THE AKTIONSART OF SPANISH REFLEXIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL VERBS

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Abstract

In this paper we argue that reflexive psychological verbs in Spanish (SRPVs), such as *aburrirse* 'bore-REFL' constitute a special subclass of stative predicate which we term BOUNDED STATE PREDICATES. Bounded state predicates entail that the onset of the state they denote falls within the reference time for the predicate. The analysis not only accounts for subtle differences between SRPVs and related *estar*+participle expressions but also lays the groundwork for explaining the otherwise puzzling fact that SRPVs are translated into English with phrases involving *get* in some cases and *be* in others.

1   Introduction

Psychological verbs, which include e.g. English *fear, frighten, disturb, worry*, have generated interest primarily because of their implications for the theory of argument structure (see among many others Belletti and Rizzi, 1988; Dowty, 1991 and more recently Ackerman and Moore, 2001 and references cited there). In this paper we address a different and equally challenging aspect of these predicates: their Aktionsart.

Although psychological predicates of the *fear* class are commonly assumed to denote states (Grimshaw, 1990; Pustejovsky, 1991, among others), there is much less consensus about the aspectual value to be assigned to those of the *frighten* type. Thus, for example, English *frighten* verbs have been argued to be achievement predicates (Van Voorst, 1992) as well as accomplishments (Tenny, 1994), while Filip (1996) has argued that they are not telic, and both Pylkkänen (2000) and Arad (1998) have argued that at least some interpretations of some members of this class in Finnish (Pylkännen) and English and Romance (Arad) are stative.

When one examines this diversity of analyses –particularly the latter ones mentioned– and the data used to support them, two things become immediately clear. First, there is no guarantee that the Aktionsart of a given verb in one language will be exactly the same as that of its most familiar translation equivalent in another: there is greater cross-linguistic variation than one might naïvely think. Second, the nature of this variation can also be more subtle than the standard Vendlerian characterization of Aktionsarten might lead one to believe. These observations indicate that, in order to arrive at a more adequate theory of Aktionsart –a better understanding of what information about event structure is encoded in natural language and how different languages encode it– more case studies of specific verb classes in specific languages are necessary.

Our goal in this paper is to undertake precisely one such case study: the class of Spanish reflexive psychological verbs (henceforth SRPVs) such as *aburrirse* 'bore-REFL' and *sorprenderse* 'surprise-REFL', which have a nominative experiencer subject and can be accompanied by an optional prepositional phrase that describes the stimulus that produces the psychological state, as illustrated in (1):

(1)   a.   Se aburrió (con la película).
                'S/he was bored (by the movie).'
        b.   Se sorprendió (por la noticia).
                'S/he was surprised (at the news).'

We will argue that these verbs are stative, much as Arad (1998) argues for one reading of experiencer object verbs in Romance. However, we will show that they denote states with a specific property not previously identified in the literature, namely that their onset is entailed to occur within the Reichenbachian reference time for the verb. For this reason, we will describe SRPVs as BOUNDED STATE PREDICATES.

The paper is organized as follows. In section 2, we present a series of tests that demonstrate that SRPVs are neither telic nor even dynamic but rather stative. We further show that the temporal properties of SRPVs pattern with those of stative stage-level predicates. In section 3, we compare SRPVs with semantically very similar *estar* + participle sentences, in order to argue that they are bounded state predicates. We compare our analysis to that of Arad (1998), in section 4. Finally, section 5 presents our conclusions.

2   SRPVs describe states which are not temporally persistent

Our argument that SRPVs denote states which are not temporally persistent proceeds in two steps. We begin by presenting a series of tests to show that they are stative, and particularly to rule out the hypothesis that they fall into the class of achievement predicates. We then present arguments that they behave like stage-level predicates as opposed to individual-level ones with respect to their temporal properties.

2.1   Tests for telicity and dinamicity

It is well known that only telic predicates can be modified by adverbials of the type *in* x time. In contrast, *for x time* adverbials combine with both process and stative predicates, but are not compatible with telic predicates except on an iterative reading or on a reading which does not entail that the event described by the predicate has finished. We observe the same behavior in Spanish for *en* ('in') and *durante* ('for') adverbials:

(2)   a.   Escribió su tesis *durante/en nueve meses.   [Eventive predicate]
                'She wrote her thesis in nine months.'
        b.   Paseó durante/*en un cuarto de hora.   [Process predicate]
                'S/he walked for an hour.'

c.   Admiró a su hermano durante/*en un año.   [Stative predicate]
       'S/he admired his/her brother for a year.'

Crucially, SRPVs combine with *durante* adverbials on a noniterative reading, and they generally resist modification by *en*, both signs of their atelic nature:

(3)   Se {aburrió/divirtió} {durante/*en} toda la tarde.   [SRPV]
       'S/he was bored/amused (continuously) during the whole afternoon.'

A second piece of evidence for the atelicity of SRPVs is their incompatibility with predicates such as *acabar* or *terminar* ('finish'), which require that their infinitival complement describe an action that can be completed:

(4)   *Ha terminado de asustarse/preocuparse.   [SRPV]
       'S/he has finished being afraid/worried.'

The examples below show that only eventive predicates can be complements of *acabar* or *terminar*; processes and states cannot:

(5)   a.   Ha acabado de pintar la baranda.   [Eventive]
          'S/he has finished painting the railing.'
     b.   *Ha terminado de acariciar al perro.   [Process]
          'S/he has finished petting the dog.'
     c.   *Ha acabado de preferir las acelgas.   [Stative]
          'S/he has finished preferring chard.'

We now show that SRPVs fail two of the most reliable tests for dynamicity in Spanish.

First, unlike dynamic predicates (whether eventive, (6a), or process-related, (6b)), and like other stative predicates, (6c), SRPVs systematically allow a nonhabitual interpretation in the simple present tense (see (7)):

(6)   a.   Su padre corta el césped.   [Eventive]   [habitual]
          'Their father cuts the grass.'
     b.   Su hermano conduce el camión.   [Process]   [habitual]
          'Their father drives the truck.'
     c.   Le gustan los hombres con barba.   [Stative]   [nonhabitual]
          'S/he likes men with beards.'

(7)   Se preocupa por el futuro de sus hijos.   [SRPV]   [nonhabitual]
       'S/he worries about the future of his/her children.'

Second, SRPVs also pattern systematically with stative predicates in the way they combine with the aspectual predicates *parar* ('stop, cease') and *dejar* ('stop, give up'). While dynamic predicates –with some minimum duration– can be complements to either *parar* or *dejar*, stative predicates are only acceptable with *dejar*:

(8)   a.   Ha parado/dejado de pintar la baranda.   [Eventive]
             'S/he has stopped painting the railing.'
    b.   ¡Para/deja ya de llorar!   [Process]
             'Stop crying already!'
    c.   Ha *parado/dejado de admirar a su hermano.   [Stative]
             'S/he has stopped admiring his/her brother.'

(9)   Ha *parado/dejado de preocuparse.   [SRPV]
    'S/he has stopped worring.'

Note that the restriction on *parar* does not involve agentivity/control; an agentless predicate such as *llover* ('to rain') combines felicitously with it: *Ha parado/dejado de llover* ('It's stopped raining').

From the tests applied in this section, summarized in the following table, we can conclude that SRPVs denote atelic, nondynamic situations; that is to say: states.

	Eventive	Process	Stative	SRPVs
en ('in') x time	yes	no	no	no
acabar/terminar ('finish')	yes	no	no	no
habitual interpretation in present	yes	yes	no	no
parar ('stop, cease')	yes	yes	no	no

However, they do not describe the same type of states as do verbs such as *temer* ('fear') or *odiar* ('hate'). SRPVs, like stage-level predicates, lack the inference of temporal persistence that *temer* and similar individual-level predicates manifest.[1]

2.2   Tests for temporal persistence

Like predicates which do not entail temporal persistence, SRPVs can restrict temporal quantification, (10), while temporally persistent stative predicates cannot, (11):

(10)   a.   {Cuando/siempre que} {se impresiona/obsesiona} por algo, se deprime.
             'When(ever) s/he obsesses about something, s/he gets depressed.'[2]

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[1] See Condoravdi (1992) and McNally (1994) for a characterization of the temporal properties of individual-level predicates in terms of an inference of temporal persistence.

[2] See the next section for comments on the translation of these examples.

b.　　　Cada vez que se asusta/enfada, empieza a llorar.
　　　　　'Every time s/he gets scared/afraid, s/he starts to cry.'

(11)　a.　　　*{Cuando/siempre que} {admira/teme} tus reacciones, se deprime.
　　　　　'When(ever) s/he admires/fears your reactions, s/he gets depressed.'
　　　b.　　　*Cada vez que odia/prefiere las películas de terror, se va del cine.
　　　　　'Every time s/he hates/prefers horror movies, s/he goes to the movies.'

SRPVs are also compatible with temporal modifiers, such as *hace unos días* ('a few days ago') or *tan pronto como* ('as soon as'), which temporally persistent stative predicates normally reject:

(12)　a.　　　Hace unos días me aburrí.
　　　　　'A few days ago I was bored.'
　　　b.　　　Tan pronto como/en cuanto se despiste, me lo dices.
　　　　　'As soon as s/he is distracted, let me know.'
　　　c.　　　Después de haberse enfadado, se sintió mejor.
　　　　　'After having been angry, s/he felt better.'

(13)　a.　　　*Hace unas semanas temió a su padre.
　　　　　'A few weeks ago s/he feared his/her father.'
　　　b.　　　*Tan pronto como/en cuanto admire a tu hermano, me lo dices.
　　　　　'As son as s/he admires your brother, let me know.'
　　　c.　　　*Después de haber detestado/preferido las acelgas, se marchó.
　　　　　'After having detested/preferred chard, s/he left.'

We also find clear differences between the two type of state predicates in other grammatical domains. As shown in the following examples, participles based on SRPVs can appear as adjunct predicates and within small clauses introduced by *con* ('with'), (14), which is not the case for temporally persistent statives, (15):

(14)　a.　　　Llegó a su casa asustado/preocupado.
　　　　　'He arrived home frightened/worried.'
　　　b.　　　Con el jefe enamorado/enfadado, no se puede trabajar.
　　　　　'With the boss in love/angry, it's impossible to work.'

(15)　a.　　　*Llegó a su casa admirado/detestado.
　　　　　'He arrived home admired/detested.'
　　　b.　　　*Con el jefe odiado/preferido, no se puede trabajar.
　　　　　'With the boss hated/preferred, it's impossible to work.'

However, perhaps the clearest divergence between SRPVs and temporally persistent stative predicates is attested with *estar* and other Spanish copular verbs. As can be

observed in (16), SRPVs are compatible with *estar*, but not with *ser*, while temporally persistent statives exhibit the opposite behavior:

(16) a. Juan {está/*es} {asustado/enfadado/preocupado}.
          'Juan is frightened/angry/worried.'
    b. Juan {*esta/es} {admirado/odiado/temido}.
          'Juan is admired/hated/feared.'

So-called pseudo-copular verbs, such as *andar* (literally, 'walk'), *quedar(se)* ('remain') or *seguir* ('continue') are governed by identical aspectual constraints as those associated with *estar*:

(17) a. Esteban {anda/sigue} {asustado/enfadado/preocupado}.
          'Esteban continues to be frightened/angry/worried.'
    b. *Esteban {anda/sigue} {admirado/odiado/temido}.
          'Esteban continues to be admired/hated/feared.'

We summarize the results of our diagnostics in the following table:

	Temporally Persistent Statives	SRPVs
Restriction over temporal quantification	no	yes
Temporal modifiers	no	yes
Adjunct predicates / *con*-clauses	no	yes
ESTAR / other copular verbs	no	yes

Thus, it is clear that SRPVs denote states which lack the inference of temporal persistence typical of individual-level predicates and in this sense have more in common with stage-level predicates. However, we will now show that they manifest specific temporal properties that other arguably stage-level predicates do not share, leading us to conclude that they constitute a well-defined proper subclass of stage-level predicate.

3   Evidence for bounded state predicates: SRPVs vs. *estar*+participle

As mentioned in the introduction, the data show that SRPVs are what we will call bounded state predicate. We define 'bounded state predicate' in (18):

(18) A bounded state predicate denotes a state whose onset is lexically entailed to coincide with or be posterior to the onset of the reference time for the predicate.

Bounded state predicates contrast with other stative predicates insofar as the event time of the latter is generally assumed to include their reference time or at least to permit this possibility. This contrast becomes evident when we compare the interpretation of SRPVs and counterpart *estar*+participle sentences, which are generally considered to be stage-level (see e.g. Fernández Leborans, 1999; see also Marín, 2004 for a different characterization which is compatible for present purposes); it provides evidence for the claim that SRPVs are indeed bounded state predicates.

Consider the sentences in (19):

(19) a.   Los niños se aburren.
      b.   Los niños están aburridos.
      c.   The children are bored.

Both of these sentences can be translated as in (19c), leading to the impression that (19a) and (19b) are synonymous. However, when these expressions are embedded in contexts which make the reference time explicit, interpretive differences emerge. We consider two such contexts here: 1) when the SRPV or *estar*+participle appears in the main clause in a generic *cuando* ('when') or *siempre que* ('whenever') sentence, and 2) when an SRPV or *estar*+participle is modified by a simple temporal modifier.

We begin with generic *cuando/siempre que* sentences. The *cuando/siempre que* clause not only can be understood as the restriction on generic quantification over events; it also provides a reference time for the situation described by the main clause. We thus have the following prediction: if SRPVs denote bounded states, then the state they describe should be entailed to begin during the time described by the *cuando/siempre que* clause. In contrast, if *estar*+participle denotes an ordinary stage-level state, there should be no entailment that the state begin during or after the time described by the *cuando/siempre que* clause; if anything, it should be the other way around. If the event time of stative predicates is generally taken to include the reference time, we should get an implication that the state described by the *estar*+participle holds prior to the time described by the subordinate clause.

This prediction is very clearly borne out. Note first the oddness of the both the Spanish sentences in (20a) and (21a) and their English counterparts:

(20) a.   ??Cuando lo molestas, el perro está muy enfadado.
      b.   ??When you bother him, the dog is very angry.

(21) a.   ??Siempre que tiene un examen, está muy preocupado.
      b.   ??Whenever he has an exam, he is very worried.

All of these sentences are anomalous for the same reason. Such generic sentences establish a quantificational relationship between the situation described in the subordinate clause and that described by the main clause. Since the quantification is universal, the relationship can easily be inferred to be causal. But there is something wrong with the causal relationships in (20) and (21): the situations described by the

main clauses are all inferred to hold prior to the onset of the situations described in the subordinate clauses. And if this is the case, it is difficult to imagine in what sense the latter situations could be said to cause the former. This is exactly what we would expect if the main clauses describe states whose event time is inferred to include their reference time. Interestingly, this anomaly does not occur with SRPVs, as shown in (22a) and (23a).

(22)   a.   Cuando lo molestas, el perro se enfada mucho.
            'When you bother him, the dog is very angry (and the onset of anger coincides with or is after the onset of bothering).'
       b.   When you bother him, the dog gets very angry.

(23)   a.   Siempre que tiene un examen, se preocupa mucho.
            'Whenever s/he has an exam, s/he is very worried (and the onset of worry coincides with or is after having an exam).'
       b.   Whenever s/he has an exam, s/he gets very worried.

The (a) examples entail, as noted, that the onset of the states described by the SRPVs is posterior to the onset of the situations described by the *cuando*/*siempre que* clauses. As a result, nothing prevents establishing a causal relationship between the two situations of the kind excluded with *be* and *estar*+participle. Crucially, despite the fact that the (a) sentences are most naturally translated into English with nonstative *get*, as in the corresponding (b) examples, we are not forced to conclude that SRPVs are ambiguous between a stative and nonstative reading, or that they are not stative at all, hypotheses that would be inconsistent with the diagnostics we presented in section 2. Instead, the translation follows directly from the hypothesis that SRPVs denote bounded states together with the fact that English apparently lacks such a class of stative predicates, forcing a translation which preserves the temporal relationship entailed by the original but via the use of an aspectually different predicate which easily permits the inference that the state described in the original obtained.

Similar predictions are made and realized with ordinary temporal modifiers such as *hace unos días* ('a few days ago') or *mañana* ('tomorrow'). The (a) and (b) examples in the following pairs are not synonymous. When the temporal modifier combines with an SRPVs, the state described in the main clause is entailed to begin at some time after the onset of the reference time, be that time in the past or the future. In contrast, when the modifier combines with *estar*+participle, there is no such entailment –the state could start or have started either before or after the onset of the reference time.

(24)   a.   Hace unos días, me aburrí.
            'A few days ago I was bored (and that boredom began a few days ago).'
       b.   Hace unos días, estuvo/estaba aburrida.
            'A few days ago I was bored.'

(25)   a.   Esta mañana se ha enfadado durante un buen rato.

'This morning s/he was angry for a good while (and that anger began this morning).'

b.   Esta mañana ha estado enfadado/a durante un buen rato.
'This morning s/he was angry for a good while.'

(26)   a.   Mañana se aburrirá.
'Tomorrow s/he will be bored (and the anger will begin tomorrow).'

b.   Mañana estará aburrido.
'Tomorrow s/he will be bored.'

(27)   a.   Mañana se enfadará.
'Tomorrow s/he will be angry (and that anger will begin tomorrow).'

b.   Mañana estará enfadado.
'Tomorrow s/he will be angry.'

Once again, these facts are exactly what is predicted if SRPVs are bounded state predicates and *estar*+participle expressions, simple stage-level stative predicates which are silent as to the temporal properties of the states they describe.

4   Comparison with Arad (1998)

Though we have found no study which specifically addresses the Aktionsart of SRPVs,[3] it will be useful to compare our analysis to that of Arad (1998). As mentioned in the introduction, Arad posits that Romance experiencer-object psychological verbs, which are closely related to SRPVs, can be stative.[4] Though she does not give examples from

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[3] There do exist various works on the Aktionsart of psychological verbs in Spanish (e.g. Parodi and Luján, 2000 and references cited there), but these, like Arad's study, systematically address nonreflexive variants (e.g. *preocupar*, *aburrir*). Although one would expect the reflexive and nonreflexive variants of a given verb to share aspectual properties, the existence of an accusative/dative case alternation in the nonreflexive forms complicates matters considerably, and has motivated our decision to limit the present study to the reflexive form. For reasons of space, our discussion of other analyses focuses on Arad's study, as it is the only one even remotely compatible with the basic data presented in section 2.

[4] Arad's analysis is inspired in Pylkkänen's analysis of Finnish psychological verbs, first presented in 1997 and then published as Pylkkänen (2000). Pylkkänen divides these verbs into four classes, including causative "stage level" statives (i) and inchoative nonstatives (ii):

(i)   Hyttset   inho-tta-vat   Mikko-a.   (Pylkkänen, 2000, (1b))
     mosquitos.NOM   findDisgusting-caus-3PL   Mikko-PAR
     'Mikko finds mosquitos disgusting.'

(ii)   Mikko   viha-stu-i   uutisi-sta.   (Pylkkänen, 2000, (2a))
     Mikko.NOM   anger-INCHOATIVE-3SG.PAST   news-ELA
     'Mikko became angry because of the news.'

It is clear that SRPVs are not directly analogous to verbs exemplified in (i) as they lack a causative component. They seem more to resemble the class exemplified in (ii). Unfortunately, Pylkkänen provides no argumentation that this latter class of verb is nonstative; the only observation she makes concerning the semantics of these putative inchoative nonstative verbs is that the stimulus argument must be eventive, as (iii) shows. This is not true for SRPVs, as illustrated in (iv):

Spanish, our understanding of her analysis is that she would consider it to cover examples such as the following:

(28) a. Tu comportamiento le molesta a Martín.
          'Your behavior bothers Martín.'
      b. Aquel profesor me aburre.
          'That professor bores me.'

Arad associates this reading with three characteristics. First, she claims that such states manifest a general absence of control: "[S]omething inherent to the stimulus, outside its control, […] triggers a particular mental state in the experiencer […] Similarly, the experiencer cannot control the mental state which the stimulus triggers in it." (Arad, page 4 of the manuscript version). Second, Arad maintains that there is no change of state in the experiencer, stating "[t]he stative reading […] only asserts that the experiencer is at a specific mental state as long as she perceives the stimulus (or has it on her mind) […]" (*ibid.*). Third, the state is considered to hold only as long as the stimulus is present: "On the stative reading the stimulus is an inherent part of the event of mental state: the existence of the state depends on it […] this state disappears along with the stimulus" (*op. cit.*, pp. 5-6). Thus, setting aside the possible habitual reading, (28a) would be claimed to entail that Martín is bothered as soon as and only as long as he perceives or thinks about the hearer's behavior. Arad suggests that this stative reading for an example such as the English (29) would be represented logically as in (30) (*op. cit.*, footnote 4; we have cleaned up her formalization slightly and added the last conjunct concerning the temporal coextensiveness of the two events in accord with Arad's comments in this footnote):

(29) Blood sausage disgusts Nina.

(30) $\exists t[t=now \wedge \exists e[perception(e) \wedge perceiver(e, Nina) \wedge perceived(e, blood\ sausage) \wedge hold(e,t) \wedge \exists e'[feel\text{-}disgusted(e') \wedge experiencer(e', Nina) \wedge stimulus(e', blood\ sausage) \wedge hold(e',t) \wedge Cause(e,e') \wedge \forall t'[hold(e,t') \leftrightarrow hold(e',t')]]]]]$

This set of characteristics is only partially shared by SRPVs. We have argued that SRPVs are not telic and therefore cannot denote a change of state, even though this change is made very salient by the fact that the onset of the state is entailed to occur within the verb's reference time. Thus, on this point SRPVs conform to Arad's characterization of object-experiencer verbs.

(iii) ??Maija   viha-stu-i   Jussi-sta.
       M.NOM   anger-INCHOATIVE-PAST   Jussi-ELA
       'Maija became angry because of Jussi.'

(iv) Juan se preocupa por su madre.
      'Juan worries about his mother.'

In contrast, both the generalized absence of control and the temporal coextensiveness of the stimulus and the mental state are stated too strongly to apply to SRPVs. While it is certainly the case that sentences containing SPRVs do not entail deliberate action on the part of the stimulus, nor deliberate control over the mental state on the part of the experiencer, they do not appear exclude such control, either. For example, it would not make much sense to utter (31), which is felicitous both before and after the hearer has gotten angry, if the speaker did not presume that the hearer (i.e., the experiencer) could exert some control over being in the mental state.

(31)   No te enfades.
        'Don't be angry.'

Similarly, the stimulus can be an individual who acts volitionally to produce the state described by the verb, as (32) shows:

(32)   Cuando el hijo de Félix quería que su padre le hiciera más caso, se puso a salir
        por la noche hasta las tantas, a tomar drogas, y a buscar problemas con todo el
        mundo hasta que, por fin, Félix se preocupó por él.
        'When Felix's son wanted his father to pay more attention to him, he began to
        stay out late at night, take drugs, and get into trouble with everyone until, finally,
        Felix (began to) worry about him.'

We are therefore inclined to conclude that rather than insisting that lack of control is entailed, perhaps the intuition Arad intends to convey is something that simply follows from the fact that the verbs in question denote states. Since states are not dynamic, the final clause in (32) cannot in and of itself entail that Felix's son has done anything to cause the mental state, though it is compatible with the son voluntarily being the stimulus for the state. Since volition in and of itself is not dynamic, there is no inherent incompatibility with being a participant in a state voluntarily.

Where Arad's claims regarding the semantics of psychological verbs most diverge from our observations concerning SPRVs is on the question of the temporal relation between the perception of the stimulus and the existence of the mental state. We see no reason that SPRVs should necessarily carry any temporal restriction beyond that described in the previous section. If it were entailed that the mental state should cease upon the disappearance of the stimulus, utterances like (33) should be contradictory, but they are not:

(33)   Esta mañana se ha enfadado por un comentario tonto, y se ha mantenido
        enfadado durante todo el día.
        'This morning s/he was angry over a silly comment, and s/he's stayed angry all
        day.'

Arad explicitly links this temporal coextensiveness condition to the claim that the psychological verbs in question do not describe changes of state:

> I take […] the existence of a state which holds independently to be part of the definition of "change of state." On the stative reading the stimulus induces a state in the experiencer, but this state disappears along with the stimulus. There is thus triggering of a state, but no change of state. Note also that both the stative reading and the non-stative reading are causatives […] The type of causation is different in each case: one is an active causation, causing a change of state, the other is stative causation, or triggering a concomitant state. (*op. cit.*, p. 6)

Let us set aside the trivial fact that SPRVs and the verbs Arad discusses describe relations between individuals, and that, strictly speaking, such a relation (here, by hypothesis, a state) cannot hold if the stimulus in the relation ceases to be the object of the mental state. Arad's claim is intended to imply that, if (35) denotes the sort of state she describes, then the subject's anger must subside as soon as the silly comment has been made. But both intuition and the felicity of (35) indicate that this is not the case.

Nonetheless, Arad's claim leads us to ask what makes it possible for a sentence like (35) be true. (35) can only be true if anger is an emotion which we can ascribe to an individual even if the cause of the emotion is not perceptible to him/her or perhaps to anyone. This, in turn, is only possible if we can associate anger with a certain set of internally or externally observable physical and/or psychological properties. The extent to which the different states described by psychological predicates have this characteristic is unclear to us and is a matter which we will have to leave for future investigation. The question we wish to address here is: Is this characteristic linked in any deep way to the Aktionsart of psychological predicates, as Arad's comments might suggest?

On the surface, the answer would appear to be no. We can find no logical reason why we could not have a verb which denotes an event of a stimulus causing an experiencer to become angry, or one which denotes the anger relation between a stimulus and an experiencer, with or without the entailment that the anger cease to hold once the stimulus disappears. The connection in this case between the nature of the mental state and the Aktionsart of related psychological predicates seems loose at best.

Summarizing, in this section we have examined Arad's claims concerning the semantics of statively interpreted experiencer-object psychological verbs and have shown that SPRVs do not manifest all of the properties she attributes to such verbs. Given the obvious morphological relation between SPRVs and experiencer-object verbs in Spanish, we might have expected there to be a closer match between the semantics of SPRVs and the properties Arad describes. We conclude that a closer examination of statively-interpreted experiencer-object verbs in Spanish is clearly necessary.

5   Conclusion

In this paper we have demonstrated that reflexive psychological verbs in Spanish (SRPVs) such as *aburrirse* ('bore-REFL') and *sorprenderse* ('surprise-REFL') describe stative situations, contrary to what has generally been claimed in the literature about similar classes of verbs in other languages. Moreover, SRPVs manifest specific

temporal properties (namely, the fact that their onset is entailed to occur within the reference time of the verb) that other arguably stage-level predicates such as *estar*+participle constructions do not share, leading us to conclude that they constitute a well-defined proper class of stage-level predicate, which we have called BOUNDED STATE PREDICATES.

The entailment concerning the onset of bounded state predicates has allowed us to explain the difference in felicity between SPRVs and related *estar*+participle expressions in certain contexts, as well as the fact that SRPVs are translated into English with phrases involving *get* in some cases and *be* in others. In addition, our analysis captures those aspects of Arad's (1998) characterization of stative psychological predicates that we consider to be empirically justified for SPRVs, without committing us to other aspects which are not applicable.

Our proposal has at least two consequences for the development of a general theory of Aktionsart. First, we have provided a new example of why a more detailed and empirically satisfactory typology of situations is necessary. Second, our case study emphasizes the fact that even relatively closely related languages can manifest significant aspectual differences, underscoring the need for additional studies of the sort we have undertaken here.

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