

Academic year 2022-23 (תשפ"ג)

**Course title (English):** Event semantics in theory and experiments

**Course title (Hebrew):** סמנטיקה של אירועים בתיאוריה ובניסויים

**Course number:**

**Course slot (semester/s, weekday/s, hours):** MA course, yearly, Wednesdays 12-14

**Lecturer:** Dr. Aviya Hacoheh

**Lecturer's conference hour and contact details:**

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By appointment

**Course description & objectives:**

This course is concerned with how events in the world are encoded in natural language. Our focus will be on the notion of event boundaries, or telicity. Telicity here is defined in terms of culmination requirements, whereby telic predicates, but not atelic ones, have an inherent culmination point which must be reached for the predicate to be true. The goal of this course is to explore this distinction, its linguistic sources, and the cognitive mechanisms that govern and license its interpretation in adult language. We will discuss existing theoretical literature on event semantics and how data from experimental psycholinguistics bear on, and further advance, the theory on the topic.

**Course requirements:**

- Participation – 5 %
- Reading and annotations (Perusal) – 5%
- Paper presentations – 10%
- Presentation of research (15%)
- Final paper (65%)

**Important!**

Students must submit at least 80% of assignments and participate in at least 80% of classes. Failing to do this will result in automatic failure. Note, that 80% is merely the threshold for passing; each assignment still counts towards the final grade.

**Academic honesty**

You are highly encouraged to read, discuss and study together with your fellow students, both for the assignments and for the exams. However, all work that you submit in your name, must be **your own original work**. Plagiarism and cheating are forms of academic dishonesty and will be (potentially) rewarded with a failing grade for the entire course.

The university guidelines on academic honesty, is stated in section 4 of the following document:  
[https://in.bgu.ac.il/acadsec/doclib2/plagiarism\\_eng.pdf](https://in.bgu.ac.il/acadsec/doclib2/plagiarism_eng.pdf)

## Topics & bibliography

### Planned topics:

Lexical Aspect vs. Grammatical aspect

Aspectual classes

Acquisition of telicity

Non-culminating events

Event maximalization

### Selected bibliography:

Arunachalam, S. & Kothari, A. (2011). An experimental study of Hindi and English perfective interpretation. *Journal of South Asian Linguistics*, 4(1), 27-42.

Demonte, V., & McNally, L. (Eds.). (2012). *Telicity, change, and state: A cross-categorial view of event structure* (Vol. 39). Oxford University Press.

Dowty, David. 1979. *Word meaning and Montague Grammar*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.

Filip, H. (2008). Events and maximalization: The case of telicity and perfectivity. *Theoretical and crosslinguistic approaches to the semantics of aspect*, 110, 217-256.

Filip, Hana. "Lexical aspect." *The Oxford handbook of tense and aspect* (2012): 721-751.

Hacohen, A. (2010). On the acquisition of (Hebrew) compositional telicity. Doctoral dissertation at BGU.

Hay, Jennifer, Christopher Kennedy & Beth Levin. 1999. Scalar structure underlies telicity in "Degree achievements". *Semantics and Linguistic Theory* 9. 127–144.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.3765/salt.v9i0.2833>

Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2022). Boundedness in event cognition: Viewers spontaneously represent the temporal texture of events. *Journal of Memory and Language*, 127, 104353.

Kearns, K. (2007). Telic senses of deadjectival verbs. *Lingua*, 117(1), 26-66.

Martin, F., Demirdache, H., del Real, I. G., Van Hout, A., & Kazanina, N. (2020). Children's non-adultlike interpretations of telic predicates across languages. *Linguistics*, 58(5), 1447-1500.

Martin, Fabienne. 2019. Non-culminating accomplishments. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 13(8). 1–20. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1111/lnc3.12346>

Rappaport Hovav, Malka. 2008. Lexicalized meaning and the internal structure of events. In Susan Rothstein (ed.), *Theoretical and crosslinguistic approaches to the semantics of aspect*, 13–42.

Amsterdam: John Benjamins. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1075/la.110.03hov>

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

Smith, C. (1991). *The Parameter of Aspect*. Kluwer Academic Publishers

Tenny, Carol. 1994. *Aspectual roles and the syntax-semantics interface*. Dordrecht: Springer.

DOI: <http://doi.org/10.1007/978-94-011-1150-8>

Ünal, E., Ji, Y., & Papafragou, A. (2021). From event representation to linguistic meaning. *Topics in Cognitive Science*, 13(1), 224-242.

van Hout, A. (2018). On the acquisition of event culmination. *Semantics in language acquisition*, 96-121.