

Expressive modifiers of manner and degree

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Introduction Many African languages have large inventories of non-productive modifiers which occur with only one or two lexical verbs. As illustrated by the following examples from Wolof [Wo] and Temne [Tm] (Niger-Congo: Atlantic), these modifiers (in bold) augment the intensity of a gradable stative predicate ('adjectival verb') (1) or the manner of realization of an eventive predicate (2).

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| <p>(1) <i>áŋ-sùp á ránt páθ.</i> [Tm]
 CL-soup COP tasteless IDEO
 'The soup is extremely tasteless.'</p> | <p>(2) <i>ś-wáθ ś dínè yéŋ.</i> [Tm]
 CL-child 3SG disappear IDEO
 'The child disappeared abruptly.'</p> |
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Prior descriptive work has classified them as *ideophonic modifiers* (IMs): salient words which vividly convey speaker-oriented sensory experiences, often through sound symbolism. Specifically, manner IMs are reported to "[augment] event intensity from the speaker's point of view" (Schaefer, 1992, 339), while degree IMs "emphasize or amplify the meaning and emotional content of the adjective they modify" (Kanu, 2008, 132). In addition to perspective dependence, I show that IMs exhibit other features linked to expressives (Potts, 2005), including descriptive ineffability, nondisplaceability, and immediacy. However, unlike pure expressives, IMs' expressive content is suppressed under negation, as in (4) and (6). (Negated IMs are somewhat odd out-of-the-blue, but acceptable in metalinguistic negation.)

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| <p>(3) <i>Ndox mi tang na jërr.</i> [Wo]
 Water DEF hot FIN.3SG IDEO
 At-issue: 'The water is really hot.'
 Expressive: 'I feel this strongly.'</p> | <p>(4) <i>Ndox mi tang-ul jërr/lool.</i>
 Water DEF hot-NEG IDEO/very
 'The water isn't really hot.'</p> |
| <p>(5) <i>Ali dagg na ko fatiit.</i> [Wo]
 Ali cut FIN.3SG 3SG IDEO
 At-issue: 'Ali cut it in one stroke.'
 Expressive: 'I feel this strongly.'</p> | <p>(6) <i>Ali dagg-ul ko fatiit/noonu.</i>
 Ali cut-NEG 3SG IDEO/DEM
 'Ali didn't cut it in one stroke/like that.'</p> |

Notice that in negated sentences, the IM can be substituted with a general intensifier or manner demonstrative without changing the meaning. Bowler and Gluckman (2017) propose that IMs are intensifiers that boost the standard for a particular dimension—so, *jërr* in (3) names a particular *way* of being hot that is not applicable in any other dimension. Similarly, a manner IM like *fatiit* (5) conveys a manner of realization specific to cutting events. This paper provides an explicit analysis of several aspects of the semantics of IMs in a unified way, including their restriction to predicate-specific manner and degree augmentations and their apparent expressive content.

Manner and degree as kinds IMs appear to narrow the extension of a lexical predicate to include only eventualities having a certain manner of execution or surpassing a high contextual standard particular to that predicate. The idea that degree and manner are *distinguished* or *default* properties of states and events, respectively, is formalized in recent work by Anderson and Morzycki (2015). They enrich the notion of kinds (Carlson, 1977) to model degrees as kinds of Davidsonian states, and manners as kinds of Davidsonian events. Using the familiar notation, $\cup k$ is the property counterpart for a kind k , while $\cap P$ is the kind corresponding to a property P . So, if e is an sloppily-executed event, then $\cup \text{SLOPPILY}(e)$, and if s is a state of being strikingly tall, then $\cup \text{STRIKINGLY}(s)$. Among the distinguished properties of states associated with gradable predicates are equivalence-kinds, which are inherently ordered and correspond to degrees in this model. The set of kinds realized by a predicate is captured using the **dist** function: if D_o is the subdomain for non-kind objects in D , then:

- (7) **dist**(o, P) is true iff P is among the distinguished properties of o

I propose that IMs denote distinguished properties of eventualities in the extension of a particular non-IM verb, explaining their non-productivity.

IMs bear mixed content Starting with the descriptive dimension, IMs behave like context-sensitive intensifiers in other languages but add a predicate-specific degree or manner augmentation: IMs take a property P true of an eventuality σ in context c and return the intersection of that property with a distinguished degree or manner of realization that is true of σ in all possible contexts (8). Thus, when the lexical predicate P denotes a gradable property, an IM boosts the standard along the dimension lexicalized by P . When P denotes a property of events, an IM modifies it intersectively to pick out This captures two features of IMs: their emphatic function, and the fact that they narrow the extension P to a set of eventualities that count as extreme for P .

$$(8) \quad [[\text{IDEO}_{des}]] = \lambda P_c \lambda \sigma. \forall c' [cRc' \rightarrow P(\sigma) \ \& \ \cup \text{IDEO}(\sigma) \text{ in } c']$$

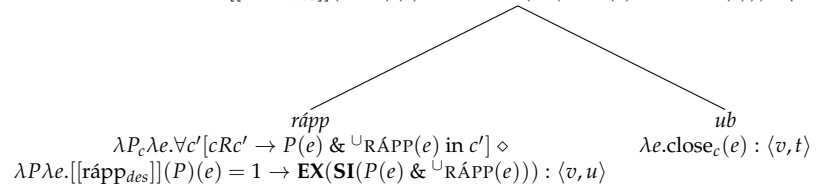
Turning to the expressive dimension, I adopt two functions introduced for expressive intensifiers by Beltrama and Bochnak (2015): **speaker.involvement (SI)**, which is a measure function from propositions to degrees of the speaker's emotional involvement in that proposition, and **extreme_c (EX)**, which is true of a degree if it counts as extremely high in a context c . To capture the factive nature of the SI function (see (3)-(4)), the ideophone must first apply to P at the descriptive level, followed by interpretation at the expressive level. The two levels of meaning are linked by the multidimensional compositional system of McCready (2010) and Gutzmann (2011) for mixed content words. This adds an additional type u for expressives, interpreted at a separate dimension (reflected by the diamond \diamond notation).

$$(9) \quad [[\text{IDEO}]] = \lambda P_c \lambda \sigma. \forall c' [cRc' \rightarrow P(\sigma) \ \& \ \cup \text{IDEO}(\sigma) \text{ in } c'] : \langle \alpha, t \rangle \diamond \\ \lambda P \lambda \sigma. [[\text{IDEO}_{des}]](P)(\sigma) = 1 \rightarrow \text{EX}(\text{SI}(P(\sigma) \ \& \ \cup \text{IDEO}(\sigma))) : \langle \alpha, u \rangle$$

Thus, an IM intersectively modifies a property of eventualities P with a particularized degree or manner of realization for P . An IM also conveys a high degree of speaker involvement in the truth of the proposition iff $P \ \& \ \cup \text{IDEO}$ is true in all contexts. The composition of an IM and lexical verb is illustrated in the tree in (10).

$$(10) \quad \text{Ub rápp ('slam closed')}$$

$$\lambda e. \forall c' [cRc' \rightarrow \text{close}(e) \ \& \ \cup \text{RÁPP}(e) \text{ in } c'] : \langle v, t \rangle \bullet \\ \lambda e. [[\text{IDEO}_{des}]](\text{close})(e) = 1 \rightarrow \text{EX}(\text{SI}(\text{close}(e) \ \& \ \cup \text{RÁPP}(e))) : \langle v, u \rangle$$



Conclusion This paper addresses an underexplored class of lexically specific modifiers which augment verbal predicate meanings: they specify a prototypical manner for eventive verbs, and an extreme degree for stative verbs. Like intensifiers cross-linguistically, IMs appear to bridge the truth-conditional and expressive dimensions, adding an emphatic commitment to the truth-conditional content as well as a factive expressive component.

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