Adjective for which such entailment is totally lacking.

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