



Lithuanian
events & entities:
the rise of
evaluative
interpretations

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3 Roadmap

Setting the stage

1. Background assumptions
2. Data puzzle
3. Research questions

Forging an account

5. Theoretical toolkit
6. Proposal

Observing how predictions play out

- Interactions with Number
Head~Modifier distinction
Lexical constraints
Pragmatic maleability
7. Conclusions. Further questions

Setting the stage

5 Dimensions of language, painted with a big brush

Foolen 2015, Potts 2005

- Knowledge transmission [information structure]
- Source of knowledge & level of veracity [evidentiality]
- Speaker certainty [modality]
- **Emotions [expressivity]**

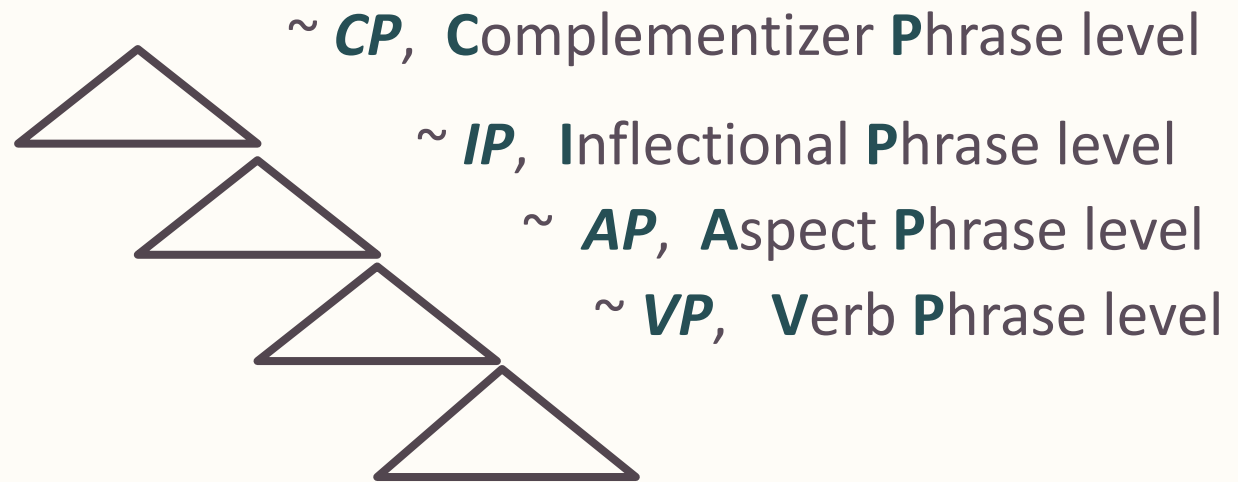
6 So where does expressivity nest?

Well, everywhere

- Phonetics [=physical reality of sounds] babytalk palatalization Kochetov & Alderete (2011)
- Phonology [=sub-conscious view of sounds] *Darth Vader vs Barth Fader* Myers Schulz et al (2013)
- Morphology [=word structure] diminutives, reduplication
- Syntax [=word structure] *What, me worry?* Incredulity response Lambrecht 1990
- Semantics [=meaning] *kraut, damn*

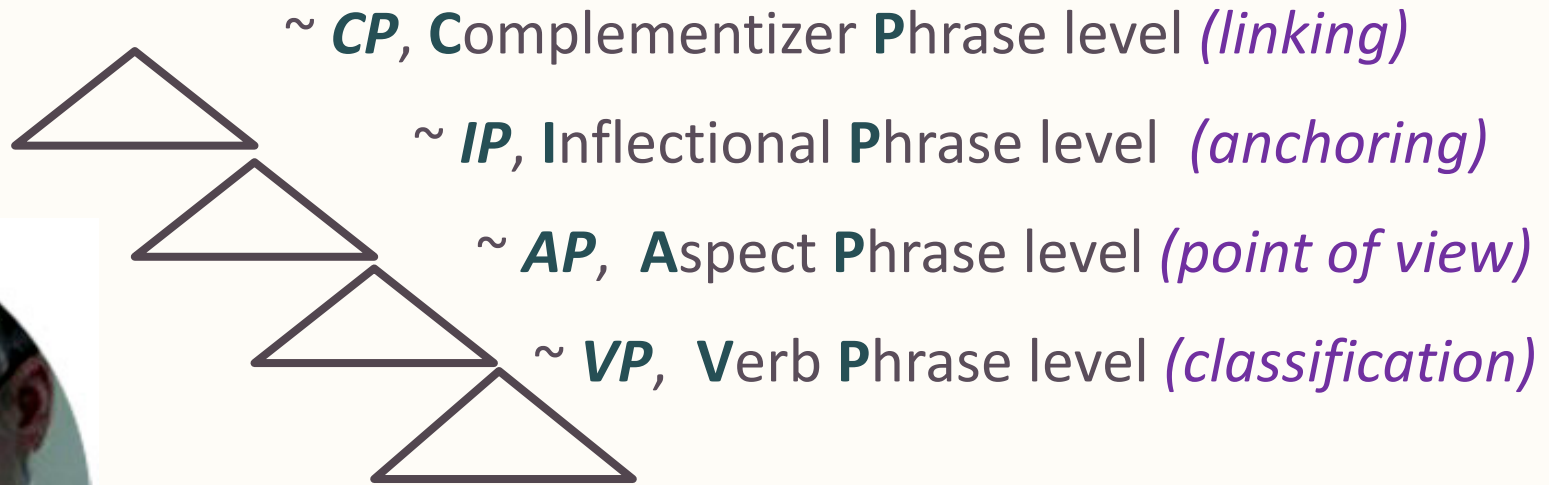
Note these are just a few examples, and only from English

7 Universal Base



8 Universal Spine Hypothesis

USH Wiltschko 2017



Data puzzle

10 Data puzzle: a quick peek N domain

(1) Visiškai girtas 17-metis kaimo **banditėlis** mušė vaikus ir moteris.
'A completely drunk 17-year old village **wanna-be criminal** was beating up women and children'

www.DELFI.lt 2009-08-13 (title of an article)

(2) **Banditėliai** tarpusavyje santykius aiškinosi, toks tokj ir nušovė.
'**Wanna-be criminals** were sorting things out, and shot each other, fittingly.'

www.vilniausdiena.lt 2019-05-24 (commentary on an article)

11 Data puzzle: a quick peek V domain

(3) Ji nemėgo būti dėmesio centre, o savo indėliui į mano knygas neteikdavo reikšmės – sakydavo, kad mano darbas svarbesnis, o ji tik **paišinėja**.

‘She resented being the center of attention, and did not assign any value to her contributions to my book – she’d say that my work was more relevant while she just **doodles** here and there.’

www.baltoslankos.lt/media/images/istraukos/9786094791253.pdf

(4) Dar turiu "tos vienos merginos, kur pastoviai **paišinėja** kraujus ir kūno dalis" reputaciją.

‘I also have a reputation of a gal ‘who constantly **doodles** blood and body parts’.

<https://www.wattpad.com/271286386-ra%C5%A1ytoj%C5%B3-kampelis-ra%C5%A1ytoja-dasha-the-muggle>

12 Research questions

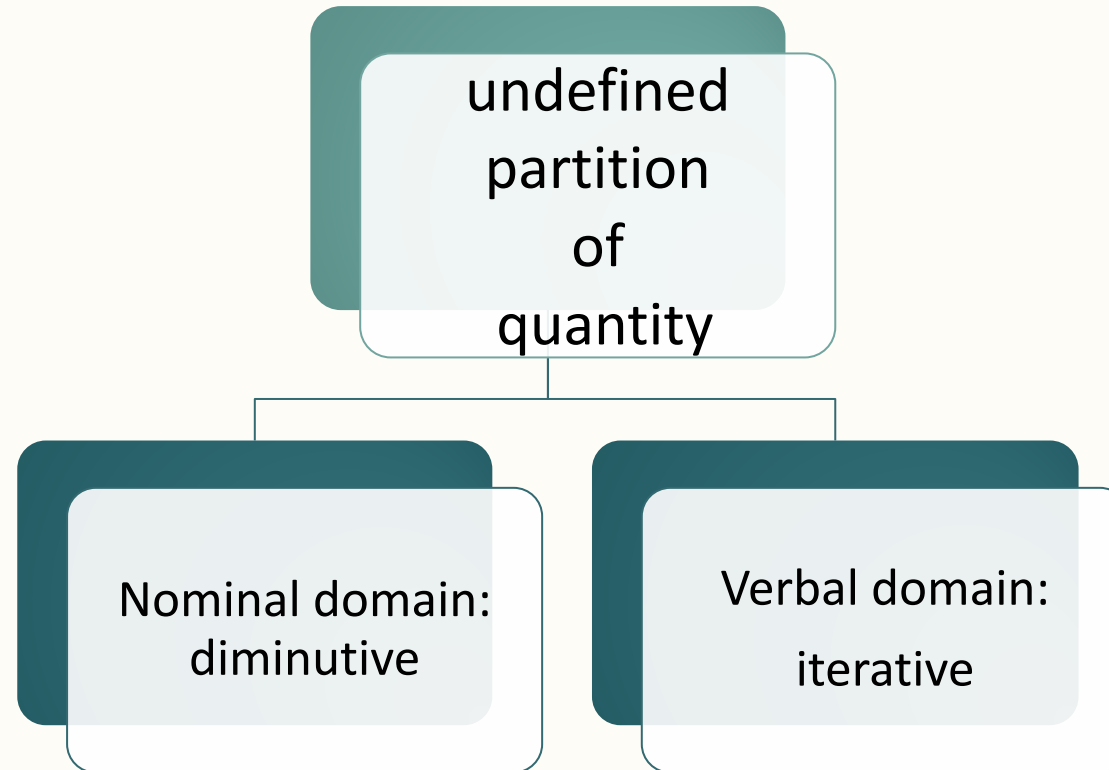
- (i) How to justify the **coexistence** of
positive and negative evaluative overtones?
- (ii) How to give a **unified account** for evaluative interpretations across
distinct lexical categories?

Forging an account

14 Intuitive, informal proposal

inspired by Tovená 2011

‘when small is many in the event domain’



15 Theoretical toolkit

Borer 2005, Julien 2007, Ott 2011, Svenonius 2008, Tovena 2011,
Wiltschko 2006

- Diminutive suffixes share the unifying feature: a reduction in size effect on the base they attach to

16 Theoretical toolkit

Borer 2005, Julien 2007, Ott 2011, Svenonius 2008, Tovena 2011, Wiltschko 2006

- Diminutive suffixes share the unifying feature: a reduction in size effect on the base they attach to
- Otherwise, diminutive types & behavior vary cross-linguistically and within language: they can
 - ...be heads or modifiers
 - ...be category specific or category neutral
 - ...be means of nominalizing derivation or functional expression of N unit or classifier
 - ...have some formal features (e.g., gender) or lack them
 - ...allow or disallow stacking and with classifiers of higher order
 - ...be phonologically prominent (stressed) or not
 - Etc...

17 Theoretical toolkit

Borer 2005, Julien 2007, Ott 2011, Svenonius 2008, Tovena 2011,
Wiltschko 2006

- Iterative suffixes share the unifying feature: a multiplication of event effect on the base they attach to

18 Theoretical toolkit

Borer 2005, Julien 2007, Ott 2011, Svenonius 2008, Tovena 2011,
Wiltschko 2006

- Iterative suffixes share the unifying feature: a multiplication of event effect on the base they attach to
- Otherwise, iterative types & behavior vary cross-linguistically and within language: they can
 - ...be heads or modifiers
 - ...be distributional or not
 - ...have Aktionsart effect or not
 - ...be phonologically prominent (stressed) or not
 - Etc...

19 Proposal specific for Lithuanian

(still work in progress)

N diminutive **-ėl-/-el-**, and **V** iterative **-inė-** ...

...are incarnations of **an abstract quantifier** that reduces an entity for N and introduces subevents for V

...take two distinct syntactic guises: **head or modifier**

...have **no inherent evaluative** content

20 Proposal specific for Lithuanian

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Prediction: if so, we will see quantifier-like behavior in interactions with number

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Prediction: if so, we will find pragmatic malleability

23 Proposal specific for Lithuanian

(still work in progress)

- **N** diminutive **-él-/-el-**, and **V** iterative **-inè-** ...
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Prediction: if so, we will distinguish between modified and derived instances

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Observing predictions play out
(still work in progress)



25

- i. Interactions with Number
- ii. Head~modifier distinction
- iii. Lexical constraints
- iv. Pragmatic malleability

Walking
through
predictions
(work in progress)



26 Abstract quantifier: interactions with Number, **N** domain

- Unlike in other languages, **N suffix -el/èl-** introduces reduction in entity but does not affect the mass/count properties of the base N

- a. Daug duonos suvalgëm. b. Daug duonelès_{DIM} suvalgëm. *Mass*
'We ate a lot of bread.' 'We ate a lot of bread.'
- c. Vienas daržas – ne vargas. d. Vienas darželis_{DIM} - ne vargas. *Count*
'One garden – not a chore.' 'One flower garden – not a chore.'

27 Abstract quantifier: interactions with Number, **V** domain

- Like in other languages, **V -inē-** introduces multiplicity of events and can affect Aktionsart of the base V

a. Kart kartēmis rašau.

‘I write from time to time.’

b. Kart kartēmis raš**inē**ju_{ITER}. *Activity*

‘I write this and that from time to time.’

c. *Sēdi iš vietas j vietā.

‘Sit from one place to another.’

d. Sēd**inē**ja iš vietas j vietā. *State → Activity*

‘Move seat from one place to another.’

Example (d) from www.lkz.lt



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- i. Interactions with Number
- ii. Head~modifier distinction
- iii. Lexical constraints
- iv. Pragmatic malleability

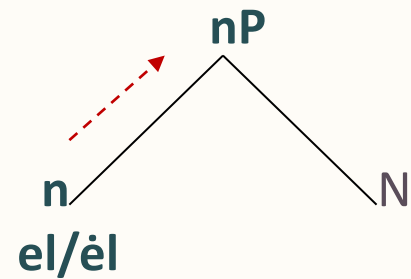
Walking
through
predictions

(work in progress)

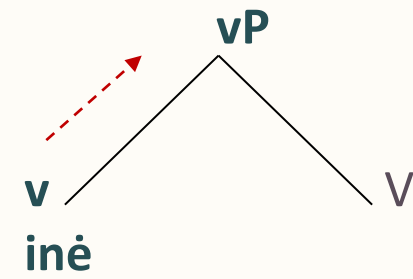


29 Syntactic structure for heads

Head for N



Head for V



30 Head/modifier distinction N & V domain

N

daržas → darželis;
'vegetable garden' (i) 'flower garden'
(ii) 'kindergarten'

31 Head/modifier distinction

N & V domain

N

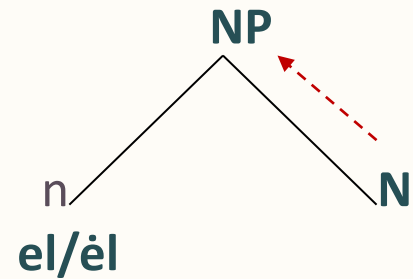
daržas → darž**elis**;
'vegetable garden' (i) 'flower garden'
(ii) 'kindergarten'

V

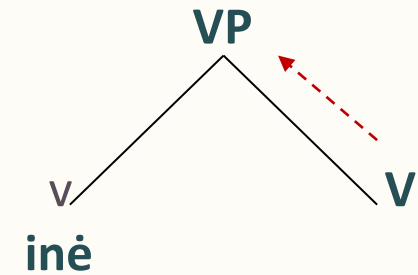
blusa → blus**inēti**;
'flea' (i) 'to catch fleas';
(ii) 'to work slowly';
(iii) 'to nitpick'

32 Syntactic structure for modifiers

Modifier for N



Modifier for V



33 Head/modifier distinction N & V domain

N

agurkas
'cucumber'

→ agurk**elis**
'small cucumber'

vaikas
'child'

→ vaik**elis**
'kiddie'

34 Head/modifier distinction N & V domain

N

agurkas
'cucumber'

→ agurk**elis**
'small cucumber'


vaikas
'child'

→ vaik**elis**
'kiddie'

V

griauti → griov**in**ėti
'to demolish' 'to demolish lightly,
repeatedly'

kalti → kal**in**ėti
'to hammer' 'to chisel'

- 
- i. Interactions with Number
 - ii. Head~modifier distinction
 - iii. Lexical constraints
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Walking
through
predictions

(work in progress)



36 Lexical constraints

- Morphemes **-èl-/-el-**, **-inè-** lack **inherent evaluative** connotations
- If they had inherent evaluative connotations, these would remain stable
- Only the quantification effect remains stable, while interpretation is an emergent quality
- Thus, the evaluative effects are epiphenomenal and emerge when
 - (i) the suffixes interact with particular lexical bases
 - (ii) in particular pragmatic contexts (to be addressed next)

37 Lexical constraints: sensitivity to base semantics

- Pejorative N
with [+ human], [+ ethnic] class where diminutivization is unexpected
- a. ‘Nors žydelis, geras buvo žmogus.’
‘Even though a Jew_{DIM}, he was a good man.’
- b. ‘Ot, protelis – kas gi verda kiaušinius be vandens!’
‘No brain_{DIM} whatsoever – who boils eggs without water!’

38 Lexical constraints: sensitivity to base semantics


– Pejorative V

with [- subevent] [+dynamic] V class where subevent is unexpected

a. Trumpas kartais paskaitinėja FTB ataskaitas.

‘Trump sometimes browses_{ITER} through FBI reports.’

Lit.: ‘Trump sometimes reads_{ITER} through FBI reports.’

- 
- i. Interactions with Number
 - ii. Head~modifier distinction
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39

Walking
through
predictions

(work in progress)



40 Empirical observation, N domain

- Suffix **èl-/-el-** consistently provides a diminutive meaning
- A particular pragmatic interpretation – neutral, positive, modest, pejorative - depends on
 - (i) base of the word (just discussed); (ii) discourse context

41

Pragmatic malleability **N** suffix:
neutral, positive, modest, pejorative

a. Taigi, ašara nėra vien sūrus vandenėlis. Sveiką ašarą sudaro trys sluoksniai: gleivinis, vandeninis ir riebalinis.

‘Thus, tears are not just salty water_{DIM}. A healthy tear has three layers: mucus, water and fat.

<https://www.moteris.lt/lt/sveikata/g-38408-akiu-sveikata-issaugoti-pades-nanotechnologijos>

42

Pragmatic malleability **N** suffix:
neutral, **positive**, modest, pejorative

a. Kai gerti norisi, tai ir vandenėlis skanus.

‘When one is thirsty, even the water_{DIM} is tasty.’

b. Lyginant su sūriausia Žemės kūdra, Negyvoji jūra – tyras vandenėlis.

‘If compared to the saltiest pond on Earth, the Dead Sea is pure water_{DIM}.’

<https://www.delfi.lt/mokslas/mokslas/lyginant-su-suriausia-zemes-kudra-negyvoji-jura-tyras-vandanelis.d?id=60655019>

43

Pragmatic malleability **N** suffix:
neutral, positive, **modest**, pejorative

a. Taigi, kai kada ir mūsų samprotavimai yra toks vandenėlis, kuriame nerasi peno ir džiaugsmo širdims, priešingai nei sakoma psalmėje.

‘Thus, at times our musings do not hold water_{DIM}, lacking in substance and joy, in contrast to the psalm[text]’

<http://www.kunigas.lt/praskiestas-vynas-xx-eilinis-sekmadienis/>

44

Pragmatic malleability **N** suffix: neutral, positive, modest, **pejorative**

a. Visiškai nesijaučia apynių, skonis – tarsi chemija ir vanden**ėlis**!

‘There is no flavor of hops, the flavor is only chemistry and water_{DIM}!’

<https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/verslas/4/15204/kaimo-aludaris-apie-dabartini-alu-birzgalas>

b. Vanden**ėliu** biržiečiai vadina nelogiškas kalbas, straipsnius, teisinius normatyvinius aktus ir kitokius negyvenimiškus skystim**ėlius**.

‘Water_{DIM} is what the inhabitants of Biržai call speeches, normative acts and all other “watered_{DIM} down” documents that lack in logic.’

45 Empirical observation, V domain

- Suffix **-inè-** consistently provides an iterative meaning
- **Note** at times, distributive meaning is also available. As it does not affect the issue at hand, we set this question aside for the time being
- A particular pragmatic interpretation – neutral, positive, modest, pejorative - depends on
 - (i) base of the word (just discussed); (ii) discourse context

46

Pragmatic malleability **V** suffix: ?neutral, positive, modest, pejorative

a. Tai šj, tai tą **dirbinėju**, dykas nebūvu.

www.lkz.lt

‘I do tinker on this or that, I do not idle.’

b. Mykolas nebuvo linkęs ūkininkauti: kurį laiką šen ten **dirbinėjo** (net prekiavo), vėliau įstojo į Joniškėlio žemės ūkio mokyklą.

‘Michael was not naturally inclined to farm; having tried his hand in a variety of crafts (even trading) he got into the agricultural institute of Joniškėlis.’

https://www.google.com/search?q=dirbin%C4%97ja&ei=BR4MXfikK5LI_Qbao7eYCg&start=70&sa=N&ved=0ahUKEwi4u-qoovniAhUSZN8KHdrRDaM4PBDw0wMllwE&biw=954&bih=488

47

Pragmatic malleability **V** suffix:
neutral, positive, modest, pejorative

a. Eina kruta, kad ir paliegę, ką galėdami, **dirbinėja**... Marč, tu gi guli štai lovoje per visus pusryčius...

‘[They] press on, even though sickly, and, to the best of their capacity, work on on whatever they manage to, however little... You, daughter-in-law, just stay in bed throughout breakfast...’

<https://books.google.com/books?id=yK3XBQAAQBAJ&pg=PT55&lpg=PT55&dq=dirbin%C4%97ja&source=bl&ots=XScMwYZjhn&sig=ACfU3U06DQ0zovCpBwmv58A1lo0x2yFxuA&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwi59KTaoPniAhUqT98KHbUIDos4FBDoATAAegQICRAB#v=onepage&q=dirbin%C4%97ja&f=false>

48

Pragmatic malleability **V** suffix:
neutral, positive, modest, pejorative

a. Neseniai atsikėlė iš po ligos, bet jau pradeda **dirbinėti**. www.lkz.lt

‘[S/he] has just only recovered, and yet already tries a hand at work.’

49

Pragmatic malleability **V** suffix: neutral, positive, modest, pejorative

a. Jaunam – ypatingai nedera, juos reikia tiesiog atkirsti nuo vadinamo „politikavimo“. Bet ir suaugę atseit tegu sau ką nors abejingai **dirbinėja**...

‘This is especially inappropriate for the youngsters. They should be cut of from ‘politicking’. However, the oldies also can also be **mucking around** indifferently...’

http://www.xxiamzius.lt/numeriai/2006/01/18/liet_04.html

b. Vietoj to, kad imtų kirvį, pjūklą į rankas (na na na, kas taip dirba per Motinos dieną – aut. pastabėlė) suaugęs vyras aplink gėlytes **tupinėja**.

‘Rather than grabbing an ax or a saw (here, here, who works on a Mother’s day! – a note by the author), the grown man is **fiddling with flowers**.’

<https://www.dirgincius.com/tag/fotografija/page/11/>

50 Pragmatic malleability summary

**N domain, diminutive -èl-/-el-
contexts**

- Neutral
- Positive
- Modest

**V domain, iterative -inè-
contexts**

- Neutral
- Positive
- Modest

5.1 Born our predictions for N & V suffixes

(still work in progress)

Property	Diminutive suffix	Iterative suffix
Syntactic		
ability to serve as head/modifier	yes	yes
Semantic		
sensitivity to in interactions with number	yes	yes
sensitivity to base semantics	yes	yes
Pragmatic		
Positive/negative interpretation malleable	yes	yes

Conclusions
and
further questions

53 Conclusions

→ The **coexistence** of positive and negative evaluative overtones with diminutives and iteratives can be justified by

(i) interactions with particular bases, e.g.,

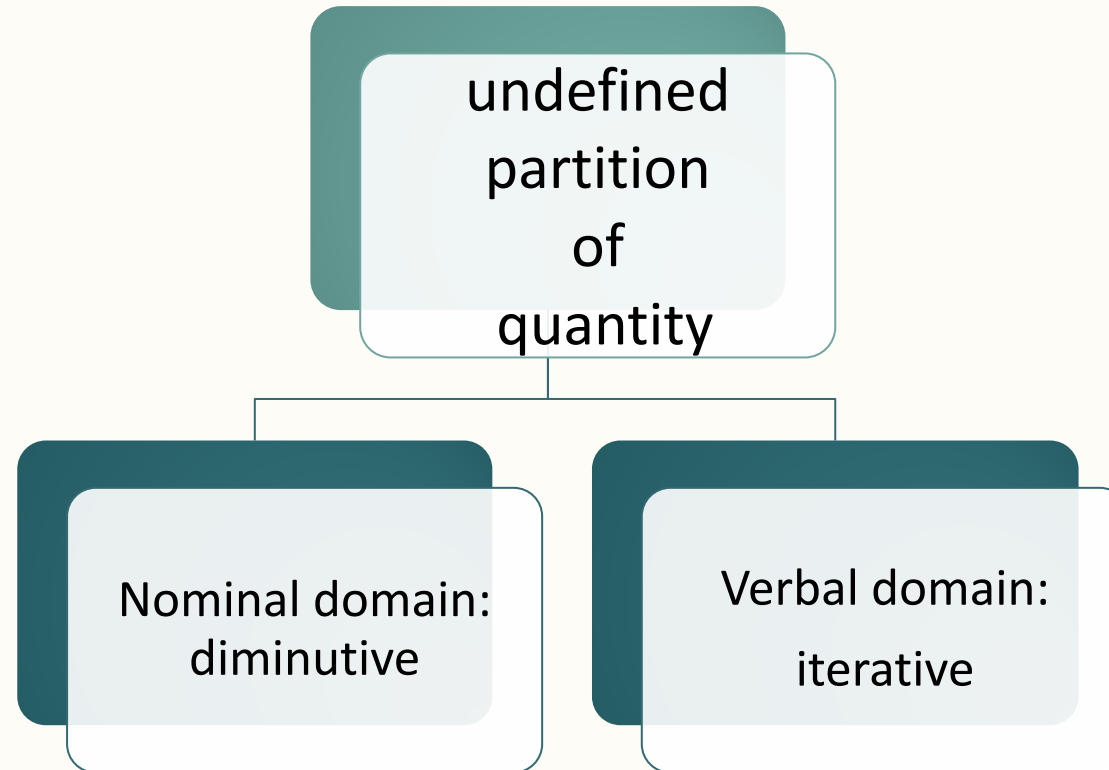
for N [+human] and/or [+ethnic] protas/prot**elis**; žydas/ žyd**elis**

for V [-subevent] draw vs. doodle

(ii) pragmatic malleability

→ A **unified account** for evaluative interpretations across distinct lexical categories becomes possible if we abandon category specific efforts and pursue a category neutral view of an abstract quantifier that applies across categories with different effects

54 And how about **A** (cf. Macienė, 2005)?



55 Further questions

- We had a story of ONE suffix from **N** and **V** domain each. What are the relationships, constraints and functions of **other** N and V affixes? How about a unified account for ALL diminutive, augmentative and collective affixes?

E.g., a. žydas → žy**delis**

diminutive, pejorative*

b. žydas → žy**dukas**

just diminutive

*[Special thanks to A.M. Jurašienė for bringing this contrast to my attention]

56 Further questions

- How about constructions *beyond affixation* (cf. Schneider, 2013)?
- What is the relationship between diminutive/iterative *modification* vs. *derivation*? What does a formal model have to say about it, if anything?

Another **N** suffix: modesty –**iuk-**, combined *with change in gender*
the special case in car ownership

57

„Su šiuo „mašiniuku“, kurį mes turime, jau artėjame prie viso potencialo, bet dar galima šiek tiek pasitempti. Kaip bus toliau, sunku pasakyti. Aš dabar jaučiuosi kaip ir suvedęs sąskaitas su Dakaru...’

‘With this “**carlet**” that we have, we are now close to reaching the potential, although there is some room for improvement. It is hard to tell what would happen next. I feel as if I have settled my accounts with Dakar...’



<https://www.lrt.lt/naujienos/sportas/10/241899/v-zala-su-savo-masiniuku-jau-priartejome-prie-viso-potencialo>

the car in question: **Toyota HiLux**

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Thank YOU!

For comments & discussion thanks to:

- *Emotion in Language* reading group
- My syntax and morphology students
- Aušra Marija Jurašienė;
- Peter Guekguezian;
- Johan Rooryck;
- Deb Rossen-Knill;
- Robert Truswell;
- Stella Wang;
- Martina Wiltschko

Appendices

60 Appendix A: diminutive N/small V event sample

N list

- agurkas → agurk**ė**lis;
- ožka → ožk**el**ė;
- sūnus → sūn**el**is;
- vaikas → vaik**el**is

V list

- griauti → griov**in**ėti
- kalti → kal**in**ėti;
- nurodyti → nurod**in**ėti
- ropoti → rop**in**ėti;
- trypti → trip**in**ėti;
- važiuoti → važ**in**ėti;

61 Appendix B: pejorative and/or modesty sample

N list

- advokatas → advokatėlis;
- protas → protelis;
- rusas → ruselis;
- viršininkas → viršininkėlis;
- žydas → žydelis;

V list

- dirbti → dirbinėti;
- išsidirbti → išsidirbinėti;
- prašyti → prašinėti;
- rašyti → rašinėti;
- skaityti → skaitinėti;
- tūpti → tūpinėti;
- valyti → valinėti

62 Appendix C: derivation sample

N list

- plyta → ply**tel**ė;
- puodas → puod**el**is;
- raštas → rašt**el**is;
- daržas → darž**el**is;

V list

- blusa → blus**in**ėti;
- dantis → dant**in**ėti;
- kampas → kamp**in**ėti
‘slankioti pakampiais’;
- velnias → veln**in**ėti ‘landžioti
kur nereikia’;

63 Appendix D: Data from other languages

64 References

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