

The existence of the local and the global (im)perfective aspect in Polish: Evidence from the embedded clause of the *zanim* ('before') and the *dopóki* ('until') constructions

Polish, as a language with morphological aspect, accepts verb pairs with the same or closely related lexical meaning and a different aspectual meaning regarding both (im)perfectivity and (a)telicity. The combination of the features [ $\pm$  perfective] and [ $\pm$  telic] is expressed through affixation or morphological change on the verb stem. Since there is no 1:1 relationship between (im)perfectivity and (a)telicity in Polish, it is necessary to distinguish between these two phenomena while investigating the category of aspect.

In my presentation, I will show that although the verb in the embedded clause is marked as perfective, the event it refers to is described from the imperfective perspective. This observation serves as evidence for the claim that the local (im)perfective aspect in Polish<sup>1</sup> needs to be distinguished from the global (im)perfective aspect<sup>2</sup>. It further shows that aspectual marking does not stay in 1:1 relationship with aspectual meaning.

As exemplified in (3), the verb in the subordinate clause is marked as perfective, however, the event is described from the imperfective perspective. This may be due to the meaning of the adverbial *zanim* 'before', which refers to an ongoing event and creates a temporal-conditional relation between the change of state which applies to this event and the validity of the event in the matrix clause. This relation can be paraphrased as follows: As long as the event described in the embedded clause holds (that is, as long as the change of state expressed through the perfective verb has not been achieved), the event given in the matrix clause also holds. As shown in examples (1)-(3), the only acceptable combination of the features marked on the verb in the embedded *zanim*-clause is **perfective telic**. Thus, in the *zanim*-construction there are two imperfective situations which are marked globally within the embedded clause and locally (or globally) within the matrix clause. Similar behaviour can be observed in examples (4)-(6). The event of eating in the embedded clause is described from the imperfective perspective, but the verb needs to be marked as perfective. As in examples (1)-(3), this is also due to the conditional relation established by the adverbial *dopóki* 'until' between the events in the embedded and the embedding clause.

The aim of the talk is to present a detailed analysis of the data and to show that the (im)perfective aspect marked locally in the embedded clauses in Polish can be distinct from the actual global aspectual meaning. It can be assumed that the (im)perfectivity is not limited to the aspectual verb pairs.

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<sup>1</sup> **Local (im)perfective aspect** = Almost every verb in Polish is obligatorily marked as [ $\pm$  perfective]. Because here the (im)perfectivity is marked directly on the verb stem, I will call this type of aspect the **local (im)perfective aspect**.

<sup>2</sup> **Global (im)perfective aspect** = The actual (im)perfective perspective the event is described from can be distinct from the local aspect of the verb. I will call this type of aspect the **global (im)perfective aspect**.

- (1) *Zanim \*startuj-esz* *w maratonie, mus-isz*  
 before start.IPFV.ATELIC-2SG.PRS in marathon must-2SG.PRS  
*porządnie jeść.*  
 properly eat.IPFV.ATELIC
- (2) *Zanim \*po-startuj-esz* *w maratonie, mus-isz*  
 before PFV.ATELIC-start-2SG.PRS in marathon must-2SG.PRS  
*porządnie jeść.*  
 properly eat.IPFV.ATELIC
- (3) *Zanim wy-startuj-esz* *w maratonie, mus-isz*  
 before PFV.TELIC-start-2SG.PRS in marathon must-2SG.PRS  
*porządnie jeść.*  
 properly eat.IPFV.ATELIC  
 'Before you run a marathon, you must eat properly.'
- (4) *Dopóki nie \*j-esz,* *nie odejdz-iesz*  
 until NEG eat.IPFV.ATELIC-2SG.PRS NEG leave.PFV.TELIC-2SG.PRS  
*od stołu.*  
 from table
- (5) *Dopóki (trochę) nie ?po-j-esz<sup>3</sup>,* *nie odejdz-iesz*  
 until (a bit) NEG PFV.ATELIC-eat-2SG.PRS NEG leave.PFV.TELIC-2SG.PRS  
*od stołu.*  
 from table  
 'Until you have eaten (a bit), you won't leave the table.'
- (6) *Dopóki nie z-j-esz,* *nie odejdz-iesz*  
 until NEG PFV.TELIC-eat-2SG.PRS NEG leave.PFV.TELIC-2SG.PRS  
*od stołu.*  
 from table  
 'Until you have eaten everything, you won't leave the table.'

## References

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<sup>3</sup> ? indicates awkward construction.