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MORPHOLOGICAL AND SEMANTIC PROPERTIES OF HOMONYMOUS DE-ADJECTIVAL VERBS IN POLISH: A DISTRIBUTED MORPHOLOGY ACCOUNT

Abstract. This text is devoted to the problem of formal representation concerning semantic and morphological differences among three classes of homonymous verbs in Polish, i.e. among change of state de-adjectival telic predicates, their atelic counterparts and verbs of existence, all based on identical roots. The analysis is carried out within the theory of Distributed Morphology. Semantic differences among these classes of predicates are shown to correspond to distinct prefixation patterns within this group of forms. Both semantic and morphological differences have to be coded in morpho-syntactic structures for the said verbs.

Verbs of existence are considered as representing Kimian states and the major structural difference between change of state verbs and verbs of existence is attributed to this character of the latter group of predicates. The analysis opens the discussion within Distributed Morphology concerning the representation of Kimian states in terms of verbal structures.

Keywords: change of state verb; verb of existence; telicity; atelicity; Kimian state

MORFOLOGICZNE I SEMANTYCZNE WŁAŚCIWOŚCI HOMONIMICZNYCH ODPRZYMIOTNIKOWYCH CZASOWNIKÓW W POLSKIM: PODEJŚCIE MORFOLOGII DYSTRYBUCYJNEJ

Abstrakt. Tekst jest poświęcony formalnej reprezentacji różnic semantycznych i morfologicznych pomiędzy trzema klasami czasownikowych homonimów w języku polskim, to jest pomiędzy odprzymiotnikowymi telicznymi czasownikami zmiany stanu, ich atelicznymi odpowiednikami i czasownikami egzystencjalnymi. Wszystkie te czasowniki oparte są na identycznych przymiotnikowych rdzeniach. Różnice semantyczne w tym zbiorze czasowników korespondują z ograniczeniami nałożonymi na ich możliwości prefiksacji. Zarówno właściwości semantyczne czasowników, jak

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i ich zachowanie morfologiczne musi znaleźć odzwierciedlenie w przypisanych im strukturach morfo-składniowych, co jest podstawowym wymogiem modelu Distributed Morphology, w ramach którego niniejszy tekst jest posadowiony.

Fenomen stanów Kima został przywołany aby wyjaśnić różnice pomiędzy atelicznymi czasownikami zmiany stanu i czasownikami egzystencjalnymi, otwierając dyskusję w ramach Distributed Morphology nad reprezentacją różnic występującej pomiędzy podobnymi grupami czasowników.

Słowa kluczowe: czasownik zmiany stanu; czasownik egzystencjalny; teliczność; ateliczność; stan Kima

INTRODUCTION

Polish has a group of de-adjectival synthetic verbs[1] with homonymous[2] properties (Malicka-Kleparska). They pose an interesting linguistic problem since a single verbal form may realise change of state[3] telic predicates, change of state atelic predicates and verbs of existence (Levin). While these verbs constitute a group of lexemes based on a variety of adjectives, their internal morphology is relatively uniform. They consist of roots followed by verbalising morphemes and inflectional endings (Laskowski, 1984; Rubach, 1984; Zdziebko, 2019; Bloch-Trojnar, 2023). The verbs we will concentrate on in this text have adjectival roots coding visible properties, predominantly colours, like *czerwony* 'red'—*czerwienieć* 'redden', *czarny* 'black'—*czernieć* 'blacken', *biały* 'white'—*bieleć* 'whiten', *zielony* 'green'—*zielenieć* 'become green', *jasny* 'light'—*jaśnieć* 'shine', *ciemny* 'dark'—*ciemnieć* 'darken', etc. The roots are followed by verbalising *-e-/-ej-*, e.g, *czerwień-e-ć* 'redden.INF' vs. *czerwień-ej-e-*.3SG.PRS, with the final morpheme standing for the inflectional ending.[4]

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[1] We call verbs synthetic when a single lexical item is composed of a few morphemes. In Polish some verbs appear with a clitic element which contributes to the meaning of such verbs, e.g. *czerwienić się* 'grow red'. These verbs could be called analytic.

[2] We choose to call the verbs described in this section homonyms rather than polysemes because the distinction between homonymy and polysemy is diachronic in nature, while it is of no consequence for synchronic studies.

[3] The term *change of state verb* is adopted here after Levin and Rappaport Hovav (2013), while other sources use varied terminology, e.g. Zdziebko (2019) calls these verbs *inchoative unaccusatives* while Medová and Wiland (2019) use the term *degree achievements*.

[4] Other de-adjectival synthetic change of state verbs in Polish have different verbalising morphemes, like *-ną-*, in *bled-ną-ć* 'fade.INF', *-owa-*, in *mut-owa-ć* 'mutate.INF', while analytic change of state verbs are formed with the reflexive-like clitic *się*. We have to limit our discussion here just to a single morphologically uniform group. For more details see Malicka-Kleparska (2023).

Below we present the three homonymous guises of such verbs which will constitute the basic data of this paper. (1a) illustrates the predication with a change of state telic verb. The telic nature of the predication is tested with the use of the adverbial *in X time* (see Verkuyl, 1972; Dowty, 1979; Dik, 1997; Borik, 2002). (1b) has the same morphological verbal form, but the predication is atelic, as manifested by the grammatical use of the adverbial phrase *for X time*. Finally, (1c) includes a stative verb of existence. Here no modification by adverbials testing for telic predicates is acceptable, while *for X time* is grammatical. Locative adverbials usually accompany such verbs of existence as the predicate in (1c).

(1) a. *Jagody   czerwieniały   w tydzień.* (telic)
        berries.NOM   reddened.IPFV   in week.ACC
        'The berries reddened in a week.'

     b. *Jagody   czerwieniały   tydzień   / przez tydzień* (atelic)
        berries.NOM   grew.red.IPFV   week.ACC   / for week.ACC
        'The berries were growing red for a week.'

     c. *Jagody   czerwieniały   w żywopłocie   przez tydzień.*
        berries.NOM   looked.red.IPFV   in hedge.LOC   for week.ACC
        'The berries looked red in the hedge for a week.'

Unlike Polish, English seems not to have the same lexical homonyms coding verbs of existence based on visible properties of objects, so we have decided on the phrase *look X property* to render the meaning of these verbs in this language. Atelic homonyms will be translated as *grow X property*, while telic variants will be translated with the use of individual verbal lexemes.

In (1b) bare time adverbials can be employed instead of adverbial phrases to test for atelic predicates, bare time adverbials being acceptable especially with phrases standing for lexicalised short-time spans. Willim (2006, p. 176, ftn. 2) rightly maintains that *przez* 'for' adverbials do not test univocally for atelic predicates as these adverbials may have also the time span meaning in Polish. Consequently, the use of bare adverbials as the testing material is less problematic and we will adhere to this procedure in the forthcoming examples.

Apart from their homonymy, the verbs in (1) present intriguing morphosyntactic properties: Telic change of state verbs may take particular classes of perfectivising prefixes, while atelic change of state verbs and stative verbs of existence cannot be prefixed at all. Since we deal here with consistent morphological behaviour, some explanation of these regularities seems to be in order.

Explaining uniform behaviour of word classes is pivotal to the theory of Distributed Morphology as all regularities within this approach are coded by means of morpho-syntactic structures. Below, in Section 1, we will adumbrate selected tenets of this theory, i.e. the ones relevant for the forthcoming analysis. Section 2 will introduce particular subclasses of verbal prefixes in Polish to the extent pertinent to the material under analysis. Section 3 constitutes initial attempts at analysing the material, while Section 4 points us in the direction of resolving key issues and suggests a major change in verbal morpho-syntactic structures within the model of Distributed Morphology. The last section will conclude the paper.

1. DISTRIBUTED MORPHOLOGY IN A NUTSHELL

Distributed Morphology (Alexiadou & Agnostopoulou, 2004; Alexiadou et al., 2015; Borer, 2005, and many others) ascribes all types of regular morphological, syntactic and semantic behaviour to similarities in morpho-syntactic structures of particular forms, be they individual lexemes or more complex constructs, such as phrases or clauses. Since the three different meanings of Polish homonymous verbs are a constant for a subclass of de-adjectival predicates, this regularity has to be reflected in terms of structural differences in the build-up of the predicates with disparate meanings.

Distributed Morphology views the morpho-syntactic component of language as the only component generating layered structures. Particular layers represent different projections with distinct grammatical functions. When filled with morphological material such structures are interpreted by the semantic and phonological components of language. Structures capture regularities in morpho-syntactic properties and regular semantics of linguistic units. Idiosyncratic properties are attributed to particular roots and other morphemes building lexical items. Consequently, any regularity, be it morpho-syntactic or semantic, must be represented in structural terms.

At the same time, any generalised restrictions curtailing the morphological composition of lexical items, in the case at hand constraints on perfectivising prefixation, must also be accounted for in terms of partially distinct structures. It is this last point, dealing with prefixational peculiarities characterising telic and atelic de-adjectival verbs, that we propose to discuss directly below, before we move on to pondering upon semantic peculiarities of homonymous verbs within and without the theory of Distributed Morphology.

2. CLASSES OF PREFIXES *VIS À VIS* CHANGE OF STATE VERBS
AND VERBS OF EXISTENCE

As mentioned earlier, prefixation requirements of change of state verbs and verbs of existence differ, therefore a very short introduction into perfectivising prefixes in Polish seems necessary. This introduction does not do justice to all the intricacies of the Polish prefixation system, but it introduces the relevant distinctions in grammaticality.

As described in detail by Svenonius (2004), then developed and modified by other sources (e.g. Jabłońska, 2004, 2007; Łazorczyk, 2010), Slavic perfectivising prefixes fall into three classes with distinct properties: lexical prefixes, superlexical prefixes and pure perfectivisers.

Lexical prefixes are attached directly to verbal bases and cannot be stacked (Willand, 2012), they may contribute spatial or resultative meaning to the event spelled out by the verb and they may alter the meaning of the basic verb, its argument structure and its case assigning properties. (2b) below brings up one of a number of such prefixes in Polish with its specific properties (*roz-*), contrasted with an unprefixed predicate with the same root in (2a). (2c) illustrates the ungrammaticality of this type of prefixation with all three homophonous verbs under consideration.

(2) a. *Jan   chodził   (w butach).*
        Jan   walked.IPFV   in shoes.LOC
       'Jan walked in his shoes.'

  b. *Jan   roz-chodził   buty.*
        Jan-NOM   broke.in.PFV   shoes.ACC
       'Jan broke in his shoes.'

  c. **Jagody   roz-czerwieniały   (w tydzień/tydzień).*
        berries.NOM   reddened/grew red/looked red.PFV in week.ACC/week.ACC

The examples in (2a, b) show that *roz-* modifies the meaning of the basic verb and changes its argument assigning properties. While the unprefixed variant (2a) does not require an object (the prepositional phrase is optional), the prefixed verb cannot be used without it (2b).

Prefixes belonging to the category of lexical prefixes cannot be attached to any of the homonyms discussed in this text (2c), and, consequently, this regularity requires an explanation.

The remaining two groups of prefixes, i.e. superlexical prefixes (3) and pure perfectivisers (4) attach to telic change of state verbs, but not to verbs of

existence, nor to atelic change of state verbs. This gap in the distribution of prefixes must find comprehensive explanation as well.

Examples in (3) will illustrate the attachment of a superlexical prefix (*po-*) and (4) will demonstrate the addition of a pure perfectiviser (*z-*). Both cases show differences in grammaticality of resulting telic verbs on the one hand and atelic change of state verbs, as well as verbs of existence on the other.

Superlexical prefixes quantize a predication or they contribute/stress its temporal dimension. In principle, they can stack and they can attach outside lexical prefixes, but lexical prefixes are excluded from our data (2c) and stacking possibilities are severely limited in Polish morpho-syntax (Willand, 2012). In (3a) below a superlexical prefix attaches to a telic predicate, but it renders (3b) ungrammatical since the predication is interpreted as containing either an atelic change of state verb or a verb of existence.

(3) a. *Jagody*   *po-czerwieniały*   *w tydzień*. (telic)
       berries.NOM   reddened.PFV   in week.ACC
       'The berries reddened (gradually) in a week.'

     b. **Jagody*   *po-czerwieniały*   *tydzień*. (atelic)
        berries.NOM   grew red/looked red.PFV   week.ACC

In grammatical (3a) the use of *in X time* phrase shows that the predication is telic. (3b), with a bare temporal adverbial, demonstrates that the very same prefixation renders an atelic predication ungrammatical, whether it is understood as representing a change of state or an existing state. The data show that superlexical prefixes can appear with our telic predicates, but not with atelic ones.

Pure perfectivisers, unlike lexical prefixes, do not alter properties of the basic verb in any radical way (neither semantically nor syntactically), apart from rendering the verb perfective. Unlike superlexical prefixes, pure perfectivisers do not stack and any basic verb chooses just a single pure perfectiviser. In the case of (4a), *z-* is the prefix of choice.

(4) a. *Jagody*   *z-czerwieniały*   *w tydzień*. (telic)
       berries.NOM   reddened.PFV   in week.ACC
       'The berries reddened in a week.'

     b. **Jagody*   *z-czerwieniały*   *tydzień*.
        berries.NOM   grew red/looked red.PFV   week.ACC

While pure perfectivisers are fully grammatical in the telic predication (4a), they cannot appear with atelic change of state or existence predicates (4b).

The remaining part of this text will be devoted to various ways of solving the morphological and semantic conundrum posed by the data presented above, both outside the framework of Distributed Morphology and within the theory itself. In equal measure, we will try to account for the three distinct meanings that *czerwienieć* 'redden, grow red, look red' displays, while being morphologically constant. Additionally, we will propose how to solve the puzzle presented by its perfectivising prefixation.

3. ANALYSIS

Let us start our analysis with possible explanations of the facts concerning the subregularities in the attachment of perfectivising prefixes to the verbs under consideration, followed by the problem of the homonymous semantics of these predicates.

To state the obvious, the prefixation differences described above cannot result from different phonological or morphological environments in which particular classes of prefixes can or cannot be added to the group of verbs analysed here: whether telic or atelic, the verbs are homophonous. It is also quite clear that a lexical prefix like *roz-* can, in principle, attach to roots starting with such segments as in (2c) since other verbs with similar phonology take this prefix without any restrictions, e.g. *roz-czesać* 'comb', *roz-czepić* 'split', etc.

Then, short of claiming that the roots on which the verbs are built represent distinct morphemes for each homonym, in spite of their undistinguishable meanings denoting the very same properties, an explanation relying on different identities of roots would not hold water either.

Another way of explicating the differences may lie in the distinct semantics of our homonyms. When we consider the semantics of telic vs. atelic verbs, the solution seems to be within our reach. If telicity of a predication goes hand in hand with the perfective aspect, then the presence of at least some perfectivising prefixes with a telic verb is to be expected.

This conjecture may be supported by a handful of Polish verbs which are telic and perfective, but morphologically simplex: *lec* 'lie down', *rzec* 'proclaim', *wziąć* 'take'. Their perfectivity manifests itself when we apply the known perfectivity tests to the data (Schoorlemmer, 1995; Filip, 2000; Borik,

2002). In Polish, phase verbs, such as *skończyć* 'finish', *przestać* 'stop' cannot be complemented by perfective verbs (5a), and perfective verbs do not appear in the analytical future tense formed with the auxiliary *być* 'be' (5b).

(5) a. *Jan*   *skończył*   *lec*   *na podłodze.*
         Jan.NOM f inished.PST   lie.down.INF   on floor.LOC

     b. *Jan*   *będzie*   *lec*   *na podłodze.*
         Jan.NOM   be.FUT   lie.down.INF   on floor.LOC

On top of being telic and perfective, however, the verbs in (5) can take perfectivising prefixes, and, which is of particular interest to us, lexical prefixes among them, e.g.: *wy-lec* 'go out', *wy-rzec* 'speak out', *za-wziąć się* 'get to be stubborn'. Consequently, telicity of verbs by itself cannot account for our data, i.e. for the selective use of perfectivising prefixes with telic change of state verbs.

Atelic verbs in Polish may be prefixed with perfectivising prefixes, without necessarily losing their atelic character, as the example in (6, cf. 2a) manifests:

(6) *Jan*   *ob-chodził*   *pole*   *cały dzień*   *i jeszcze*
     Jan-NOM   walk.around-PST   field-ACC   wholeday-ACC   and still
     go   *nie*   *ob-szedł.*
     it-ACC   not   walk.around-PST
     'Jan has been walking around the field the whole day, but he still has not finished walking around it.'
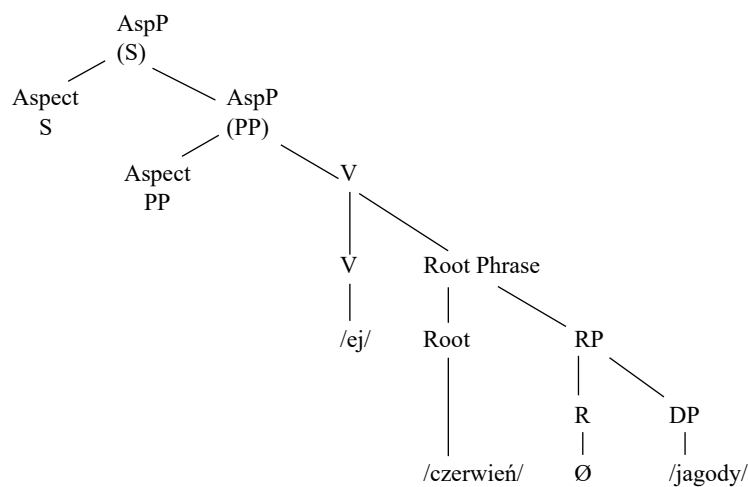
Consequently, telicity vs. atelicity of predicates by itself cannot supply us with an explanation why atelic verbs in our data do not accept perfectivising prefixes, while telic predicates are selective in this respect. Moreover, within Distributed Morphology semantic and morphological regularities are read-off structures, so even if we were able to come up with a semantic explanation for the distribution of prefixes, the weight of such an explanation would ultimately have to rest on structures attributed to lexical items, only later interpreted by their semantics.

In Malicka-Kleparska (2023), we find a proposal within Distributed Morphology linking the gaps in the prefixation of telic and atelic change of state verbs to their specific morphological structures. It is proposed that telic change of state predicates possess in their structure a single Result Phrase (RP) headed by the zero morpheme. The presence of this morpheme prevents the attachment of other morphemes which are heads of Result Phrases, i.e. other lexical prefixes. Superlexical and pure perfectivisers are introduced

higher in the verbal structure, specifically in the aspectual projection, hence they can attach to telic predicates (7). The absence of any perfectivising pre-fixes with atelic change of state verbs is explained by the lack of the Result Phrase and higher aspectual projections with such verbs (9). Below we repro-duce the proposed structures (Malicka-Kleparska, 2023, p. 39), filling them with the morphological material relevant to this text.

(7) Telic change of state verbs

```
           AspP
           (S)
         /      \
   Aspect       AspP
     S           (PP)
              /        \
        Aspect          V
          PP          /    \
                     V      Root Phrase
                     |      |         \
                   /ej/    Root        RP
                            |         /  \
                        /czerwień/   R    DP
                                     |    |
                                     Ø  /jagody/
```

(8) *Jagody*   *czerwienieją*   (*w tydzień*). (telic)
     berries.NOM   redden.IPFV   in week.ACC
     'The berries redden in a week.'

(9) Atelic change of state verbs

```
   V
   |    \
   V      Root Phrase
   |      |         \
  /ej/   Root        DP
          |          |
      /czerwień/   /jagody/
```
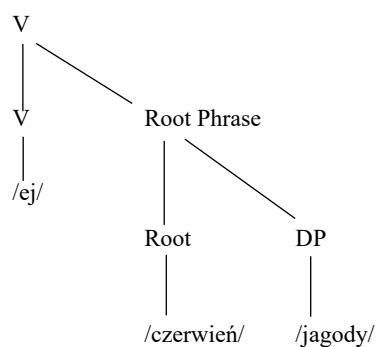
(10) *Jagody*　　*czerwienieją*　　(*tydzień*). (atelic)
　　berries.NOM　　grow.red.IPFV　　week.ACC
　　'The berries have been growing red/have been looking red for a week.'

The structures above may account for the differences in prefix attachment for our homonymous telic and atelic verbs. However, these structures take into consideration the telic–atelic division only. They disregard the semantic distinction between atelic change of state verbs and verbs of existence, whose prefixation properties are identical (the similarity captured in 3b, 4b above), but whose meanings are not. As the two homonyms in our data represent a regularity, and accounting for regularities rests with layered structures in Distributed Morphology, so atelic change of state verbs and verbs of existence must structurally differ, although they both resist prefixation.

The answer to this problem may lie in the distinction between eventive predicates and Kimian states, i.e. between the verbs which have the event argument in their structures and those that do not have one. The next section will be devoted to arguing for Kimian state status of verbs of existence in contrast to change of state verbs. The section will end with a structural proposal of representing the said difference within the theory of Distributed Morphology.

4. KIMIAN STATES

If we are able to show that verbs of existence are Kimian states (K-states henceforth), unlike change of state verbs, we could claim that both telic and atelic change of state verbs are equipped with a projection capturing their eventive character, while verbs of existence do not possess such a projection. As a consequence the semantic differences among all classes of our homonyms will be readable off their morpho-syntactic structures, while their phonetic realisations stay identical. Telic change of state verbs will be structured as eventive, with the Result Phrase headed by the zero morpheme, atelic change of state verbs—as eventive, but without the Result Phrase, verbs of existence—as non-eventive and without the Result Phrase.

The conception of K-states has been significantly developed by Maienborn in her numerous publications. For the purposes of this text we will rely mostly on Maienborn (2019) (but see also Maienborn, 2003, 2005). In the paper she summarises the properties of the verbs which are K-states in the following way (Maienborn, 2019, p. 71):

(11) Linguistic diagnostics for K-states:
    a. K-state expressions cannot serve as infinitival complements of perception verbs and do not combine with locative modifiers, manner adverbials, and further participant expressions.
    b. K-state expressions combine with temporal modifiers.
    c. K-state expressions are accessible for anaphoric reference.

Not all the criteria of K-statehood can be tested for Polish since verbs of perception cannot be followed by infinitival verbal complements in this language. However, the remaining criteria can be tested.

The first criterion to be considered is the ungrammaticality of K-states with manner adverbials, in particular the adverbials that describe the way in which an event develops. Since K-states do not include events in their semantics, this type of adverbial modification is unacceptable. Manner adverbials describing how an event develops cannot appear with verbs of existence (12a, b), as compared with atelic change of state verbs (12a, b), which are not K-states. For our purposes, we will test the grammaticality of verbs of existence with *szybko* 'quickly' (rate adverb) and *stopniowo* 'step by step' (degree adverb), having it in mind that the meaning to be recovered is that of *look X property*.

(12) a. *Jagody   szybko   czerwieniały   w* żywopłocie.
      berries.NOM   quickly *looked.red/grew.red.IPFV in hedge.LOC
      'The berries quickly were growing red in the hedge.'

    b. *Jagody   stopniowo   czerwieniały   w* żywopłocie.
      berries.NOM   step.by.step *looked.red/grew.red.IPFV in hedge.LOC
      'Step by step, the berries were growing red in the hedge.'

Examples in (12) show clearly that the predication modified with manner adverbials has the meaning of change of state exclusively. The existential meaning cannot be recovered in such cases so verbs of existence cannot appear with event modifiers. This test shows unmistakeably that events are not parts of the semantics of our verbs of existence.

The next test concerns the grammaticality of additional comitative or instrumental arguments in the predications under investigation. K-states are conceptualised as abstract objects (Maienborn, 2019), not events, and consequently instrument participants bringing about an event (13b), or additional comitatives participating in an event (13a) are excluded. The sentences in (13) below do not allow the readings with verbs of existence.

(13) a. *Jagody*   *czerwieniały*   *z*   *gilami*   *w*
    berries.NOM   *?looked.red/?grew.red.IPFV with   bullfinches   in
    żywopłocie.
    hedge.LOC

  b. *Jagody*   *czerwieniały*   *od ciepła*
    berries.NOM   *looked.red/grew.red.IPFV   from heat.GEN
    w żywopłocie.
    in hedge.LOC
    'The berries were growing red from heat in the hedge.'

As examples in (13) above show, additional arguments cannot appear with verbs of existence, while change of state verbs are admissible with instrumental phrases. (13a) is questionable for change of state verbs since bullfinches are red *per se*. We have chosen the comitative argument with constant properties to make the existential meaning as salient as possible but even this choice of the comitative argument does not improve the grammaticality of the predication with a verb of existence to any significant extent.

The next property of K-states named by Maienborn (2019) consists in K-states functioning as referents for anaphoric expressions, like *przy tym* 'with it'.

(14) *Jagody*   *czerwieniały*   *a*   *przy tym*   *lśniły.*
    berries.NOM   looked.red.IPFV   and   with it.LOC   shone.IPF
    'The berries looked red and at the same time shone.'

This property, however, does not distinguish K-states from eventive predicates, likewise the grammaticality of K-states with temporal adverbials (1c vs. a, b) is not their distinctive feature.

The tests so far show that existence verbs may be considered K-states. However, one diagnostic seems to point in a different direction. Namely, verbs of existence can appear with locative phrases quite freely (see 1c), indeed such phrases usually accompany their uses, while Maienborn (2019) claims that locatives are excluded from predications headed by K-states. However, Polish verbs of existence outside the body of the data discussed in this text seem to gainsay this claim: predicates like *istnieć* 'exist', *być* 'be', *trwać* 'persist' take locative modifiers (15).

(15) *Niepewność*   *istnieje/jest/trwa*   *w umyśle*   *człowieka.*
    uncertainty.NOM   exists/is/persists   in mind.LOC   human.GEN
    'Uncertainty exists/is situated/persists in human mind.'

Examples in (15) might suggest that either the ungrammaticality of locative phrases with K-states does not obtain in Polish or another explanation should be sought. Maienborn (2005, pp. 288–289) introduces a distinction between frame-setting and eventuality-related locatives. Frame-setting locatives specify the setting of the whole predication and they appear with K-states, while eventuality-related modifiers, banned from K-state structures, place the event itself. In the sentence *In Poland, he got married in Church* the frame-setting locative is spelled by *in Poland*, while *in Church* is eventuality-related. We would like to suggest that locatives with our verbs of existence are such frame-setting modifiers, especially that they are nearly obligatory if no other modification appears in homonymous existential predications.

Whether the above explanation is on the right track or not, the overall prevalence of positive tests for K-statehood allows us to claim that our verbs of existence may be treated as K-states in Polish. Having stated that, we have to wonder how to express this property by structural means, i.e. how to code K-states in terms of morpho-syntactic structures.

We would like to propose that the morpho-syntax of atelic and telic change of state verbs should be enriched with an additional eventive layer of structure, quite apart from verbal projections, present in all verbal and verb-related structures, while verbs of existence would be deprived of this structural layer. The identity of the lower layers of structure of atelic change of state verbs and verbs of existence would allow us to explain their similarity with respect to affixation (the lack of perfectivising prefixes), while the difference in event implications between the two classes would be captured by the existence of such a projection with change of state verbs but the lack thereof with verbs of existence. The eventless structure would result in their *look X property* semantics, while the presence of the verbal projection would secure their other verbal properties, verbal inflections among them.

In this text we are not able to develop this proposal in any more technical details, such as establishing the exact placement of the eventive projection with respect to other verbal projections. However, we think that drawing the attention of other researchers to the problem exemplified by Polish homonymous de-adjectival verbs as something that has to be taken into consideration while working with mechanisms of Distributed Morphology may constitute another step towards better understanding of how verbs work and should be represented.

CONCLUSION

The problem of coding semantics and prefixation properties touching a relatively small class of homonymous verbs in Polish may seem trivial, but as a matter of fact it reveals a much more significant issue regarding the necessity of addressing the question of the morpho-syntactic representation of K-states. This issue is easily overlooked as K-states typically include specific root morphemes, whose properties may be held responsible for K-state interpretations. For instance roots of emblematic K-states, such as *know*, *weigh*, *own*, *cost* and *resemble* (Maienborn, 2003) may be claimed to bear the responsibility for rendering their verbal semantics Kimian. However, if idiosyncratic morphemes cannot secure Kimian interpretations of particular verbs, as we have argued for de-adjectival verbs of existence in Polish, a more thorough research in this direction should be undertaken within the theory of Distributed Morphology.

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