Temporal reasoning: creating cohesive contexts with aspectual adverbs.

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New questions for temporal reasoning

• Interaction of aspectual adverbs and determiners.
  (1)  a. * Every child was not singing anymore.
        b. No child was still singing.

• Interaction aspectual adverbs and temporal adverbs.
  (2)  John was already living in NYC before 9/11.
        => John was still living in NYC after 9/11.

• Indexical inferences.
  (3)  There are \([F \text{ already three}]\) students here => Students are coming
‘Existential contexts’ accept only weak DPs:
(4) a. There are no new students in this class.
   b.* There are all new students in this class.

A determiner D is weak = def. if for every model and subset A, if D(A) is defined then neither DAA nor ~ DAA.

$\Rightarrow$ Det (N) is a/are N must be contingent
$\Rightarrow$ truth is dependent upon choice of model.

(5)
a. Every child is a child. $\checkmark$
   b. Some children are children. $\sqrt{\checkmark}$
   c. Both children are children. $\checkmark$
   d. No children are children.
Existential presuppositions of the positive polarity aspectual adverbs *already* and *still* project into the common ground, create *current* existential context.

(6) a. * There was every child not singing anymore.
    b. There was no child still singing.

(7) a. Some children **had been** singing. (prior to current context)
    b. Some children **were** singing. (within current context)

(8) a. * Every child was not singing anymore/no longer singing.
    b. No child was still singing.

(9) a. There were no longer (any) children singing. All you could hear was the countertenor.
    b. There were still children singing along with the countertenor.
The paraphrases of (8) with the presupposed information in the restrictive relative clauses in (10ab) in perfect tense are unproblematic for either kind DP.

(10)  a. Every student who had been singing was no longer singing.  
     b. No student who had been singing was still singing.

Projection of presuppositions and restrictive relative clauses differ importantly in constraining the current context.
With referential temporal adverbial phrases, aspectual adverbs support temporal and causal inferences, that have much in common with scalar implicatures, but do not seem \textit{cancellable}, only \textit{corrigible}.

(11) a. Jane was already living in NYC before 9/11.  
    b. $\Rightarrow$ Jane was still living in NYC after 9/11.  
    c. $\Rightarrow$ 9/11 did not make Jane leave NYC.

(12) a. Jane was no longer living in NYC after 9/11.  
    b. $\Rightarrow$ Jane was still living in NYC before 9/11  
    c. $\Rightarrow$ 9/11 made Jane leave NYC.
Presuppositions of positive aspectual adverbs also account for the indexical inferences in (13).

(13) a. There are \( [F \text{ still three}] \) students here. \( \Rightarrow \) Students are leaving
b. There are \( [F \text{ already three}] \) students here \( \Rightarrow \) Students are coming

With the decreasing *no longer* this inferred information must be added as assumption before conclusions about the number of students in the class can be derived, (no future polarity transition within the current context).

(14) a. There are no longer two students in this class.
   \( \Rightarrow \) - if students are leaving \( \Rightarrow \) max one student left over in class
   - if students are coming \( \Rightarrow \) more than two students in class
b. Two students are no longer in this class.

Raising the DP to subject, cf. (14b), makes the DP definite, anaphoric, i.e. not in focus.
Aspectual adverbs modifying weak DPs are constrained in monotonicity, unless blending to a meta-temporal interpretation as counterfactual.

(15) a. Already/?*still three students have arrived.  
    => students are on their way  
    b. Three students have already/*still arrived.

    c. Still/?*already three more students have left.  
       => students are leaving  
    d. Three students have still left.
Focus on aspectual adverbs indicates the speaker’s judgments regarding the relative speed of a described event, leading to new monotonicity constraints.

(16) a. *Few people are al[READY] leaving.
   b. There are only (a) few people who are already leaving.
   c. A few people are already leaving.

(17) a. *Nobody is STILL here
   b. There STILL is nobody here
   c. *Everyone is not here anymore
Selected references

