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## „The special effect of progressive with stative verbs: a corpus based analysis of BNC and COCA"

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**List of abbreviations**

BNC……………………………………………………………British National Corpus
CG ……………………………………...…………………………… Cognitive Grammar
COCA ……………………………………… Corpus of contemporary American English
INF …………………………………………………………………………… infinitive
FUT ……………………………………………………………………………… future
MOD ……………………………………………………………………….…. modal
P ……………………………………………………………………………….… past
PERF ………………………………………………………………………..… perfect
PR …………………………………………………………………………… present
SP …………………………………………………………………………………. spoken
WR …………………………………………………………………………... written

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**Introduction**

Although it is generally accepted that stative verbs are incompatible with the progressive aspect, there are attested examples of stative verbs with the progressive aspect in scholarship such as *I am wanting to say* or *She is liking her new job*. Many linguists have attempted to examine this phenomenon; however, their attempts were limited to analysing the meanings that this combination yields. Quirk et al. (1985: 202) suggests that it produces a "special effect of progressive" with stative verbs. Some studies agree that stative verbs with the progressive aspect require a new interpretation of meaning (Radden and Dirven 2007: 192; Huddleston and Pullum 2002: 170). Surprisingly, the reasons why stative verbs can be used with the progressive aspect have not been closely examined. Applying the theory of Cognitive Grammar, namely the concept of construals, could shed light on what causes this phenomenon.

This thesis investigates the occurrence of the progressive form with six stative verbs, namely *hate, like, want, know, recognise, understand* in BNC and COCA.

More specifically, the study addresses the following research questions:

1)  What are the novel meanings of stative verbs in the progressive aspect in the spoken and written registers of BNC and COCA, if any?

2)  What construal(s) motivate(s) this novel meaning?

The methodological approach chosen for this study is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches. Creating the sample for this thesis required a five-step process starting with creating a list of already investigated stative verbs, eliminating raw tokens from the corpora to 1987 tokens, and finishing by systematizing and analysing them in AntConc. It seems that the combination of these approaches allows not only to distinguish statistical patterns of usage in the naturally occurring written and spoken speech, but also to find out the meanings and underpinning construals of the structures in question.

The theoretical framework for the thesis is based on three areas: the historical background of the progressive, approaches to aspect and views on stative verbs used with the progressive. This study compares how aspect and stative verbs are viewed in both general and cognitive

linguistics. Prominence is given to cognitive construals as they are assumed to be a powerful tool for explaining the use of traditionally incompatible stative verbs with progressive.

This paper is divided into seven chapters. First, it gives a brief overview of the Cognitive Grammar paradigm. The second chapter gives an account of aspect from three different angles – history, general linguistics and Cognitive Grammar. The third chapter deals with stative verbs in the progressive aspect through the lens of both general linguistics and Cognitive Grammar. The next chapter explains the methodological approach taken for this study. Chapters five and six provide quantitative and qualitative analyses of the results of this study. The seventh chapter presents a discussion of the quantitative and qualitative findings of the study including problems and limitations and, finally, the last chapter offers concluding remarks on the study.

**Chapter 1. Cognitive grammar**

**1.1. Language and cognition: relativists and universalists dilemma**

The relationship between language and cognition has fascinated scientists, linguists and philosophers since Aristotle. There are heated debates regarding the relationship of language and cognition which produced two opposing positions. One position is represented by relativists, who assume that language dominates cognition such as Whorf (1940), Sapir (1958), and the second position is argued by universalists, who claim that language is primarily determined by cognition (Berlin and Kay 1969).

The relativistic view gained its popularity in the 1930s. According to this theory, language is central in framing concepts about this world. Language determines the way people think and cognise the world. Sapir (1958:69), one of the first proponents, stated that people have a predisposition to perceiving the world due to a language "[w]e see and hear and otherwise experience very largely as we do because the language habits of our community predispose certain choices of interpretation."

Whorf (1940: 213-14), another early proponent, claimed that our native language frames our vision of the world "[w]e dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages". For Whorf, language represents a system which facilitates our organization of ideas about the

world. For relativists, language takes precedence over cognition and plays the main role in dividing things to understand reality.

In recent research on the topic, Boroditsky (2001:20) claims that language has a strong influence on the way people think about abstract notions such as time, because abstract thinking does not rely on visual or audial sensors, "[l]anguage can be a powerful tool for shaping abstract thought. When sensory information is scarce or inconclusive (as with the direction of motion of time), languages may play the most important role in shaping how their speakers think". Her experiments confirm that Mandarin speakers tend to think about time vertically, not horizontally, as they are used to talk about the sequence of events, days, months applying to vertical domains like *up* and *down* (Boroditsky 2001:18).

Other scholars dispute relativism, for example, Piaget (1929), who found that thought influences language. He noticed that children begin saying *gone* and *miss* about things that disappear from their view when they realize that things still exist even though they cannot see them. After developing this cognitive ability to remember about missing objects, children start talking about things in the past. A similar view, developed by Vygotsky (1962), considered that language and cognition exist independently, but interact as people rely on both for social interaction. Interaction plays an essential role in language acquisition as children learn language through socializing. These views do not prioritize either language or cognition but focus on their interaction.

Similarly, the relativistic view on the relationship of language and cognition was challenged by Berlin and Kay (1969). They proposed that people have inborn cognitive abilities to differentiate colours finding that subjects from 20 different countries had the same universal pattern of colour naming. This suggests that people with different language backgrounds perceive at least colours in a similar way using similar cognitive processes. Since the cognitive linguistics paradigm is gaining momentum, it seems reasonable to establish its position regarding this issue.

### 1.1.2. Language and cognition in Cognitive Grammar

In trying to understand how language and cognition are related, many scholars of cognitive linguistics, such as Heine (1997), Dirven (2004), Radden and Panther (2011), and Langacker (2013), state that language can open a window to human cognition and reveal its mechanisms. Langacker (2013: 4) assumes that language is a "key" to human cognition. Cognitive Grammar (CG) underlines the fact that language has an interactive function where interaction

is grounded in conceptualization. Langacker (2013: 4) considers conceptualization to be "flexible" and "open-ended" and it is understood that through grammar people can express "symbolically complex meanings" and evoke new concepts because simpler structures integrate into complex ones. Moreover, Langacker claims that "meaning is identified with conceptualization" since people construe many different situations based on their internal view (Langacker 2009:6). Hence, language is an integral element of cognition and cognition encompasses the context of speaking since when people interact, they perceive their interlocutor and evoke background knowledge.

In addition, discussing language and cognition, Langacker (2014) assumes that it is interwoven with culture. While cognition takes place in the mind, language is learnt through usage and context, which ultimately means that it is culturally transmitted. Cognition and language create a continuum where "cognition at all levels is both embodied and culturally embedded" (Langacker 2014: 28). Embodiment here means the fact that regardless of cultural or linguistic background people have similar innate cognitive abilities to categorise, analyse and compare physical reality that they encounter. Turning to cultural relationships, Langacker states that language is acquired in sociocultural interaction and that culture lays the foundation for a language and potentially shapes it. Langacker acknowledges a "certain tension" between embodiment and cultural interaction, but there is no definite distinction or opposition between the two because they are interdependent (Langacker 2014: 31).

Heine (1997) argues that by examining a language, one can uncover the mechanism of cognition, and agrees on the reflective role of a language which is formulated as "[l]anguage mirrors human conceptualization". It could be contended that Heine (1997) reduces the role of language to an instrument of reflection, however, he highlights the meaning of concepts and patterns that underpin a language, because "it is shaped by" these concepts. As an example, Heine (1997) discusses the notion of sunset which can explain the use of motion verbs *fall, go down, descend* when describing western locations as the west is associated with the sunset, which motivates these directional verbs (Heine 1997: 16).

Even though Heine (1997: 148) agrees that language is a reflection of human conceptualization, he opposes the view that language "is an immediate reflection of thought". To elaborate, Heine argues (1997: 148), firstly, humans do not always voice what they think, and secondly, he notes that language is a "historical product", which means that people use prefabricated language that had been created before they were born. Based on this historical

legacy, one should not just research modern language forms but take into consideration what aims certain forms had at the time they first appeared.

Discussing relativistic and universal views, Heine states that "the most dramatic piece of evidence" in support of the relativistic view is deictic and cardinal orientation. Often, to describe a location, one uses deictic orientation - *The key is behind the phone*, however, there are some cultures which do not have deictic orientation, rather cardinal one, that is why there are these descriptions - *The key is to the north of the phone.* Heine (1997) also underlines that even though different cultures have the same number of concepts in physical world for conceptualization, they can still devise different linguistic forms. He concludes that "there is both diversity and unity", diversity in terms of different linguistic forms of the same concepts, which represents unity (Heine 1997: 14).

Similarly, Radden and Panther (2011: 8) highlight an essential role of language in relation to cognition, stating that "[l]anguage is probably the system that links more tightly than any other system to cognition". They further claim that there is a bidirectional influence of language and cognition which is known as the "Whorfian effect" and *linguistic motivation"* (original emphasis). To illustrate the "Whorfian effect", they appeal to recent research concerning grammatical gender in different languages. In German, for instance, the noun *key* has a male gender, evoking such characteristics as *hard, heavy, jagged, serrated, and useful* for language users. The Spanish *llave* is grammatically female which consequently stimulates a female set of associations, namely *golden, intricate, little, lovely* (Radden and Panther 2011: 9). Hence, they argue that linguistic motivation is driven by cognition (Radden and Panther 2011: 10).

Dirven (2004) also discusses a connection between language and cognition and shares Heine's (1997: 16) opinion. He comments that language is not only a means of communication but is also a reflection of human conceptualization (Dirven 2004: 1). Dirven (2004: 127) also indicates that one can find universal concepts in languages across the globe, "[m]ost linguistic concepts are indeed language-specific, but there is also a small number of universal linguistic concepts which occur in all languages". Moreover, he reflects on the historical context of a language, "[t]he culture-specific words and grammatical constructions of a language are conceptual tools which reflect a society's past experience of doing and thinking about things in certain ways", which means that language should not be analysed separately from its historical development and context (Dirven 2004: 144). It should be noted that the importance of a historical legacy encapsulated in words and grammatical structures

echoes the Heine's idea of "historical product" (1997: 148), which also argues that while examining cognition through language, one should also consider the historical evolution of a language.

This section has shed light on the long-lasting debate about the relationship between language and cognition and presented the position of Cognitive Linguistics regarding this issue. Cognitive linguists such as Langacker (2013), Dirven (2004), Heine (1997), and Radden and Panther (2011) are more moderate than the extremes of relativism and universalism and they agree that language can aid in discovering the mechanisms of cognition. Moreover, these scholars assume that the language and cognition relationship should be treated as a multi-faceted phenomenon where all aspects such as the historical development of language, human conceptualization, cultural peculiarities and language form must be given equal attention.

## 1.2. From cognition to grammar

This section explores the relationship between language and cognition from a cognitive grammar paradigm. It first describes cognitive operations that are involved in language production, and then it addresses the way thoughts are expressed in language with the two basic word classes of nouns and verbs.

### 1.2.1. Construals

It has been claimed that CG revolutionized traditional views on grammar and language. Langacker, the founder of CG, is one of the first to claim that grammar is not primarily a matter of form, but, rather, that "grammar relies extensively on imaginative phenomena and mental constructions". His main claim is that grammar is meaningful and mirrors the human "experience of moving" and world perception (Langacker 2008:4).

One of the most innovative arguments of CG is the reassessment of a person's role in a language. Langacker was one of the first to address the role of language users by assigning an active role to speakers as, in his view, speakers perceive and construct their own reality with the help of brain activity and mental processes which they then verbalize using a given language. He calls these mental processes construals and has developed them in a succession of works (Langacker 1987, 2008, 2009, 2013, 2015). Generally, he defines it as the "ability to conceive and portray the same situation in alternate ways", and it can be assumed that a speaker or language user is granted a key role in perceiving and shaping a situation (Langacker 2008: 43).

It is not only construals and the role of speakers that are crucial for expressing meaning; Langacker also acknowledges the importance of content which represents objective reality. These two elements, content and construal, are inseparable in expressing a message, as they work simultaneously in imbuing a message with a meaning (Langacker 2015: 120). Moreover, Langacker (2013:43) indicates that there is no sharp distinction between the two. The fact is that any message conveys some content, but this content can be construed in various ways. Langacker (2013:43), emphasizing the link between the two, illustrates it with the example of a glass of water which can be viewed as half-full or half-empty depending on a construal.

It is worth noting that in establishing his theoretical framework, Langacker (2015) suggests that mechanisms of construal are similar to those of vision. For Langacker five factors (shown in the table) describe construal; the aim is not to delineate all possible construals but rather give a descriptive account.

**Table 1.** The framework of construals developed by Langacker (2015).

| Perspective | Selection | Prominence | Dynamicity | Imagination |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| vantage point | specificity and schematicity | onstage and offstage prominence | processing and conceived time | baseline and imaginative conceptions |
| figure and ground | profile | trajectory and landmark | sequential scanning and summation | Extensionality, integration, disengagement, and abstraction |
| scope (maximal and immediate) | | profile | | |
| profile | | | | |

These construals can overlap, and there is no clear-cut distinction between them. In addition, the table indicates that construals represent two basic dimensions – spatial and visual, which reflect the way people perceive reality in space and time.

The construal framework developed by Radden and Dirven (2007) does not dramatically differ from Langacker's. Radden and Dirven (2007: 21) define construals as "[cognitive] operations that help select the appropriate structural possibility among various alternatives", and like Langacker (2015), they find construals "strikingly similar" to visual perception.

Overall, they distinguish nine dimensions of construals, most of which belong to visual perception. The following table presents their framework:

**Table 2**. The framework of construals developed by Radden and Dirven (2007)

| Viewing frame |
| --- |
| 1. generality vs specificity |
| 2. viewpoint |
| 3. objectivity vs subjectivity |
| 4. mental scanning |
| 5. fictive motion |
| 6. profiling |
| 7. windowing of attention |
| 8. figure and ground |

Similarly, Ungerer and Schmidt (1996) elaborate on construal by distinguishing three views. The first is an "experiential view", which relies on empirical rather than theoretical evidence encompassing people's emotions, associations and impressions (Ungerer and Schmidt 1996: XI).

The next view is the "prominence view", which involves information selection. Depending on the situation and "degrees of prominence", language users select different objects to refer to in their speech (Ungerer and Schmidt 1996: XII). Drawing on this, they distinguish figure and ground, trajectory and landmark construals, sequential and summary scanning and levels of specificity.

The final view is "attention allocation", which presupposes what attracts peoples' attention: viewing arrangements, choice of event participants, and subject and object assignment based on windowing of attention (Ungerer and Schmidt 1996: XIII). Thus, Ungerer and Schmidt distinguish motion events, path-windowing, causal-chain event frames, as shown in table 3:

**Table 3.** The framework of construals developed by Ungerer and Schmidt (1996).

| Experiential view | Prominence view | Attentional view |
|---|---|---|
| Prototypes and categories | figure and ground | motion events |
| Superordinate and subordinate categories | trajectory and landmark | path-windowing |
| Basic level categories: actions, events, properties, states, locations | sequential and summary scanning | causal-chain event frames |
| Metaphors and metonymies | levels of specificity | |

Overall, the three construal frameworks developed by Langacker (2015), Radden and Dirven (2007), and Ungerer and Schmidt (1996) have much in common since they represent a cognitive paradigm and are based on visual and spatial perception. As can be seen from Tables 1 – 3, Ungerer and Schmidt (1996) use the same definitions and terms, but with a different organization. Langacker's (2015) classification is more elaborate and different construals are grouped by five factors. Radden and Dirven's (2007) classification is more straightforward, not distinguishing any construal groups but rather listing a number of different construals. Ungerer and Schmidt (1996), offer a condensed version Langacker's framework.

### 1.2.2.  The category of verbs in CG

Langacker's attempt to redefine the orthodox view of grammar also involves distinguishing grammatical classes like verbs and nouns. In Generative Grammar verbs were traditionally defined as a word class because of specific morphosyntactic features. Langacker prefers to give them notional definitions i.e., defines verbs as a class in terms of their meaning. To do so, he employs prototypical and schema levels which are represented in figure 1:
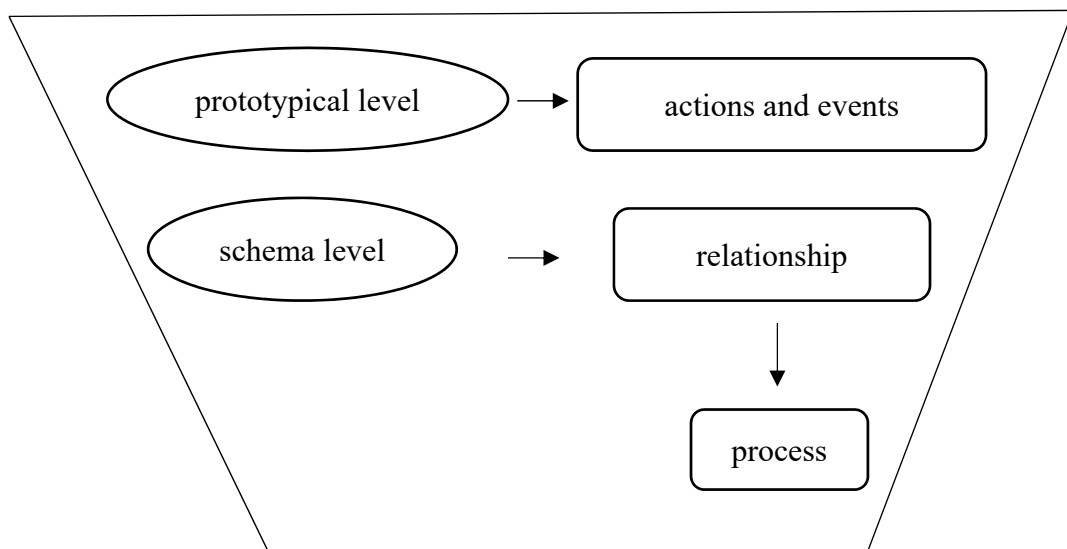
**Figure 1.** Langacker's framework of verbs

It is clear from figure 1 that the meaning of verbs is narrowed down from actions and events to abstract processes. On the prototypical level, verbs express actions and events. Langacker, however, argues that this prototypical meaning cannot be applied to all verbs; thus, he seeks a more abstract meaning relevant to all verbs. On the schema level, Langacker (2008: 94) reduces verb meaning to the notion of relationship; moreover, for Langacker, verbs profile a process. Importantly, schemas are independent and rely on cognitive processes of "apprehending relationships and for tracking relationships through time" (Langacker 2008: 108).

Thus, drawing on a symbolic nature of grammar, the main tenet of CG is that word classes instantiate abstract schemas (Langacker 2002: 60):

> I claim that nouns and verbs also lend themselves to schematic semantic characterization--this is the novel (and surely controversial) aspect of the following proposals. More precisely, I maintain that all members of the noun class (not just central members) instantiate an abstract noun schema, while all verbs elaborate an abstract verb schema.

Even though Langacker (2002: 60), (2008: 94) attempted to present an approach to defining verbs (and other word classes) appealing to meaning, his framework is difficult to understand. Therefore, we now turn to the framework of Radden and Dirven (2007), which "presented a "soft" version" of Langacker's model of Cognitive Grammar" (Radden 2015: 6).

### 1.2.3. Radden and Dirven's (2007) typology of verbs

Radden and Dirven (2007) note that the most frequent grammatical categories are nouns and verbs. They suggest that this frequency reflects the way humans categorize the world – differentiating it into two fundamental conceptual units: things and relations (Radden and Dirven 2007: 42). Agreeing with Langacker (2002:60), (2008: 94), they define things "as a conceptual unit that is expressed in language as a noun". Moreover, they distinguish prototypical things, like physical objects, and less prototypical things, like abstract notions. What is important - things have relations to other things. Radden and Dirven (2007: 42) define relations as "dependent conceptual units that link two or more things and tend to be short-lived, i.e., have a lower degree of time stability than things. Relations are expressed as verbs, adjectives, adverbs, prepositions, and conjunctions".

They claim that both things and relations are crucial to express thoughts. Things and relations together form conceptual cores, which in turn build up conceptual entities. To illustrate this, they consider the following examples (Radden and Dirven 2007: 43):

(1)     a. Joe *kicked* the garbage can.

        b. Jane *is fond of* Reggae music.

        c. the goldfish *in* the pond

        d. Joe invited Jane *because* he likes her.

The relations in the examples are expressed by different linguistic means: a verb in (1a), a copular structure with an adjective in (1b), a preposition in (1c), and a conjunction in (1d); nevertheless, the relations are equal on a conceptual level because they all express the relation between conceptual entities. The fact that different grammatical classes reveal relationships between the entities signifies that there is a principle that underlies examples (a-d). They claim that it is based on the "figure and ground principle", when "one entity in a conceptual core is the figure, while the other serves as the ground" (Radden and Dirven 2007: 43).

**Table. 4** Conceptual cores with two explicitly expressed conceptual entities Radden and Dirven (2007)

| Figure entity | Relation | Ground entity |
|---|---|---|
| a. Joe | *kicked* | the garbage can. |
| b. Jane | *is fond of* | Reggae music. |
| c. the goldfish | *in* | the pond |
| d. Joe invited Jane | *because* | he likes her. |

Table 4 reveals that there are two entities in (a-d) that are related to each other by the figure and ground principle.

Like Langacker (2008: 43), Radden and Dirven (2007: 49) also highlight the key role of the speaker, who grounds a situation, stating that "[i]n grounding a situation, the speaker provides information about who or what he is talking about, when the situation happened in relation to the present moment of speaking, and whether it really happened". Grounding can be realized by virtue of grounding and setting elements. Here, grounding elements refers to words which establish the time, location and real or unreal conditions of a situation from a speaker's perspective:

(2)    *My* fiancé bought *the* wedding rings and may also buy *a* necklace

By using *my* the speaker establishes their relationship to *fiancé*, using the definite article signifies that both the speaker and listener are aware of the wedding tradition of buying a ring. The indefinite article in *a necklace* indicates that neither speaker nor hearer can identify this necklace. Therefore, these grounding elements are determiners "which serve to indicate whether the things talked about are or are not identifiable in the current discourse" (Radden and Dirven 2007: 49). Similarly, the grounding elements of the predicate reveal that the situation of buying a ring is real, and it grounds the situation in the past, and the modal verb *may* demonstrates that the speaker projects a possible future scenario.

Apart from grounding elements, Radden and Dirven distinguish setting elements which "provide information such as where and when the event happened, why it happened, the condition under which it happened, etc." (Radden and Dirven 2007: 50). Compared to grounding elements, setting elements are not obligatory and they are expressed by lexis:

(3)    (After ten years of engagement) my fiancé *bought* the wedding rings and may also buy a necklace (at Tiffany's) (*last night*).

The setting elements, indicated by brackets in (5), illustrate temporal and spatial settings. Grounding and setting elements work cooperatively, and even if the time of the event is primarily expressed by the tense of *bought* (grounding element), the setting element *last night* additionally establishes the current discourse and facilitates communication (Radden and Dirven 2007: 50).

Grounding and setting elements are crucial for CG, in this regard Radden (2015: 9) regrets that CG is mainly focused on the abstract theory of language, whereas communication and discourse settings are ignored:

> Cognitive grammar, like most linguistic and didactic approaches to grammar, has mainly been confined to the structure of the sentence in its written form. All linguists are aware of the primacy of spoken language and know that spoken

sentences may be truncated or ill-formed and still be understood. We also know that sentences do not occur in isolation but within a communicative setting. The overall discourse and situational context largely determine the speaker's verbalization and the hearer's interpretation. However, most cognitive linguists tend to ignore discourse in the same way that discourse linguists tend to ignore Cognitive Linguistics.

As this study deals with spoken data from the COCA and BNC corpora, it is expected that analysing the grounding and setting elements will help to accurately answer the research questions.

Thus far, this section has presented some of the main tenets of the CG paradigm, namely the notion of construal and its considerations regarding the verbs as a word class. As has been discussed, CG presents an abstract meaning of verbs as a process. The following chapter narrows down the focus to the progressive aspect and will give insights into the historical development of the progressive and describe the way CG treats it.

## Chapter 2.  Aspect

This chapter describes aspect in greater detail. It first gives a brief historical account of aspect, and then discusses how it is regarded in general linguistics and presents some statistical evidence from corpora studies. Finally, a CG paradigm on aspect is considered in the last subsection.

### 2.1.  The present progressive: a historical perspective

Aspect was unmarked in Old English, but it has been suggested that the Norman Conquest gave a rise to the structure (Welna 1996: 109). Welna (1996: 108) reports that "[t]he new present participle marker -*ing(e)*" appears regularly in the works of Chaucer. In Middle English, aspect appeared as a successive chain of ending changes moving from the Southwest to the Midlands. The form was fully fixed by the Late New English period. It has been suggested, although the issue is still debated, that one of the possible origins of the form came from "he is on working" (Welna 1996: 168).

More recently Kranich (2010) carried out a long-term diachronic study of the evolution of progressive in English between 1600-1999, using the ARCHER-2 corpus. Kranich (2010) argues that the present progressive could have emerged from three structures (Table 5) "be + adjectival participle, be + appositive participle, be + agent noun, beon/wesan + v-(i)ende and beon/wesan + on ~ in ~ a + v- ing" in OE (Kranich 2010: 80):

**Table 5.** Possible patterns of emergence of the progressive (Kranich 2010)

| Pattern | OE | Translation |
|---|---|---|
| *be* + the adjectival participle | *he wæs blissiende* | he was happy' or 'he was rejoicing |
| *be* + the appositive participle | *he wæs on temple lærende* | he was in the temple learning |
| *beon/wesan* + agent noun | *he wæs ehtend(e) cristenra monna* | he was a persecutor of Christian men |

Kranich (2010: 80) highlights that the existence of these "possibly ambiguous constructions" may signify a change in use. Even though it seems impossible to state which of the constructions served as the source for the progressive, Kranich (2010: 80) supposes that those patterns "supported the spread of the verbal periphrasis" of the progressive. Presumably in OE and ME, one of the main functions of progressive was to express aspectual meaning rather than to highlight the essence of a situation (Kranich 2010:249):

> the function of this construction was, however, not yet clearly grammatical. In OE and ME, it is only for the sake of a uniform denomination that we speak of the 'progressive', since the construction was in general not yet used to express progressive aspect. Rather, two main factors governed its use: it emphasized either the durative and/or imperfective nature of the situation or the 'remarkableness' of the situation.

However, over time its grammatical meaning (aspectual function) crystallized through a number of grammaticalization stages, possibly between 1650-1800. Kranich (2010) indicates that the meaning developed from the imperfective and just indicated durative situations in OE and ME, and from the 19th century, it fulfilled an interpretative function – i.e., a speaker's interpretation of the situation. Notably, Kranich (2010: 107) noticed a correlation between the frequency of its use and the final stage of grammaticalization.

In treatments of grammatical evolution, Traugott and Dasher (2002: 35–36) discuss the general mechanisms of historical change and highlight the key role of the use grammatical structure:

> change does not originate within language (grammars do not change by themselves), but in language use, i.e. in factors external to language structure. It is not possible to predict precisely under what circumstances and when a change will take place in historical linguistics […] Once actuated or initiated, they spread through a community, again in replicable ways, that ultimately lead to cumulative effects and adoption by a community.

This assumption that language change takes place extrinsically, not triggered within a language but by its use is similar to CG claims which regard language as a "historical product" (Dirven 2004: 144), (Heine 1997: 148).

Kranich (2010:101) states that the progressive was most popular in drama and letters compared to science and medical genres, where it was scarce. Her study does not provide a full picture as it does not include the spoken register. However, she does note that drama and letters possessed features of spoken speech, and that there are many dialogues in drama:

> the progressive was at first more associated with spoken, colloquial language use, to which the language used in drama and private letters comes closest, and that it only took ground in a less speech-based genre such as the novel somewhat later. Another point may be that the relative proportion of dialogue passages in the novel might have changed over time.

Generally, Kranich favours the idea that the progressive is more typical in spoken speech, explaining the negligible number of the progressive in science and medical writing became more common in the 17th-20th centuries (2010: 102).

Drawing on Kranich's statistical data, it is difficult to trace the origins of the progressive as well as its function. Consequently, Kranich (2010: 249) concludes that "no single core meaning of the progressive can be made out but that the construction is used in PDE on the one hand with aspectual meaning and on the other with subjective functions". Hence, the progressive form can have a progressive and subjective meaning at the same time.

## 2.2. Corpus studies of aspect

With respect to the frequency of use of the progressive in contemporary English, having examined a 40-million-word corpus, Biber et al. (1999: 462) report that the frequency of the progressive aspect in British and American registers is negligible because 90% of verbs occurrences are unmarked for aspect. The progressive aspect is even less common than the perfective aspect, but both aspects are mostly used in spoken registers like conversations and news reports. To explain such a drastic difference in frequency between marked and non-marked aspect, Biber et al. (1999: 462) suppose that it is due to special meaning: "[t]he perfect and progressive aspects convey specialized kinds of meaning, and hence are less commonly used than simple present tense and past tense".

Additionally, Biber et al. (1999: 462) report that a comparison of British and American registers reveals a significant difference in aspect usage; American registers use the progressive form more than the British do (Biber et al. 1999: 462):

> If we add the frequencies in the two registers together, there is a clear trend: AmE strongly favors the progressive in comparison with BrE (approximately in the ratio of 4:3), whereas BrE strongly favors the perfect in comparison with AmE (approximately in the same ratio of 4:3).

A more recent comparative study on the distribution of the progressive between BrE and AmE has been carried out by Leech et al. (2009) who analysed four corpora from 1960 -1990. The study demonstrated a growth in the frequency of the progressive in both varieties of English, "[b]oth national varieties present a picture of the progressive relentlessly marching on, much as it has been over the last several centuries" (Leech et al. 2009: 122). Statistical examination showed a 10% growth in frequency within the analysed period. The present progressive active demonstrated the biggest growth in both varieties. Conversely, the use of the past progressive decreased in the active in BrE and in the passive in AmE (Leech et al. 2009: 124). Moreover, migration could have affected the spread of the progressive in the western and northern parts of the British Isles as the incidence of progressive is quite high there (Leech et al. 2009: 142).

At this point, it is interesting to mention the frequency distributions of the progressive by non-native speakers. Bernal (2015) conducted a corpus-based examination of Asian English varieties, such as Hong Kong (HKE), Indian (IndE) and Singaporean (SingE). A key finding was that the distribution is quite erratic, with the highest ratio in IndE and the lowest in HKE (Bernal 2015:102). Next, the spoken register favoured the use of the progressive in all varieties (Bernal 2015:102). Interestingly, the distribution of the present, past tenses and other verbal forms in the progressive follows the same descending pattern in all varieties "present simple > past simple> modal > perfects > to-infinitive" (Bernal 2015:104).

Smith's study (2002) has also found evidence of the increase of the present progressive form within the period of 1960-90s. More noteworthily, Smith (2002: 327) pointed out that the variety of verb types that combine with the progressive were expanding from "the domain of activity" to verbs of communication and mentality.

## 2.3. General approaches to aspect

### 2.3.1. Aspect classification by Vendler (1957)

Even though the focus of this study is the progressive aspect, it is worth giving a brief overall account of aspect. One of the most influential studies was Vendler (1957) who created a model drawing on the fact that verbs are inseparable from the notion of time. Thus, he

distinguished four time schematas for verbs (Vendler 1957: 143). He distinguished the types of verbs by using the progressive as clearly some verbs do not allow it and some do. The first two "verb species", which permit the progressive, are activities and accomplishments:

(4)    a. He is running

          b. He is running a mile

(4a) is an activity as we cannot see its end, while (4b) presents an accomplishment as the endpoint is indicated; endpoints are what differentiate activities from accomplishments (Vendler 1957: 146).

The "other genus" of verbal types are achievements and states, which are not found with the progressive. The difference between them resides in the duration of the event that they describe:

(5)    a. He reaches the top

          b. He loves her

(5a) is an achievement because it happens immediately, while (5b) is a state as it depicts an ongoing situation. To prove it, Vendler (1957: 147) considers the questions *At what time did you reach the top?* which pertains to (5a), and *For how long did you love her?* which, in turn, relates to (5b). These questions would sound strange, asked *vice versa*.

### 2.3.2. Aspect classification by Comrie (1976)

Comrie (1976) presents a detailed account of the aspectual system by analysing Romanian, Slavonic, German and other language families. Taking this broad viewpoint, he considers two domains related to aspect: lexical and grammatical. Comrie (1976: 3) agrees with the traditional lexical treatment of aspect noting that "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" or inherent meaning. Thus, he distinguishes three types of situations: states, events and processes. States "continue as before unless changed" and events are dynamic "viewed as a complete whole", while processes are "dynamic situations viewed in progress, from within" (Comrie 1976: 13). He goes on to describe the inherent semantical features of these situations:

- punctual and durative;
- iterative and semelfactive;
- telic and atelic;
- state and dynamic.

This aspectual model is based on four oppositions between inherent features. Durative situations last for a certain period of time, while punctual situations "take place momentarily". The difference between the iterative and semelfactive pair lies in repetition "semelfactive refers to the situation which "takes place once and once only", for example, "one single cough", while iterative situations are associated with a series of actions, for instance, "series of coughs" (Comrie 1976: 42). Telic and atelic situations deal with terminal points of a situation, telic ones having an endpoint like *John is making a chair*; in turn, atelic situation do not have an endpoint – *John is singing, a* situation that could last indefinitely and stop at any point of time (Comrie 1976: 44). The last distinction, state vs. dynamic, revolves around changes and phases of situations. In *Jones knows where I live* the verb *know* will indicate that Jones' knowledge will be constant at any phase of the situation. Contrarily, *John is running* indicates that running is dynamic as John moves his legs (Comrie 1976: 49).

Comrie also claims that aspect can be realized via grammatical forms and that in some languages "aspect exists as a grammatical category" (Comrie 1976: 7) and can be realized morphologically as in Spanish adding affixes *leyo* and *leia*; or by periphrasis, like in English *He was reading*. Building on the analysis of cross-linguistic cases, Comrie distinguishes two main grammatical divisions of aspect - perfective and imperfective and defines them thus, "perfectivity indicates the view of a situation as a single whole, without distinction of the various separate phases that make up that situation; while the imperfective pays essential attention to the internal structure of the situation" (Comrie 1976: 16).

The imperfective aspect is further subdivided into habitual and continuous, which in its turn is subdivided into progressive and non-progressive. He states that the progressive aspect is increasingly popular in the English language compared to other languages. And it has a "wide range" of forms compared to other languages. Finally, Comrie (1976: 38) underlines temporariness in his definition of the progressive:

> For instance, one might suggest that the basic meaning of the English Progressive is to indicate a contingent situation: this would subsume progressive meaning itself, and also the use of the Progressive to indicate a temporary (contingent) state, and its use to indicate a contingent habitual situation.

### 2.3.3. Aspect classification by Brinton (1988)

Brinton (1988: 3), argues that aspect appears to be an umbrella term for two different phenomena, which is often neglected. There is an aspect "in the strict sense", in which case

the speaker's perspective can depict a situation as "completed (perfective aspect), or as ongoing (imperfective aspect), or as beginning (ingressive aspect), continuing (continuative aspect), ending (egressive aspect), or repeating (iterative or habitual aspect)". Another phenomenon is 'aktionsart', which, concerns the "inherent nature of the situation", which can be static or dynamic, punctual or durative, bounded or unbounded, continuous or iterative. Brinton provides a compositional definition of aspect combining several features such as objectiveness and subjectiveness, grammatical and lexical characteristics (Brinton 1988: 3):

> Aspect is grammatical because, broadly speaking, it is expressed by verbal inflectional morphology and periphrases, aktionsart by the lexical meaning of verbs and verbal derivational morphology. Aspect is subjective because the speaker chooses a particular viewpoint, whereas aktionsart, since it concerns the given nature of the event and not the perspective of the speaker, is objective.

She goes on to claim that both phenomena, aspect and aktionsart, should be recognised as separate systems (Brinton 1988: 52). Brinton's typology of aktionsart (Table 6) is based on the premise that it cannot be hierarchical, as aktionsart is intrinsic and encapsulated in the meaning of verbs.

**Table 6.** Brinton's (1988: 57) aktionsart's model.

|  | **Dynamicity** | **Durativity** | **Homogeneity** | **Telicity** | **Multiplicity** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **state** | - | + | + | - | - |
| **achievement** | + | - | - | (+) | - |
| **activity** | + | + | + | - | - |
| **accomplishment** | + | + | - | + | - |
| **series** | + | + | + | - | + |

Five categories of verbs are distinguished, based on inherent lexical meaning: state, achievement, activity, accomplishment and series. These verbs types are seen through the five aspectual features. In creating a matrix design of the model, Brinton (1988) avoids overlap between the categories. She advocates a compositional approach to aspect that takes into consideration various features such as "aktionsart, formal aspect markers with nominal and prepositional complements, and adverbial modifiers" (Brinton 1988: 38).

Brinton's compositional approach also includes 'aspectualizers', a "secondary system of aspectual marking" (Brinton 1988: 57), which are an essential addition to the primary aspectual system of progressive and perfect forms. Brinton defines it as fully or partially grammaticalized infinitives and participles, "a variety of partial, or perhaps completely, grammaticalized forms such as *begin*, *continue*, and *cease* collocate with infinitives or particles and in such constructions express aspect distinctions" (Brinton 1988: 57).

It is evident that all three models differ significantly. Vendler's (1957) model is very simplistic as he created a lexical model of aspect based simply on intrinsic time schematas of verbs without considering grammatical aspect. Comrie's (1976) encompasses both lexical and grammatic aspects, but this model has only three types of situations. In effect, Comrie's and Vendler's lexical aspect models do not differ much. As both of them distinguish states, and Vendler's accomplishments and achievements correspond to Comrie's processes as these are dynamic; Vendler's activities correspond to Comrie's events as they present a situation as a whole without indicating the endpoints. Comrie (1976) presented grammatical aspect in a hierarchy where the imperfective aspect can be further dissected into four subcategories. Brinton's (1988) model appears to be the most elaborate as she takes a broad view of aspect and her model possesses grammatical and lexical aspect (or aktionsart), and she complements it with a secondary system of aspectualizers. The lexical aspect of Brinton is almost identical with Vendler's (1957) but with an additional type of series. Apart from distinguishing the perfective and imperfective grammatical aspect, like Comrie (1976), Brinton (1988) additionally highlights four more aspects, in the most detailed of the models discussed here.

## 2.4. The category of aspect in CG

### 2.4.1. *The category of aspect in CG: Langacker's model*

In discussing aspect in English, Langacker draws our attention first to the meaning of the verbs, i.e. "the inherent semantic value of content predicates ("main verbs")", as he believes that this plays a key role in the definition of aspect. The second important phenomenon, is auxiliaries, *be+ing* in particular, which construct aspect (Langacker 1982: 265). However, Langacker also distinguishes other factors involved in aspect. To define aspect and to distinguish its subcategories, Langacker draws on two essential features that underpin aspect, namely time and a trajectory construal.

He emphasizes that aspect is tightly related to time, which could be best presented by a line. As events unfold in time and have a direction, a construal of trajectory can be applied to the aspect. Given the fact that there are three basic predicate distinctions in English, aspect can be represented as follows (Langacker 1982: 266):

PERFECTIVE PROCESS

IMPERFECTIVE PROCESS

STATE

**Figure 2.** Basic predicate distinctions in English by Langacker

The perfective process depicts a full progression of an event from its start to finish. Langacker states that verbs of physical activity can portray the perfective process most precisely as in (6) (Langacker 1982: 267):

(6) X hit Y

This example demonstrates a trajectory of a subject which ultimately hits the object in a succession of points on the timeline, Langacker states "the verb and object specify a trajectory through which the subject passes". Hence, the perfective aspect demonstrates a change which unfolds in the course of bounded time (Langacker 1982: 266).

The imperfective process in figure 2 represents an event which is "constant through the time", where "any point in the process is taken as functionally equivalent to any other" (Langacker 1982: 270). Thus, neither the beginning, nor the end of the event can be distinguished. The imperfective process represents a continuation or perpetuation of the events. Langacker assumes that *hate, want, know* are typical examples of the imperfective process being constant through the time and not demonstrating event-based change (Langacker 1982: 271).

States can be considered imperfective processes which are extended in time, "A stative predicate describes a configuration that can be characterized with respect to a single point in time" like in "X like Y" (Langacker 1982: 273). To highlight the difference between the perfective, imperfective process and states, Langacker claims that "[a] perfective predicate describes the change of a configuration through time; an imperfective predicate describes the constancy of a configuration through time; and a stative predicate simply describes a configuration." It is evident that the timeline and trajectory are vital for this distinction. Importantly, he mentions that processes can be further subdivided. For instance, the perfective aspect can depict "achievement vs. non-achievement, punctual vs. durative, and so on". However, these distinctions are not clearly defined (Langacker 1982: 274).

More recently, Langacker (2002: 86) notices a peculiar feature of imperfective predicates which can occur in the present simple and not in the progressive.

21

(7)    a. Harry resembles his father.      a'. *Harry is resembling his father.

        b. Paul knows the answer.         b'. *Paul is knowing the answer

By contrast, perfectives can occur in the progressive but not in the simple form.

(8)    a. *Tom builds a canoe.         a'. Tom is building a canoe.

        b. *Tom learns the answer.       b'. Tom is learning the answer.

Langacker (2002: 86) comments:

> The classification does not, in any case, amount to a rigid partitioning of the verbal lexicon. Some verbs function comfortably in either class, while verbs that normally belong to one are often shifted to the other by a complement or adverb. Moreover, there are patterns of semantic extension which effect a change in category without marking it overtly (e.g. a perfective can be construed as habitual, hence imperfective).

It follows that considerations of aspect should go beyond the analysis of the lexical meaning of verbs, and include other elements such as complements, and adverbs, which is very similar to the grounding elements of Radden & Dirven (2007: 49). Moreover, mental construals can change the category of the verb from the perfective into the imperfective and vice versa.

Furthermore, adverbial modifiers can "force" construals as in (Langacker 2002: 88):

(9)    a. Harry played the tune again and again.

        b. *Harry resembled his father again and again.

In (9b), the event is presented as a succession of certain phases as if the resemblance was evolving through stages. Consequently, adverbial modifiers as well as verbal complements can signify some construal which constructs a situation in an atypical manner. Additionally, the nature of the subject can be aspect indicative, as in the following examples (Langacker 2008: 149):

(10)    Sam {*lies / is lying} on the beach right now.

(11)    Belgium {lies / *is lying} between Holland and France.

*Sam* and *Belgium,* animate and inanimate subjects, restrict the choice of the predicate aspect. Here, *Belgium*, as a country, cannot stop lying where it lies, while *Sam*, as a human being, can change his location.

The next factor is the object, especially when it comes to verbs of perception such as *see* and *hear.* As objects like *light* and *music* introduce a perceptual experience of quite a short span of time, the whole event is perceived holistically, and cannot be dissected into sequential phases,

Langacker (2008: 150) comments, "[t]his allows the perception verbs to be used as imperfectives", so they are not used here with the progressive aspect:

(12)   I see a flash.

(13)   I hear music.

Another factor that is influential for aspect is scope, where an event is viewed either from a close or distant perspective:

(14)   According to the map, this road winds through the mountains.

(15)   The way this road is winding through the mountains, we'll never get there on time.

(14) illustrates travellers looking at the map from distance or globally, while (15) shows that the travellers follow their route on the map, thus seeing it closer.

The next element relevant to aspect, is "contextual knowledge" as the speakers may apply it to a situation. Langacker (2008: 151) supposes that if a person knows Rodin's Thinker, it would be appropriate to say:

(16)   Rodin's Thinker sits and meditates perpetually.

However, the same situation will be construed differently if it were applied to a professor who is deep in thought (Langacker 2008: 151):

(17)   Our prof is sitting and meditating.

Another factor is simply the choice of a speaker (Langacker 2008: 152):

(18)   a. I'm still seeing that blinding flash which occurred a moment ago.

b. I still see that blinding flash which occurred a moment ago.

In these examples, the speaker focuses on the afterimage of the flash in (18a) and on the flash itself in (18b); nevertheless, both variants are acceptable.

A further constitutive element of the aspectual system is the progressive form. Langacker decomposes the meaning of the progressive to its constituents *-ing* and *be*, where *-ing* transforms a situation from a process to an atemporal relation, while *be* imposes *a* meaning of a process by a processual construal Langacker (2002: 91). The progressive is unable to occur with imperfectives due to the fact that the meaning of the structure in question is similar, i.e., "imperfectivizing" that will produce a redundant effect. However, he notes that "languages do

sometimes evolve redundant constructions – but it is nonetheless natural in functional terms." (Langacker 2002: 91).

If perfective predicates combine with the progressive form, this immediately imposes an "internal perspective" on the action, bounding it, as illustrated in these examples Langacker (2002: 94):

(19) A statue of George Lakoff stands in the plaza.

(20) A statue of George Lakoff is standing in the plaza.

The first event in (19) depicts a permanent situation "extending indefinitely through time" while (20) presents it as temporary, thus temporally bounded.

Langacker (1982, 2002, 2008) has developed quite a sophisticated interpretation of the aspect system, which can be summarized as in figure 3:
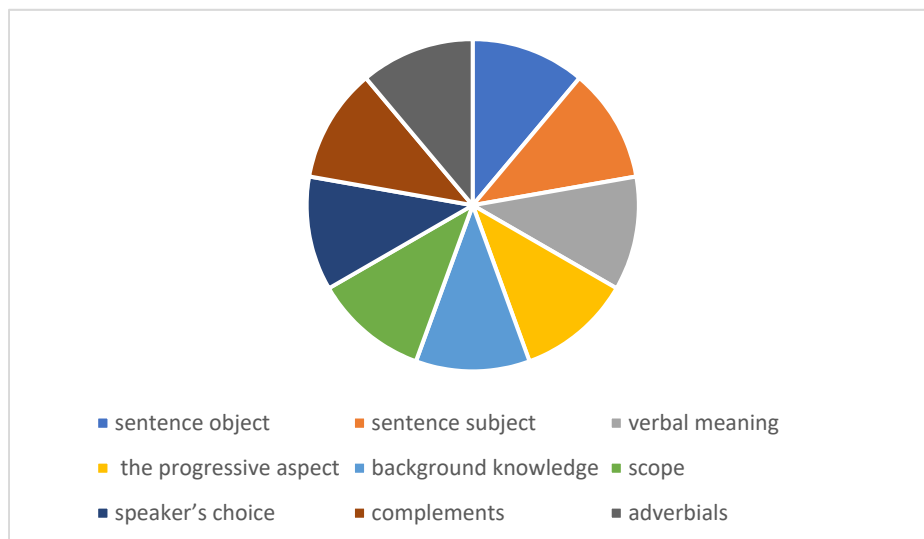


**Figure 3.** The aspectual system by Langacker.

Langacker's views on aspect are somewhat similar to Brinton (1988) arguing that aspect is a complex phenomenon which is comprised of several elements (fig.3). This is reminiscent of the Brinton's understanding of aspect as being a wide phenomenon encapsulating aktionsarts, i.e., intrinsic features of the verbs, verbal inflectional morphology and aspectualizers, a secondary subsystem (Brinton 1988: 57). However, Langacker distinguished only three types of verbs: perfectives, imperfectives and states, while Brinton, following Vendler (1976), recognises a wider range: state, achievement, activity, accomplishment and series.

Of particular importance for this study, is that Langacker goes beyond the semantics of verbs and the progressive aspect itself, and considers subjects, objects, background knowledge,

scope, speaker's choice of portraying a situation, complements and adverbials to be significant for aspect because they can "force" a particular construal.

### 2.4.2.  *The category of aspect in CG: a Radden and Dirven's model*

Radden & Dirven (2007) argue that "[a]spect is the grammatical form used by a speaker in taking a particular view of a situation". Therefore, a speaker can create either a maximal or a restricted viewing frame. The interaction of the speaker's viewing frame and situations can produce different types of situations, such as events and states. They claim that it is essential to distinguish different situation types as these combine with aspect. In particular, they note that the progressive aspect can be used both with events and states as it has a unified meaning: "[t]he English progressive aspect thus has one unitary meaning for events and states, which may be described as unboundedness with implicit boundaries". *Ann is cuddling the baby* implies an event with a restricted viewing frame, while, *Ann is living with her parents* is also a state with a restricted viewing frame (Radden & Dirven 2007: 175-176).

Accordingly, the progressive aspect has temporal boundaries, "[i]ntuitively we can describe the progressive in terms of 'zooming in' and taking an 'internal view' of a bounded event", which presupposes that progressive profiles a part of a process that can coincide with the time of speaking. Notwithstanding, Radden & Dirven (2007: 177) divide this unified meaning into three aspectual classes due to different conception processes: bounded events, lasting states and unbounded events and states.

Since the scope of the study is restricted by the progressive aspect, it stands to reason to dwell on the unbounded events and states, which are illustrated in the next figure, and exclude bounded events. What is important, the external boundaries of the events and states are not seen since the prominence is given to the internal view (Radden & Dirven 2007: 178):
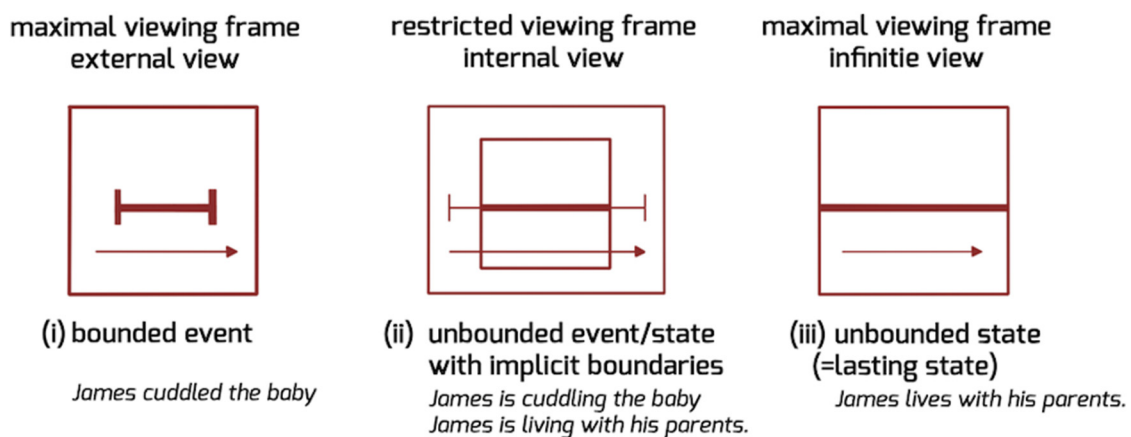


**Figure 4.** Three basic aspectual classes (Radden & Dirven 2007: 178).

Even though *James is living with his parents* and *James lives with his parents* are both unbounded states, the difference between them lies in the fact we cannot observe the boundaries of the state in the latter as it is infinite. The present progressive in (II) indicates that it is a temporary state. Notably, when discussing unbounded events/states, they argue that the progressive aspect can indicate different implicatures thus "[giving] rise to all sorts of interpretations due to its focus on the event's progression" (Radden & Dirven 2007: 187). Apart from dividing states into lasting states and unbounded they distinguish several types of states shown in Table 7:

**Table 7.** The types of states by Radden & Dirven (2007: 196).

| Lasting states | | Temporary states | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Indefinitely lasting state | How do you like your new job? | Temporary state: | How are you liking your new job? |
| Habitual state | She works in a pub. | Temporary habitual state | She is working in a pub. |
| Everlasting state | Parallel lines never intersect. | — | |

Based on the viewing frame, they distinguish two main types, namely lasting and temporary states. Lasting states are non-progressive, while temporary states are used in combination with the progressive which results in a number of different implicatures.

### 2.4.3. The category of aspect in CG: a Talmy's model

Talmy (2000: 237) states that "Aspect is a temporal structuring of events relative to the ongoing timeline". As with any grammatical category, aspect "specif[ies] a crucial set of concepts" such as a pattern of distribution. These patterns illustrate how action is distributed through the time. In the following, we can see a number of patterns (Talmy 2006: 87):
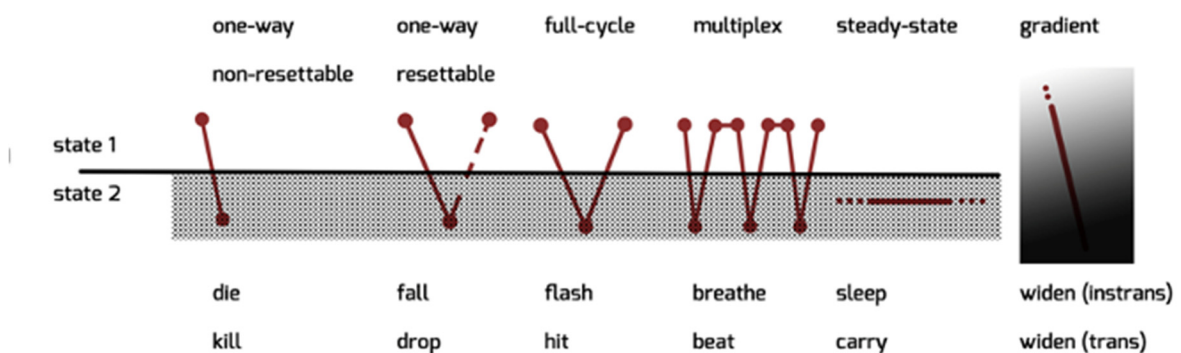


**Figure 5.** Talmy's aspect model (Talmy 2006: 87)

This model presents a lexical interpretation of aspect where the semantics of the verbs plays a role in defining the pattern. Unfortunately, Talmy does not go into detail in describing these patterns, but his main claim is that these patterns are restricted to certain grammatical forms, for example, the gradient verb *widen* can be combined with adverbs denoting increase, as in *The river widens progressively*. A steady-state type, on the other hand, cannot permit this adverb: \**She progressively slept.*

### 2.4.4. The category of aspect in CG: Croft's model

Generally, Croft (2012: 31) agrees with Comrie's definition of aspect: "aspects are different ways of viewing the internal temporal constituency of a situation" (Comrie 1976: 3) but notes that this definition cannot fully explain "specific manifestation of aspect". Therefore, he adapted Vendler's and Comrie's models to produce one which is "more elaborate than the relatively small number of aspectual viewpoints proposed in bidimensional theories" (Croft 2012: 32).

To analyse lexical aspect, Croft draws on the two-dimensional representation of aspect i.e., temporal and qualitative state dimensions which reminds us of Langacker's (1982: 266) definition of aspect where time and trajectory play a key role. The temporal dimension presents phases of the event in time, while the qualitative state dimension is "a set of qualitative states of the unfolding event" (Croft 2012: 53). He notes that the time dimension is continuous but that the qualitative state dimension is not necessarily continuous because it depends on the quality a state possesses. For example, seeing can only have two clear-cut points: a state of not seeing and seeing, but if the situation would be *I reached the crest of the hill and saw Mount Tamalpais,* it represents an achievement construal:
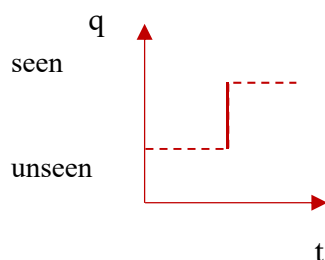


**Figure 6.** Croft: two-dimensional representation of aspect (1982: 266)

In figure 6 *t* stands for a temporal dimension and *q* is for a qualitative state dimension. We can see how the situation developed not only in temporal phases but also how "unseen" state

became "seen" gradually. The line between the two states is highlighted as it profiles the achievement. Thus, Croft (2012: 53) defines lexical aspect as "how events are construed as unfolding over time" and highlights that a construal plays a crucial role in understanding aspect (2012: 32). Overall, following Vendler (1957), Croft distinguishes four types of events: states, achievements, activities and accomplishments and examines them though the two-dimensional geometrical model.

Having discussed aspect as a linguistic category from four different perspectives, it can be concluded that even though the category of aspect is contested, the discussed studies agree that it presents an internal view on a situation. Moreover, the category does not restrict itself only to the progressive form but other elements such as the meaning of verbs, verbal complements and adverbial modifiers, and the progressive form can also affect it (Langacker 1982, 2002, 2008), (Brinton 1988: 38). In fact, a combination of different verb categories can result in construing different types of events (Radden & Dirven 2007: 178). Remarkably, there are certain verbs (denoting states) that do not typically permit the use of the progressive form. However, as the progressive aspect has been increasing in its use (Kranich 2010: 107), (Leech et al. 2009: 122) there are well-attested cases of stative verbs in the combination with the progressive form.

## Chapter 3. Stative verbs and progressive aspect

### 3.1. Stative verbs with progressive aspect in general linguistics

Biber et al. (1999: 473) state that a verb can occur with the progressive, on condition that there is a human agent who can control the initiating, continuation and finishing an action. They go on to state that verbs that typically do not combine with the progressive take a human as an experiencer rather than an agent. With regard to verbs, they claim that there are some verbs that allow the progressive and other verbs, namely stative verbs, do not allow, like *hear, see, look.* According to their findings, stative verbs are rarely used with the progressive (Biber et al 1999: 472). Furthermore, they divide stative verbs into two subgroups. The first group is represented by mental and attitudinal states (*hope*, *associate, agree),* and the second one is perception verbs *(feel, see, look).*

Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 168) distinguish four types of stative verbs based on semantics:

- verbs of perception and sensation;
- verbs of hurting;

- verbs of cognition, emotion, and attitude;
- stance verbs.

Notably, Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 170) point out that stative verbs can occur with the progressive, but the meaning of the verb should not restrict it. Once the progressive combines with stative verbs, the meaning is no longer stative rather dynamic. According to Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 168), this peculiar combination may produce different readings such as tentativeness, limited duration or activity. For instance, in *I'm hoping you can help me* the speaker sounds less harsh as the progressive makes the whole utterance sound more polite and "[it] avoids any danger of apparent brusqueness". In trying to understand the reasons of this tentative reading, they suppose that longer grammatical structures are traditionally perceived as polite, like *I wonder if you would mind opening the door.* Another reason for that can be limited duration of the action which can imply that the speaker is aware that their interlocutor may not want to help (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 170).

Quirk et al. (1985:203) distinguish four categories of stative verbs which they categorise under the umbrella term of "private states":

- intellectual states *(know, believe, think)*
- states of emotion or attitude *(intend, wish, like)*
- states of perception *(see, hear, smell)*
- states of bodily sensation *(hurt, ache, tickle)*

Surprisingly, they claim that statives can combine with the progressive and, what is the most important, it requires "some change of the interpretation other than the addition of the temporary meaning of the progressive" Quirk et al. (1985:202). Thus, they assume that the progressive produces a "special effect" which is demonstrated in the following table:

**Table 8.** The special effect of progressive (Quirk et al. 1985:202).

| Normal nonprogressive | Nonnormal progressive | Special effect of progressive |
|---|---|---|
| The neighbours are friendly | The neighbours *are being* friendly | Suggests that 'friendliness' is a form of behaviour (perhaps insincere) |
| I hope you will come | *I am hoping* you will come | Makes the speaker's attitude more tentative and perhaps more polite |
| Tina resembles her sister | Tina *is resembling* her sister | With the comparative construction, the progressive turns the stative meaning into a process meaning |

Quirk et al. (1985: 202) claim that in these sentences the verbs are reclassified as dynamic which is similar to the idea of dynamic factor by Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 170), which in turn results in "special effect" such as tentativeness in *I am hoping you will come,* and process in *Tina is resembling her sister.* Additionally, they state that the meaning of the progressive goes beyond temporariness and sometimes it can be used with attitudinal past to indicate a present wish as in *I am hoping to borrow some money.* They note that this can help to "avoid impoliteness which may well result from expressing one's attitude too directly, eg in making a request" (Quirk et al. 1985: 210).

Gavis (1998:116) carried out a study of 14 stative verbs, collecting data from various written and spoken sources, analysing 715 tokens. The results reveal that

the meaning of some stative verbs is more prone to co-occur with the progressive, such as *see, hear, love, remember* (Gavis 1998: 206-207), where the progressive maybe used for the following reasons:

- a desire for emphasis on the limited duration of the activity;
- a desire for emphasis on the conscious involvement of the subject in the activity;
- a desire for greater vividness;
- a desire for intensification.

This data reveals that expressing politeness is the major reason for the progressive to appear with stative verbs (Gavis 1998: 231). Statistically the data demonstrated a clear preference for the present tense compared to the past, 84% against 16%. Notably, 12% of tokens appeared with the perfect form, the verb *mean* in particular.  Modal and semi-modal structures, such as *will, would, be going to,* are quite infrequent. 27% of the data occurred with adverbial modifiers of different types (Gavis 1998: 298-300). Gavis (1998: 8) suggests that the study shows a "language change in progress" and sometimes native speakers opt for a progressive form rather than a non-progressive (Gavis 1998: 348):

> (21)   a. We're seeing live pictures of them now
>
>        b. We see live pictures of them now

Gavis claims that (21a) is more typical for native speakers, and this token was well-attested in CNN new reportages.

The occurrence of stative verbs with the progressive is also demonstrated more recently by Anderwald (2017) which examined the construction *loving it* in BNC, COCA and COHA. The study concluded that the verb *love* is 50 times as frequent as *loving*, but the latter shows

an increase in frequency in the 1990s (Anderwald 2017 :187). This rising trend is observable in both BNC and COCA. However, like Gavis (1998: 8), Anderwald notes that this cannot be indicative of a rising trend of stative verbs occurring with the progressive, because the incidence is still low compared to the non-progressive uses, but that it may demonstrate "a language change in progress". The meaning which this combination carries is thought to be emphatic as *love* lost its emphatic weight due to conventionalization and progressive performs this function (Anderwald 2017: 182).

Granath & Wherrity (2014) also studied *be loving* and *be knowing* in COCA. Their study found 132 and 66 tokens respectively which showed an increase in usage in the first half of the 20th century, most commonly in the spoken register (Granath & Wherrity 2014: 14-15). They conclude that such co-occurrence does not cause a shift in the meaning of verbs, rather that speakers express aspectual and subjective messages (Granath & Wherrity 2014: 11):

> such as ongoingness, progressivity, temporary state, change of state, duration, and incompletion, as well as subjective messages such as annoyance, approval/disapproval, irritation, and disbelief etc. where the speaker invokes 'process in time' to increase the vividness and immediacy of the utterance and thereby signal his/her attitude towards or emotional involvement in an event.

Additionally, they argue that progressive and non-progressive forms are not interchangeable, and that speakers opt for progressive forms to convey the aforementioned messages. As for writing, Granath and Wherrity (2014: 18) suppose that the number of progressive cases can be reduced due to automatic grammatical checkers. Overall, as these cases appear both in written and spoken registers, Granath & Wherrity (2014: 18) agree with Anderwald (2017: 194), Gavis (1998: 8) on the "on-going change".

## 3.2 Stative verbs with progressive aspect in CG

Radden & Dirven (2007: 191) present quite a detailed classification of stative verbs compared to Huddleston & Pullum's (2002: 168) or Quirk et al. (1985:203):

a) Psychological states: *want, desire, miss*

b) Emotional states: *love, hate, detest, be happy*

c) Mental states: *know, believe, think*

d) Perceptual states: *see, feel, smell*

e) Behavioural states: *be good to someone, be mean, be a miser*

f) States of possession: *possess, belong, own*

g) States of being: *contain, consist, exist*

h) Positional states: *stand, sit, lie*

i) Various relational states: *involve, be similar to, be the father of*

They highlight that these states can last for some time and then "cease to exist" and they are perceived as infinite which ultimately means that they do not have implicit boundaries and cannot traditionally combine with the progressive like in *This bottle is containing malt whisky* (Radden & Dirven 2007: 192). But if these states are used in combination with the progressive, it brings about a new meaning:

(22) a. How do you like your new job?

b. How are you liking your new job?

As the progressive focuses on the internal view of the situation in (22b) *are liking* becomes "heterogeneous, specific and episodic" and the implicature of the speaker is different. In other words, the speaker can imply that their addressee has not yet formed their opinion. (22b) can be paraphrased by "by the way, have you already formed an opinion on your job ?" (Radden & Dirven 2007: 192).

Talmy (2006:88), like Langacker (2002: 91), notes that there are some verbs that do not typically occur with the progressive, but in case such a combination does occur it can lead to a shift in meaning. A prime example is the verb *die* which usually indicates a point of becoming dead as in (23a). However, (23b) exhibits a prolongation of this point, becoming gradual (Talmy 2006:89):

(23) a. He died as she looked on.

b. He was (slowly) dying as she looked on.

Talmy (2006:88) explains it as a shift in the pattern of distribution. Normally, as in (23a) *die* realizes a one-way non-resettable distribution as the state of 'aliveness' transforms in the state of 'deadness'. However, in (23b) this change of states does not happen as the margin between them is blurred and the event becomes gradual, thereby activating one-way resettable distribution.

Croft (2012: 152) claims that the progressive requires a construal to change "aspectual contour to a (transitory state)". Croft further states that a construal of directed activity is often activated with states that can change over time:

(24) She is resembling her mother more and more every year.

(25)  I'm understanding quantum mechanics better and better.

However, Croft (2012: 153) points out that this construal is available due to the adverbial modifiers *more and more* and *better and better* in the preceding examples which realize this gradual change.

Langacker (1987: 254-267) and in subsequent works divides the verbs into two main lexical classes: perfective, indicating the start and end of an action, and imperfective, profiling stable situations with indefinite interval:

- Perfective: fall, jump, kick, bite etc.
- Imperfective: be, know, like, detest etc.

These verbs traditionally fall into two categories: "stative", which corresponds to Langacker's imperfective, and "active", referring to perfective verbs (Langacker 2008: 147). These verbs differ in their grammatical behaviour because imperfective verbs restrict a progressive form as they already possess a progressive construal. Given that the progressive's main function is "to convert a perfective process into an imperfective one", such a combination will be redundant (2008: 156). This is sometimes possible with the help of adverbial modifiers of degree, which transform a verb's construal.

(26)  a. She likes her new teacher.
      b. She's liking her new teacher more and more.

According to Langacker (2008: 150), *more and more* in (26b) enables a perfective construal which explains the use of the progressive as the verb now shows a changing rather than a fixed state.

Lee (2001: 148) also distinguishes two similar verbal categories based on their semantics, however, this differentiation is fuzzy because verbs can change their conceptual difference. So, these are not two distinct verbal categories, but rather "[s]trictly speaking, then, the terms 'perfective' and 'imperfective' apply to particular uses of verbs rather than to verbs themselves." Lee suggests the progressive encompasses two conceptual levels of an event – event as whole and a part of the event which is profiled. Lee (2001:150) compares the function of the progressive with taking photos and assigns it a "freezing function". When we look at a photograph, we see a frozen moment and this moment is a part of the whole event. Thereby, it can explain why the progressive usually occurs with adverbial modifiers of time, *at eight o'clock* or *when I came in*, and does not usually allow imperfective verbs because it necessitates a two-level conception of a situation, highlighting the moment of a situation and

its boundedness, which restricts imperfective verbs Lee (2001: 150). However, sometimes these verbs allow the progressive though with a special reading:

(27) a. This machine lacks a control lever.

b. This machine is lacking a control lever.

Lee (2001: 150) states that (27b) "conveys a suggestion of temporariness." By comparison (27b) reveals the fact that there is not a constant problem, which can be expressed as a notice on the machine, but a temporal problem which requires immediate action.

De Wit & Brisard (2014), like Langacker (1987: 254-267; 2008: 147), divide verbs into two main categories, but use the conventional terms "dynamic" and "stative" verbs as, in their view, Langacker's terms "perfective" and "imperfective" refer solely to grammatical aspect rather than lexical aspect (De Wit & Brisard 2014: 59). Hence, stative verbs profile homogeneous and unbounded situations which "remain qualitatively identical at every point in time at which it is manifested." The present progressive, in their view, plays a crucial role in differentiating these two verbal categories as it can be regarded "as a symptom of their dynamicity." It can be used as a method to observe a dynamic verb (De Wit & Brisard 2014: 61). However, they note that the present progressive cannot always show a distinct difference between the verbs as some of the "prototypically stative verbs" can co-occur with progressive (De Wit & Brisard 2014: 61):

(28) He's already talking, if this thing goes the way they think it is, next fall *he's wanting* to start looking at expanding that storage facility.

Commenting on (28), they state that the co-occurrence of the stative *want* with the progressive results in expressing a subjective prediction "with a relatively high degree of certainty" (De Wit & Brisard 2014: 75).

In sum, a number of studies from general and cognitive linguistics confirm that even though stative verbs cannot combine with the progressive, this phenomenon does occur in real language. Moreover, this use is on the rise, as corpus-based studies demonstrated Anderwald (2017:187), Granath & Wherrity (2014: 14-15). This can allude to the fact that the popularity of progressive itself is rising too Leech et al. (2009: 122), Smith (2002: 327). Despite the fact that scholars do not agree on the meaning this combination yields, they all point out that it is somewhat changed. Cognitivists assume that it is motivated by a construal Langacker (2008: 150), Croft (2012: 152). Others suppose that stative verbs in the progressive reveal subjective messages such as politeness or emphasis (Granath and Wherrity 2014: 11), (Gavis 1998: 231),

(Anderwald 2017: 182). There is also an opinion that it requires different readings or implicatures (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 170), (Radden & Dirven 2007: 195).

## Chapter 4. Corpus investigation

## 4.1. Methodology

The core of the study is a corpus of six stative verbs in the progressive which has been obtained from BNC and COCA. These verbs can be divided into two semantic categories:

- Emotion verbs: *hate, love, want*
- Cognition verbs: *recognise, know, understand*

The decision to investigate these six verbs was the result of a five-stage process of elimination. In the first stage, an initial list of stative verbs which have been already studied Anderwald (2017), Biber et al. (1999), Huddleston & Pullum (2002), Gavis (1998), Granath & Wherrity (2014), Quirk et al. (1985) was compiled. In the second stage, each of the verbs in combination with the progressive was checked in BNC and COCA to find the most frequent examples in the corpora. Both written and spoken registers were examined to develop answers to the research questions, and these six stative verbs appeared to be the most common in both corpora.

Next, search strings such as *be + stative verb + ing* were found in the corpora. A challenge for this study was to scrutinize 10,000 raw tokens in order to rule out mistagging. The numerous raw concordances had to be reduced and this stage was more time consuming than anticipated due to the fact that some of the tokens were functionally different, as such several of categories of tokens have been replaced from the study.

First, a combination of the verbs *know, understand, recognise* with *-ing* affix can function as a noun (or gerund), and thus should be removed:

(29)  a. His problem *was knowing* what to write.

b. kinds of *wanting* someone

c. So one of the aspects we're looking for sometimes *is recognising* when we're in a negative cycle

d. He thought, there *is wanting* to go to bed with someone

The second category of tokens that has not been used was possessive structures with gerund, with *know* and *understand* in particular.

(30)  a. In her *child's understanding* it seemed that it was her own liberation

b. how flimsy most *people's understanding* of it is.

c. still puzzled by the *receptionist's knowing* look.

An additional problem at this stage of the study was differentiating verbs' meanings. The verb *want,* for instance, apart from its basic meaning of 'having a desire' has a meaning of 'lacking something':

(31)  name at every opportunity, whenever more urgent occupation is wanting, had made use even of this mere three square inches of dusty glass

Therefore, tokens which have alternative meanings were eliminated from the dataset.

As for the verb *recognise,* its alternative meaning is 'admitting something', which ultimately signifies that the verb does not fall into the category of cognition verbs.

(32)  a. National and international initiatives *are recognising* the problem

b. Once again we *are recognising* the good services of a shop which has been recommended

Therefore, both verbs, as used in different meanings, were removed as they have lost their stative meaning.

In a similar manner, Granath & Wherrity (2014: 13) also experienced the same problems when compiling their study corpus, as such, to eliminate the "false hits" they removed the equative type of tokens, genitive *-s* and adjectival uses.

In the final stage of data selection, the tokens were systematized in a word unicode 8 format. They have been grouped in spoken and written registers both subdivided further into present, past, future, modal, perfect, infinitival and 'be going to' subgroups. Subsequently, the tokens were analysed qualitatively and quantitatively in the AntConc programme to distinguish recurring patterns of use to find out underpinning construals. Finally, after the elimination process the sample data were consolidated into 1987 tokens, including both BNC and COCA tokens.

## 4.2. Methodological rationale

A combination of quantitative and qualitative corpus-based approaches was used in data analysis in order to address the research questions. Corpus analysis has a number of advantages for this investigation. First, the data collected from BNC and COCA provide a

large quantity of textual discourse which can lay the foundation for a thorough qualitative examination. Secondly, a large quantity of both textual discourse and tokens, can reveal frequencies in usage, thus indicating the "reflection of unconsciously registered values along various cognitive parameters" (Talmy 2007: XVIII).

However, quantitative corpus analysis also has some disadvantages. As Talmy claims, it is unable to include audio recordings which clearly could reveal additional non-verbal information such as intonation, pitch, pauses which can be crucial for revealing cognitive construals (Talmy 2007: XIX).

Another limitation of a corpus analysis approach concerns the nature of the spoken register, as natural speech can be ill-formed and phenomena such as omission and ellipsis are well-attested in the data. Consider the following tokens:

(33)   a. *I been wanting* to say (COCA SP IF)

b. *We been knowing* each other (BCN SP IF)

c. *'Got ta be hating* that, man. (COCA SP IF)

In natural speech, many grammatical constructions can be omitted due to its spontaneous nature or a specific variety of English like Afro-American Vernacular English. For this reason, this research aims to examine both the spoken and written registers to distinguish construals that can underpin the usage of the progressive. In this respect, Grondelaers et al. (2007:149) state that there is a tight link between Cognitive Linguistics (CL) in general and corpus-based approaches as CL is based on the principle of usage-based analysis, "you cannot have a usage-based linguistics unless you study actual usage – as it appears in corpora in the form of spontaneous, non-elicited language data, or as it appears in an on-line and elicited form in experimental settings"

Overall, corpus-based analysis appears to be beneficial for the purposes of this study despite its limitations. The limitations concerning the elliptical essence of corpus data noted by Talmy (2007: XVIII - XIX) are counter-balanced by tokens taken from the written register, where the syntactical structures of sentences are mostly well-formed. However, it is acknowledged that audio recordings of the spoken data could have added valuable information for this research. In general, it seems that the sample for this research, extracted from two corpora including spoken and written registers should be sufficient for identifying frequency patterns and answer the research questions.

**Chapter 5. Quantitative analysis**

**5.1. Overall comparison of BNC and COCA data**

This section presents the result of the quantitative analysis of the sample which comprises 1987 tokens (BNC 383 tokens, COCA 1604 tokens). Figure 7 represents the distribution of the sample over the two corpora:
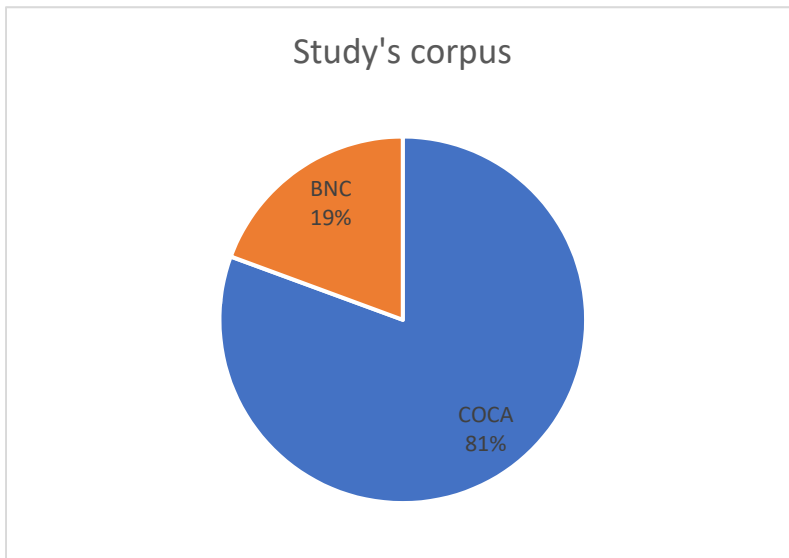


**Figure 7.** The distribution of the data in the corpora

It is clear that the corpus for this study mainly consists of tokens from COCA due to the fact that the corpora have different sizes which means that the sample should be normalised. This proportion reflects the real-life usage of verbs in the progressive, as we remember that a usage-based principle is one of the most important for CL in general, and for CG as well (Talmy 2007: XVIII).

For the purposes of this study, the sample was normalised per one million words. The next figure shows the comparison of how each verb is represented in the sample.
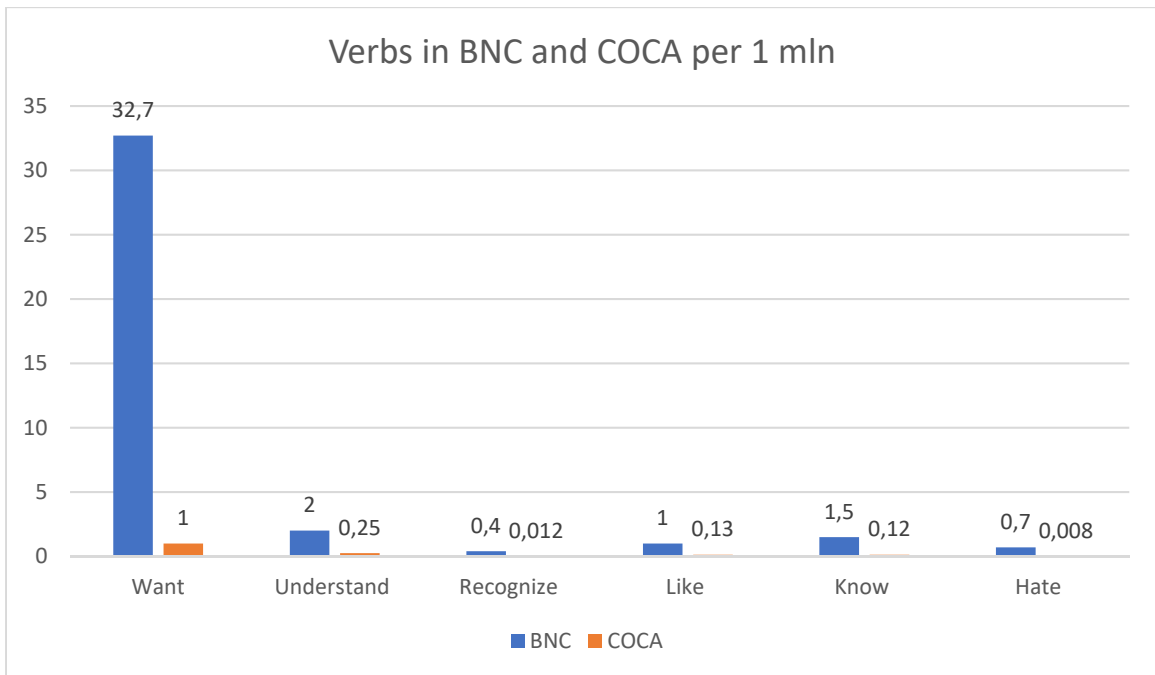
**Figure 8.** Verbs in BNC and COCA per 1 million words

Despite the relatively low occurrences of the verbs, the ratio of *want* is the highest of all the verbs in both corpora, and constitutes a major proportion of the study sample. Another important point is that COCA has demonstrated scant occurrences of the stative verbs in progressive overall, with an occurrence of less than one verb per a million words. On the contrary, the BNC sample showed a higher verbs incidence compared to COCA.

The next two figures illustrate how each sample is compiled by the verbs separately.
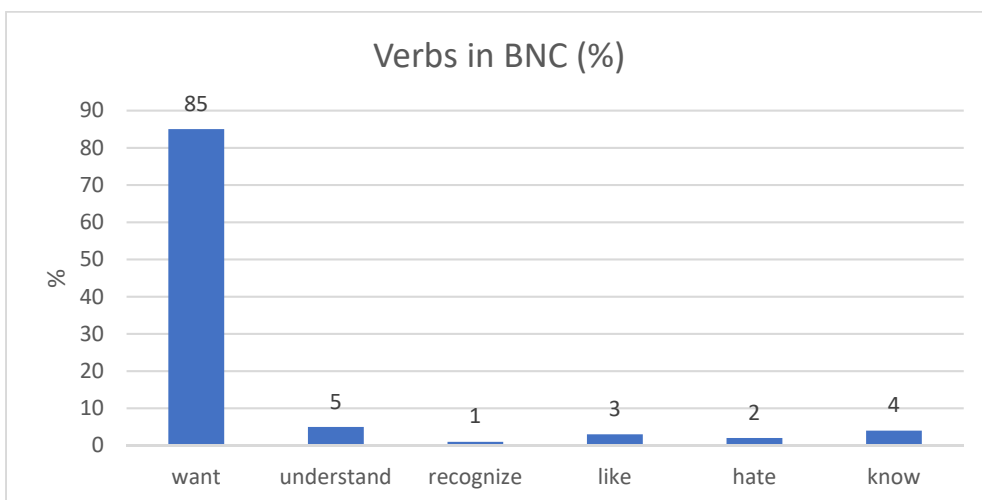


**Figure 9.** The distribution of verbs in BNC in %

It is clear that *want* constitutes the bulk of the BNC sample and the rest of the verbs are presented quite scarcely. There is a gradual trend among the rest of the verbs with a step of 1%: starting form *understand* (5%) and going to *recognise* (1%).

39

In the following figure, we can see how the six verbs build up the COCA sample.
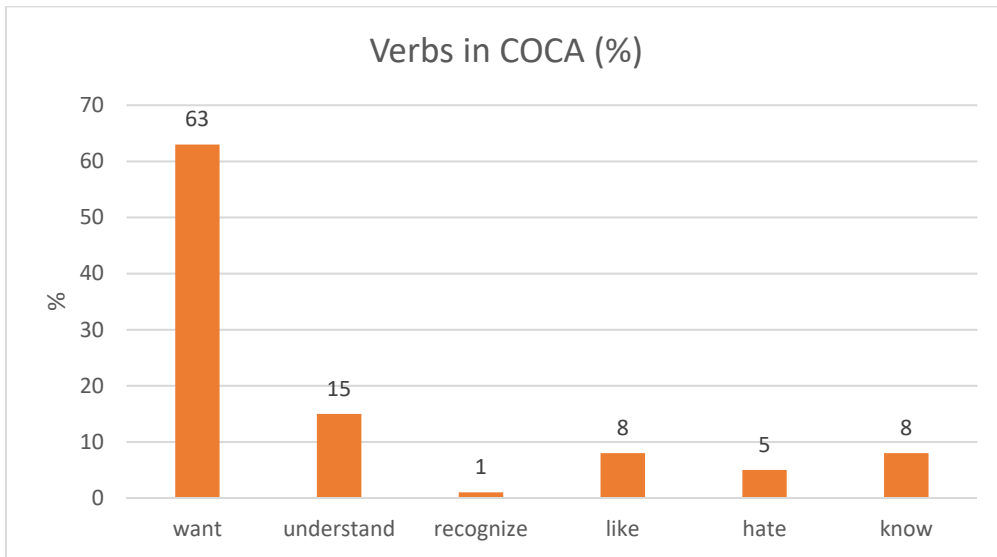


**Figure 10.** The distribution of verbs in COCA in %

In this graph, more than a half of the sample is comprised by want (63%). The rest of the verbs show an uneven distribution too, with the exception of *like* and *know* which both have 8%. The minimal ratio is with recognise (1%).

If we compare figures X and X, we can see that the distribution of the verbs is noticeably uneven; in both corpora the main part of the samples is created by *want*. Moreover, even though the rest of the verbs show different percentages, there is an almost identical trend in verbs ratios in BNC and COCA, apart from *like* and *know* which have the same percentages on COCA. The overall trend of for the ratios between the verbs in both corpora is the following:

- *want*
- *understand*
- *know*
- *hate*
- *like*
- *recognise*

## 5.2. Registers in BNC and COCA

To answer the research questions, it was also important to examine the registers as they can reveal frequency patterns. The next table demonstrates the distribution of verbs within the spoken and written registers:
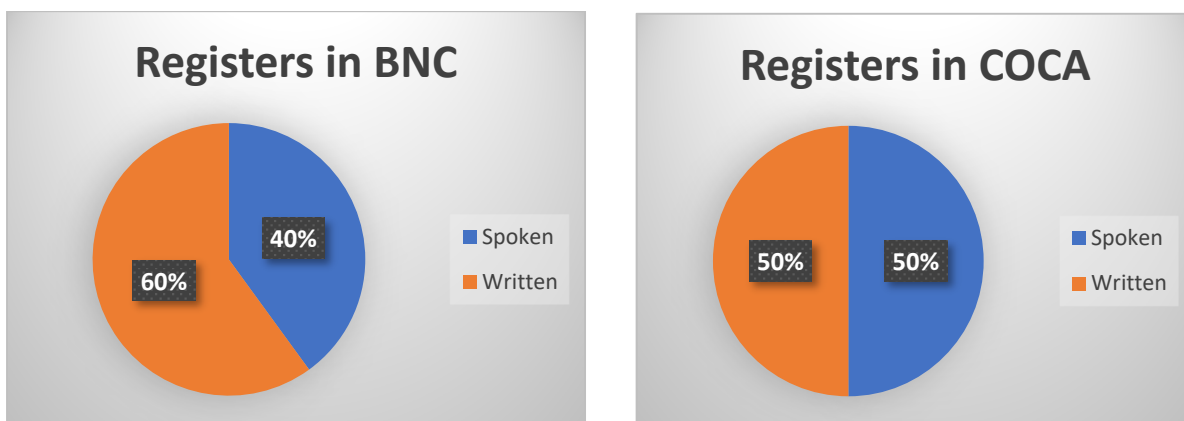
**Figure 11.** Spoken and written registers distribution in BNC and COCA

It is striking that the registers are equally distributed in COCA. Conversely the BNC data illustrates quite a different phenomenon: cases of verbs in the progressive are more frequent in the written register. It is important to comment on the different sources of texts that both corpora use. COCA has transcribed over 150 TV and radio programmes, and movies to compile the spoken corpus and written texts were taken from fiction, news periodicals, academic journals and internet resources. BNC's corpus contains texts from books, periodicals, advertising materials, unpublished written material and spontaneous natural speech in different social events (educational, business, public and leisure).

To explore register distribution more closely and highlight the frequency patterns, each corpus was analysed separately to see how each verb is represented in both registers.
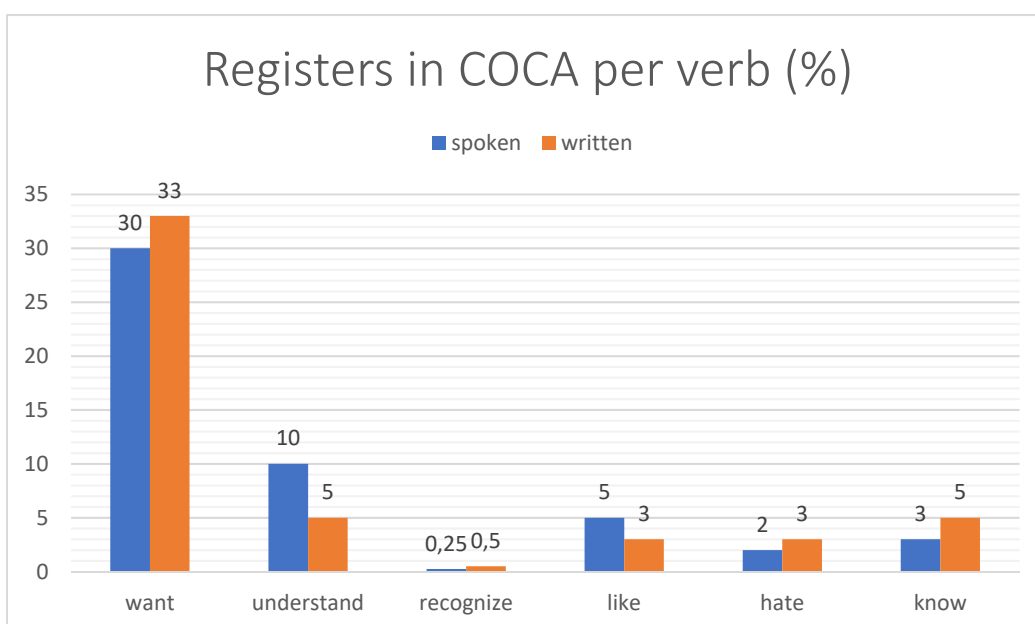


**Figure 12.** COCA: spoken and written registers distribution per verb

The percentages shown in figure 12 demonstrate that the written register is more popular for the verbs *recognize*, *hate, know* and *want*. The verbs *understand* and *like* represent the opposite situation where the spoken register is most common. For the verb *want*, figure 12 illustrates an almost equal proportion between the registers. Overall, there is a significant difference in the distribution across the registers apart from *want* and *hate*, while in the rest of the verbs the difference is almost two time more.

Figure13 demonstrates how the registers are distributed in the BNC sample:
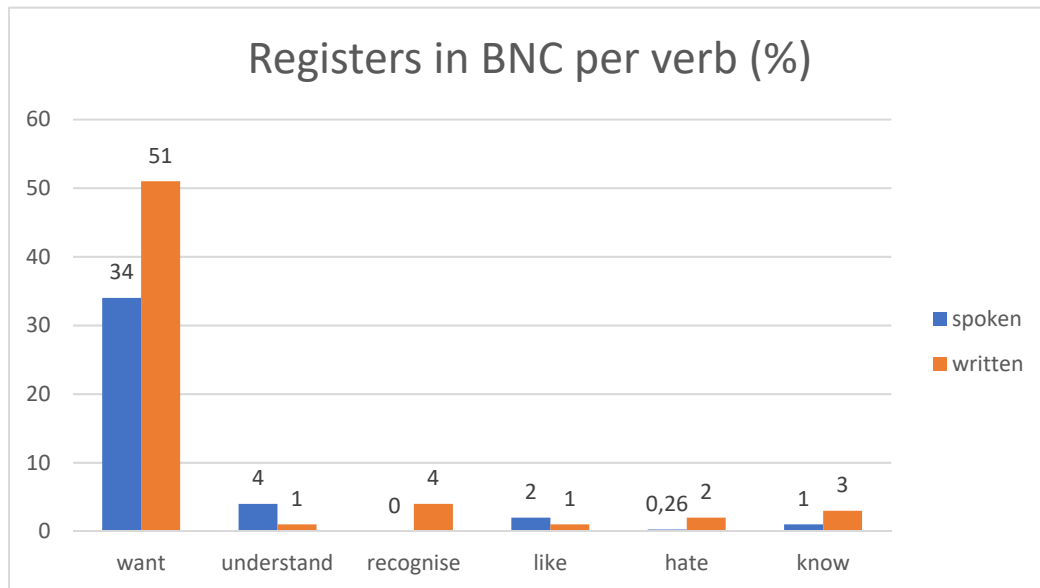


**Figure 13.** BNC: spoken and written registers distribution per verb

In this graph, the written register is more popular for *want, recognise*, *hate* and *know* while the spoken register is popular for *understand* and *like*., The difference between the registers can be quite dramatic and, in some cases, such as *understand*, four-fold (4% spoken vs 1% written), or almost four-fold in *hate* sample (0,26% spoken vs 2% written). Overall, it can be seen that the same four verbs (*recognise*, *hate, know, want)* preferred a written register in both corpora. BNC has a more significant difference in register distribution compared to COCA with *want* and *recognise*.

This section has dealt with the numerical distribution of the verbs, registers and corpora. For the purposes of this study, it is also vitally important to examine the tenses and pronouns that are used with each of the chosen stative verbs. This data is presented in the following subsection.

### 5.3. Tenses in BNC and COCA

This graph presents how the verbs are distributed with regard to tense forms (present, past, future) and verbal structures such as modal, perfective, infinitival and *be going to*.
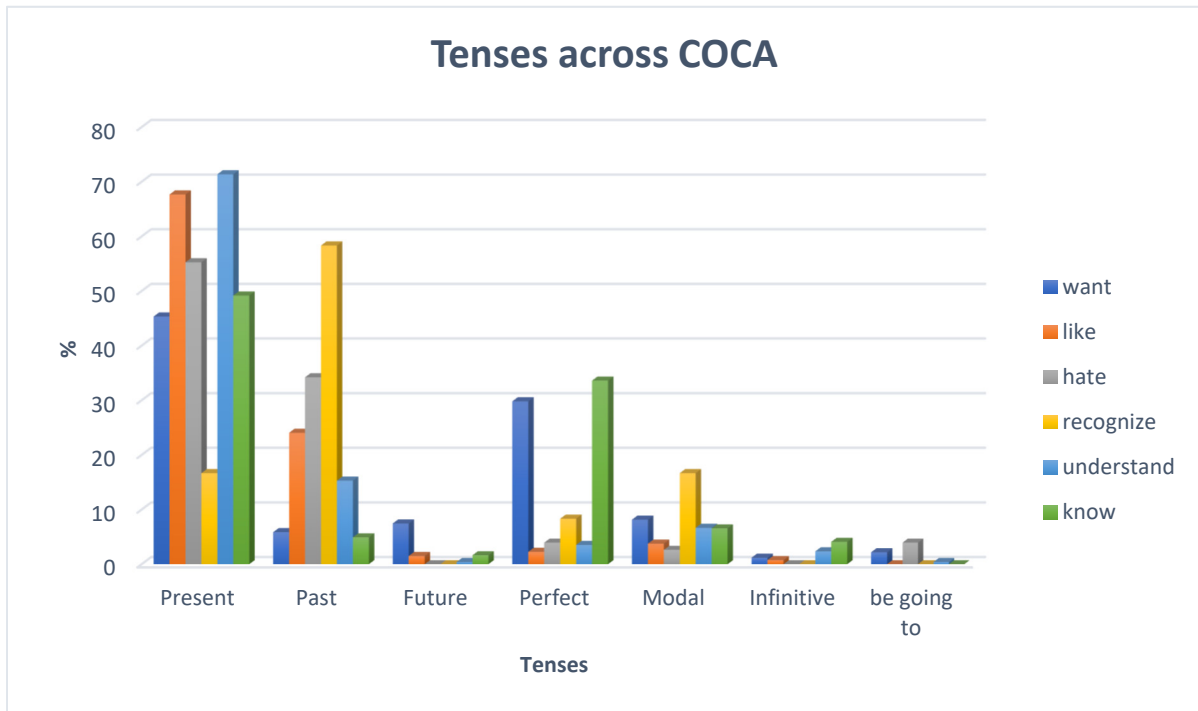


**Figure 14.** Tenses, aspects and verbal structures across COCA.

The graph shows that apart from the three tenses (present, past and future), the sample includes four further categories: the perfective aspect and a combination of stative verbs in the progressive with modal, infinitive and *be going to* structures:

(34) a. Those that *are hating* could NOT be more wrong

b. I *was recognizing* the people from last year

c. They *will be wanting* to chase up any leads

d. you *should be knowing* that guy in person before sending it.

e. but *I'll not be liking* to ruin me last pair of boots

f. Aykroyd, who *has been wanting* to do the sequel for eight years

As for the tenses, the present tense was most common for five of the six verbs. The second most popular tense is the past. Surprisingly, the future tense is rare in the sample; even considered in conjunction with the *be going to* the maximum percentage of cases related to future situations is less than 10%. The perfect tense was identified with all six verbs, but only *know* and *want* demonstrated significant ratios.
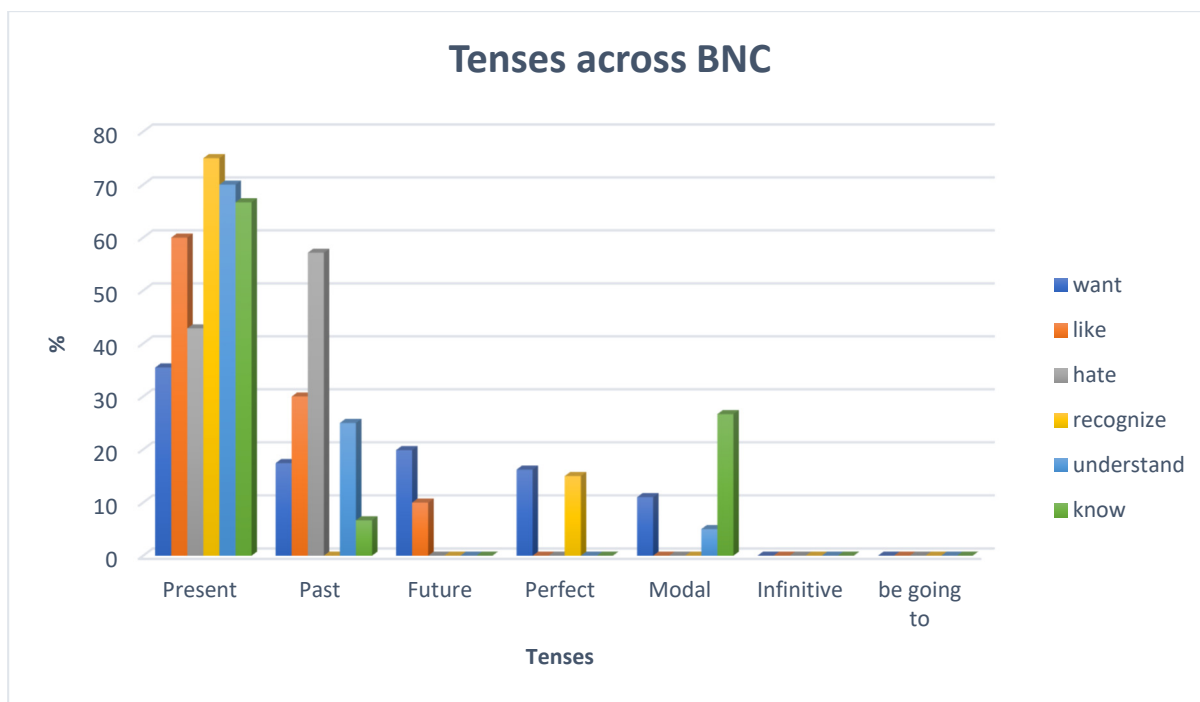
**Figure 15.** Tenses, aspects and verbal structures across BNC

The first point that arises from the BNC sample is the fact that the present tense is the most common among all the verbs while the past tense is the second most widespread. Overall, the verbs appeared predominantly in the present and past form, and the tokens used in the future and perfect forms are quite limited, and finally, only two verbs appeared in combination with them. Finally, the infinitive and *be going to* structures are not present in contrast to the COCA sample.

(35)　a. So *you're understanding* it.

　　　b. He *was hating* this.

　　　c. they *won't be liking* it if you're late.

　　　d. *I've just been recognising* that the sort of feeling your mother had

　　　e. but *I need to be knowing*

Overall, the comparison of tense distribution of the two corpora shows a clear trend that present and past tenses are the most widespread. The distribution of the rest of the tense and verbal structures differs.[1] There are fewer verbal categories in BNC than in COCA.

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[1] It should be acknowledged that this study has also used a comparison of non-progressive cases versus progressive, but the analysis did not find any significant difference between the progressive and progressive tokens in terms of tenses distribution. It seems that the progressive forms follow the same trend as the non-progressive cases in BNC and COCA.

## 5.4. Pronouns in BNC and COCA

This section completes the quantitative analysis by highlighting the incidence of personal pronouns in combination with stative verbs. Essentially, the figures in the tables 16 and 17 provide information regarding the distribution of pronouns in both corpora.
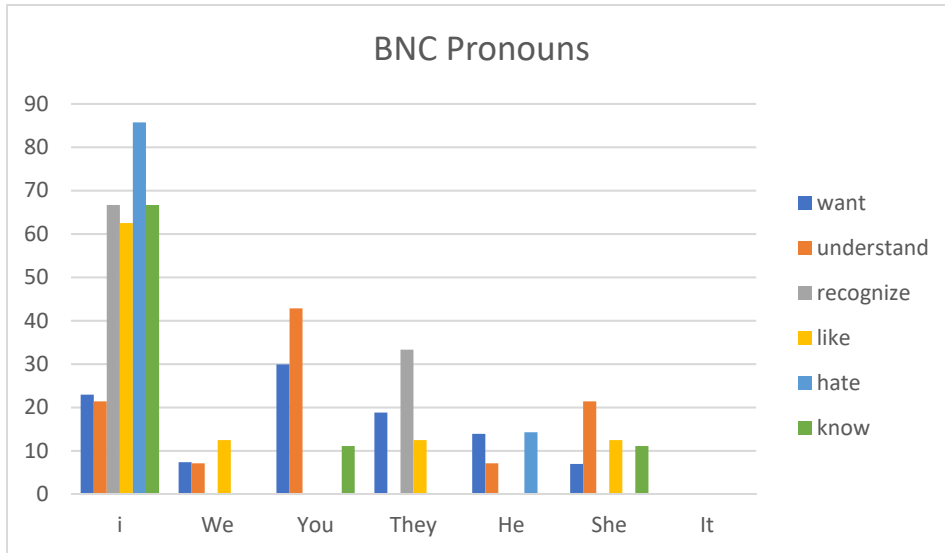


**Figure 16.** Pronouns in BNC

Figure16 shows the occurrence of pronouns with each verb in the BNC sample. Overall, the personal pronoun *I* turns out to be the most popular as it occurred with all six verbs. The incidence of *I* with *recognise*, *like* and *hate* is significantly higher than for other verbs and accounts for 60%-80% compared to *want* and *understand*, where it is approximately 20%. Interestingly, it is difficult to distinguish a clear-cut pattern for other pronouns as they are all present only in limited amounts in the sample. However, the figures show that the usage of other personal pronouns is somewhat low compared to pronoun *I* perhaps because the subjects are more often expressed by nouns, with the exception of the pronoun *I*.

The next figure highlights the use of pronouns in COCA sample.
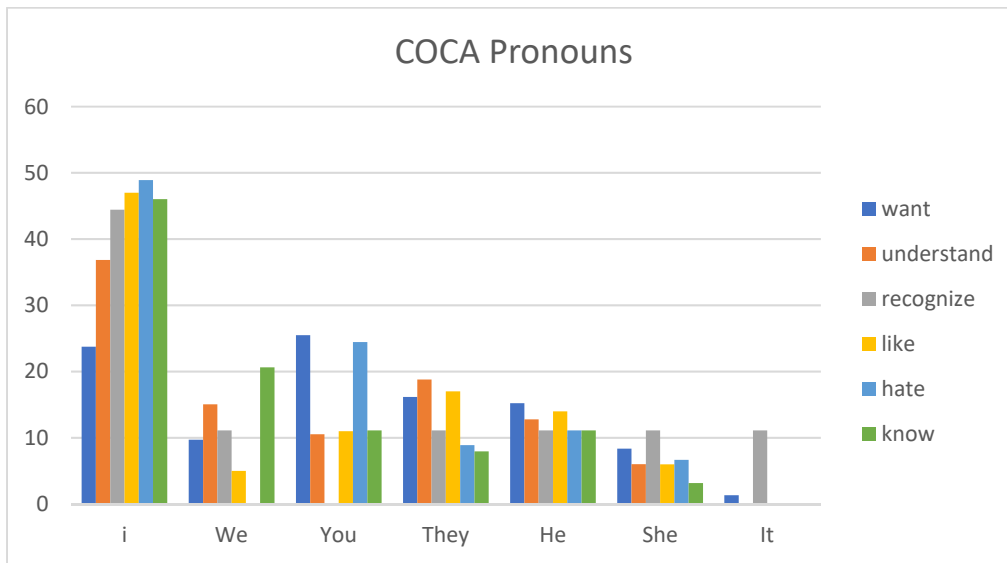


**Figure 17.** Pronouns in COCA

Generally, all seven personal pronouns are present in the sample although with different frequencies. The incidence of *I* is the highest and the pronoun occurred with all six verbs; the occurrence with *recognize*, *like*, *hate* and *know* reaches 45-50%. It is also observable that the pronouns *they* and *he* have similar patterns and, interestingly, the occurrence of *he* is almost equal with all six verbs ranging between 11-15%. The pronoun *she* is significantly lower than *they* and *he* and accounts only for 3-11%. The pronoun *you* was not found with *recognize*, but it had quite a high incidence with *want* and *hate*. The pronoun *we* is scarcely present in the sample and reaches its maximum with know (about 20%), and is not used with *hate* at all.

From both samples it is clear that the pronoun *I* has the highest occurrence and is used with all the verbs which amounts to 62-85% in BNC and 40-45% in COCA. This can apparently signify the overall trend of using *I* in our everyday life. The pronoun *you* seems to be quite widespread in both corpora which can indicate the context of a situation (a dialogue or discussion) and also show that it is easier to form judgement in the 'you-perspective' or 'i-perspective' rather than in the third person perspective. A similar pattern in both samples is a

low occurrence of pronoun *it* as it refers to inanimate objects. Overall, it can be seen that personal pronouns were more common in COCA rather than in BNC[2].

In sum, quantitative analysis was conducted to look at the use of progressive statives in the spoken and written registers both in COCA and BNC. A long and meticulous process of compiling the sample for this study from the numerous raw tokens has resulted in 1987 tokens which mainly come from COCA. *Want* appears to be the most frequent verb in both corpora. Generally, both samples show several similar trends in the frequency of verbs, tense and pronouns distribution. The distribution of registers appears to be different in the samples as BNC demonstrates a clear preference for the written register

## Chapter 6.  Qualitative analysis

To complement the statistical analysis, this study also included a qualitative analysis. The analysis presented in this chapter is based on the theoretical assumptions that have been discussed previously regarding the multi-faceted nature of aspect (Langacker 1982, 2002, 2008; Brinton 1988; Comrie 1976; Talmy 2000; Vendler 1957). The sample was carefully examined in order to find recurring patterns of meaning that will enable the study to answer the research questions. The analysis takes into consideration context, adverbials (grounding settings), verbal meaning, sentence object and subject.

### 6.1. Analysis of the verb *hate*

### *6.1.1. Emphasis*

In general, one of the clearest patterns of meaning in the *hate* sample appears to be emphasis. Consider the following example:

> (35)   a. Freddy Martin almost says something, but stops. My breath is caught in my
>
>           throat. Some kid finally calls out, she's all yours, Freddy.' No one else is
>
>           moving, but Freddy Martin gets up, walks around the circle and holds out his

---

[2] It should be noted that the occurrences of pronouns in the non-progressive data was also analysed. However, no significant difference was identified which ultimately hints to the fact that the progressive cases examined in this study follow the non-progressive patterns both in BNC and COCA.

hand. *He's hating me with every inch of his body*; I see it in his eyes, in his tight smile, I hear it when he says. Let's teach these Millstone kids about making love.' He pulls me up, his grip too hard on my hand, and kisses me right (PR COCA WR)

b. *you're hating* the job *with every molecule in your body*. (PR COCA WR)

c. Enjoying our little journey?' he asked under his breath. Rachel looked into those powerful dark eyes.*' I'm hating every minute of it*!' she said in a shaking voice (BNC WR)

The characters in (35a-c) clearly experience strong feelings of hatred. It can be argued that the emphatic effect is created by a combination of the verb with a prepositional phrase *with every inch of my body*, which intensifies the feeling. However, if we change the progressive aspect, the emphasis is somewhat lost: *he hates me with every inch of his body*. Now it seems just to state the fact rather than highlighting the feeling. Therefore, it can be argued that it is not only the prepositional phrase, but also the progressive aspect that has an additional emphatic effect. This is in line with the assumptions, discussed in the literature review, claiming that aspect is a multi-faceted phenomenon and setting elements play an important role. (Radden & Dirven 2007: 50.

Perhaps more noticeably, this emphatic interpretation can be also detected in the co-occurrence of antonyms such as *love* and *hate*, revealing opposite feelings:

(36) a. ROSELLE: Yes. I -- just -- it brings out the extremes in everybody. You either -- you're loving it and *you 're hating it*. And I agree with her that, you know, I was kind of disappointed in the Book Club because everybody was talking over everybody and you couldn't get (COCA PR SP)

b. The one negative was the injuries, the injuries and not taking enough time to get healed; and also, the press saying that I was burned out when, to me, 'burned out' means you're not enjoying it, *you're hating it,* you're not happy out there. (COCA PR SP)

c. *I am hating him*, but I writhe in a betraying ecstasy, an agony of pleasure. (BNC PR WR)

In examples (36a-c), the speakers are discussing their feeling to a book in (36a), injuries in (36b) and a person in (36c) and the use of the progressive helps to convey the feeling of hatred.

The next example, depicting the thoughts of a fictional character, illustrates the importance of lexical repetition and syntactic parallelism in creating an expressive effect:

(37) have to say goodbye to Henry and drive away, and leave him standing, alien and alone. I *hate* Temple hall, and I *hate* the headmaster, and I could strangle Hamish Blair. I have never had to do anything in my life that I have *hated* so much. I *am hating* the rain, *hating* the entire educational system, *hating* Scotland, *hating* Edmund. Hamish said, "There's a car behind us. It wants to get past." "Well, it can bloody wait," Virginia told him, and Hamish was silenced. (PR COCA WR)

In this example it is clear that expressiveness is partly displayed by the lexical repetition of the verb *hate*, which is used seven times. Interestingly, the character uses a non-progressive form of the verb at the beginning of their internal discourse *I hate Temple hall, and I hate the headmaster* and then a perfective form *I have hated so much*, and subsequently uses a progressive form of the verb. Additionally, the fact that both progressive and non-progressive forms co-occur in the same passage suggests that the progressive aspect has a particular emotional weight, otherwise it would not have been used. It seems that the character, in their mental discourse, is exploring their memories from the past few years of how they hate the school almost as if seeing the phases of this hatred. It can be suggested that hatred is growing from actual objects - *Temple hall, the headmaster* to more general *rain, the entire educational system, Scotland* and progressive can reveal this growing feeling.

The use of the progressive form in examples (35-37) can be explained by a construal of summary scanning and subjectivity. To demonstrate this, consider the context in (35a), namely the way in which the speaker is portraying the situation as if seeing this hatred – *I see it in his eyes, in his tight smile, I hear it when he says*. Thus, hatred becomes visible to the character. And what is also important is the fact that it is not the character who is experiencing this feeling but an interlocutor; the character is observing the situation subjectively and mentally reflecting on the other person's feelings, before arriving at the conclusion that another person is actually hating them. It is only in examples (35c), (36c) and (37) that the characters talk about their own feelings, in the remaining examples, the characters are observing or mentally exploring their interlocutor's feelings.

### 6.1.2. Temporariness

Another typical meaning identified in the data is temporality when the feeling of hatred lasts only temporally. In the following example a writer describes a family having a new-born baby:

(38)  a. I get up in the morning, which begins at 6:00 A.M. If Alex starts crying at 5:30, Charlie gets up. If he's still going at 6:00, Charlie wakes me up to take over. " Alex hasn't woken up for six nights in a row, so Liz *is hating* the rule *right now*. "But Charlie *was hating* it a *few months ago* when Alex was up all night teething," she says. (P COCA WR)

First, we see that the verb is used in present and past tenses which underlines that hatred is not permanent, the feeling is only relevant for a limited period of time *right now, six nights in a row, few months ago* underlines the immediateness of the situation, and it is further intensified by the use of *right now*.

The same pattern of meaning is also evident in the spoken register:

b. Andy MacPhail *is hating* life right *now*. # It's 9 a.m., less than a week in to the spring training that counts, the first spring training of the rest of his Cubs life, and this is what he has been doing for 90 minutes (PR COCA SP)

Here, the same pattern as in (38a), the present progressive and the adverb *now* reveals that the speaker is experiencing this feeling temporarily. In fact, other than the most common adverbial modifiers *now/right now*, there is a variety of time modifiers which highlights temporariness:

(39)  a. Witter recalls of the *13 weeks* he was restricted to the hospital. *I was hating* life and everyone. (P COCA WR)
b. Feb. 19, 1980 3:45 p.m., Campaign HQ I feel like a bitch because I *am hating* being here at the HQ *so much*. (PR COCA SP)
c. *It was five-thirty in the morning*, and when I finally got to sleep *I was hating* those birds (P BNC WR)

It seems that a construal of restricted viewing frame can explain the use of the progressive form in examples (38-39) as the character/speaker depicts the situation quite precisely in terms of time by using time modifiers such as *right now, a few months ago, Feb. 19, 1980 3:45 p.m.* Thus, the character's/speaker's focus is placed on a particular ongoing moment.

Overall, unlike in (33-37), where the focus is placed on the intensity of the feeling, in (38-39), the focus of attention is instead on the fact that a character/speaker is actually experiencing hatred at a given period of time.

## 6.2. Analysis of the verb *like*

### *6.2.1. Temporariness*

The most common meaning expressed in this sample was temporariness. The following examples indicate that speakers/characters are enjoying something at a given point in time:

(40)  a. It's been a while since they introduced themselves that way *back home*. Ragnar and his crew-Johann and Tooki-continued getting the boat ready. Harpa had brought us food for the trip. I put aside my video camera and volunteered to help her bring it aboard. *"How you are liking Grimland?"* She had dimples, the most amazing dimples, and hair the color of spun honey. (COCA PR WR)

b. Joanna!" slurred Bogdan from across the courtyard. She brushed herself off and walked to him across the packed dirt. *"How you are liking Ro-mah-nia?"* he asked. He was leaning sideways against one of the arbor's posts, so she leaned to be even with him. He said, "I will tell you my grandfather is from these places."
# "Well, I am loving Ro-mah-nia," Joanna said (COCA PR WR)

These two examples show that the characters are discussing the location. Both of them have the same pattern of a question starting with *how*. Typically such a question might be phrased: *How do you like the city?*, but in these examples the characters opted for the progressive form. It seems that the reason for this was to stress the ongoing moment. Interestingly, in (40b) the answer to the question is also in the progressive form, though with a different verb - *I am loving*, which can potentially prove that the character is experiencing this feeling now.

In the next group of examples, the progressive form and the context also illustrate that speakers/characters are experiencing this emotion even though there are no typical adverbial modifiers of time such as *now*:

(41)  a.Ms-SMITH: (Voiceover) It's freezing cold in the winter at night. (Footage-of-shack; - Man 10: This, a piece of... (unintelligible)... material, that's what he uses for his blanket. They *are liking* books, they *are liking* clothes,
they *are liking* blankets. These kids are just like us. (Footage-of-kids; -c Man10: (Voiceover) And they don't want to go through the situation they are going through. (COCA PR SP)

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b. The continuing revolution. Civil unrest. The breakdown of social stability. Anywhere. Isn't that what they're all after?' Cowley *was liking* the sound of this; ideas and facts were beginning to fit together. (BNC PR WR)

c. She found herself watching him as he carried their drinks back to the table, the easy way he moved, his casual dress, his ready smile, and in spite of her previous reservations she realised she *was liking* what she saw. (BNC PR WR)

d. People *are liking* what are they seeing. They are looking at him in a whole new light. And they are impressed with Al Gore BLITZER Ari Fleischer, the decision by George W. Bush to pull that ad attacking -- that attack ad -- a very negative ad -- attacking Al Gore (COCA PR SP)

e. What about as far round as that high, (unclear) nothing as far round here? (SP:FXHPS001) No nothing (unclear) no. (SP:PS232) Nothing up there? (SP:FXHPS001) No, and a wee bit there. (SP:PS232) *I'm liking* this, *I 'm liking this.* What about there? And there? (SP:FXHPS001) (BNC PR SP)

In (41a), the use of the progressive form and the setting elements *It's freezing cold in the winter at night* elucidate the fact that children are in danger and are happy to accept any help such as books, clothes or blankets. In (41b) and (41c), the events took place in the past and, interestingly, there are two actions that coincided. In (41b), *ideas and facts were beginning to fit together* and the character seems to have been aware of this, and liked that this was happening. In (41c), the character is observing what was happening around them *the easy way he moved, his casual dress, his ready smile* and simultaneously was liking the scene. Likewise, in (41d) and (41e), the visual perception of the situation coincides with what the speakers feel at the same moment, i.e. *People are liking what are they seeing*, so the progressive form helps to make it obvious that they are experiencing a pleasant feeling at the same time of seeing something.

In the next set of examples, the use of the adverbial modifiers *now, these days, right now* are used to reinforce this temporariness:

(42) a. Good history. I'm proud of it, but none of us are who we were then. *I'm liking* who I am now. I don't hate those guys. I wish them no harm at all. We made absolutely great music together. (BNC PR WR)

b. You know, I -- *I'm liking* The Revenant right now. Be honest with you. (COCA PR SP)

c. I don't know, man. Just maybe what the kids *are liking* these days, man.
(COCA PR SP)

In (42a), the speaker compares the feelings in the past and the present *but none of us are who we were then*, and the use of the progressive form clearly indicates that the character is experiencing the feeling at the moment they are speaking *I'm liking who I am now.* In general, the deployment of the progressive with the adverbials is very effective in enhancing the sense of temporariness.

Overall, the construal of restricted frame is highly likely to trigger the use of the progressive form as the speakers/characters in (40-42) are focused on a particular moment of time either in the past or present. A visual perception can also have a role to play here as the situations were described in detail *It's freezing cold, as far round as that high, right there,* so in (40a-b) and (41c-e) seeing the situation evokes pleasure, and the speakers opt for using the progressive to show that they are experiencing this delight now. It is reasonable to claim that a construal of subjectivity could also be involved as well.

### 6.2.2. Tentativeness

Another pattern of meaning that is quite persistent in the data is tentativeness i.e., cases when speakers/characters are trying to soften the situation and make their speech more moderate. In this case the use of the progressive form establishes a more intimate manner of talking between the interlocutors:

(43)   We played soccer and softball. The food is good. I *like* my counselors. Please send an extra sweater. Love you Mom. Hi Rod. "The letter she wrote to her father on the third day of camp is more revealing: "Dear Dad, I think *I'm liking* camp pretty well but it's hard to tell. Dad, how can you tell if you're enjoying your own life? What are you supposed to do to make sure your life is good? Also, what is life? Please write back soon. Love, Sammy. (COCA PR WR)

The appearance of both progressive and non-progressive forms within one excerpt indicates that the progressive form has a special meaning. It seems that when talking to her mother *I like my counselors* the character just states a simple fact and does not deliver any deeper message. The tone of communication changes when the girl is writing to her father, *I think I'm liking camp pretty well* perhaps suggests that she does not really like the camp but that she has to be there and does what her parents told her to do. Although only a tiny detail, *but it's*

*hard to tell* shows her true feelings and doubts. However, the fact that the progressive form is used instead of the non-progressive can really indicate character's tentativeness in expressing her feelings to her father.

In the next example, we read a passage from a soldier's letter who is describing his days at war:

> (44) WE *ARE HAVING* A GOOD from losing it. This was during my first year in Iraq. Every DAY. THE SUN'S OUT AND *I'M NOT SWEATING* LIKE A PIG FOR week we'd get these care packages from church groups and ONCE AND THE BREEZE IS NICE. *HOPE U ARE LIKING IT 2*. (COCA PR WR)

It is clear that all the key verbs related to the character are used in the progressive: *we are having a good, I'm not sweating like a pig.* In the last sentence, when the character addresses their interlocutor, the stative verb *like* is used in the progressive too. Yet, the use of the verb *hope* apparently serves to increase a tentative attitude to the addressee, but it is assumed that the use of the progressive plays an equal role in this case too.

In (45), a character is trying to be very polite to the interlocutor:

> (45) 'catch it, have it fly on back to Nell. No use putting letters in a bottle. Bottle'll sink eight feet and freeze, suspended forever. Pains me to think of em letters, drawings too, all salty and blurred. # Cap'n, I think *you'll be liking* this story, Yana said. (COCA FUT WR)

To do this, the character not only uses the progressive form but also *I think* – for framing their opinion and the future tense. Taken together, these result in a sense of tentativeness. It can be suggested that the use of the future progressive form can be compared to the attitudinal use of the past progressive form (Quirk et al. 1985: 210). It appears that it also expresses that the character tries to avoid any harshness in the particular situation.

In the next two examples, tentativeness is revealed through the use of the progressive in combination with conditional sentences:

> (46) They *won't be liking it if you're late*. "She'd be there in good time herself, given half a chance, to eat their game pies and their plum cakes and drink their wine, to stand by their log fires to warm herself. (BNC FUT WR)

> (47) Previous studies have shown that when pre-service teachers participate in practicum experiences they determine their lessons to be successful by how

much enjoyment students were having**,** and if *students were liking* the physical education class, there would be a greater degree of student achievement. (COCA P WR)

In (47), the structure of the sentence is more complicated compared to (46), as other than the future progressive form, a conditional sentence is also used. Of course, progressive aspect, conditional sentence and future tense are all important in creating the tentative effect, but it still appears that the progressive aspect plays a prominent role here, as without it, the effect is not created, as in *If students like the physical education class, there would be a greater degree of student achievement.*

It is quite possible that construals of subjectivity and sequential mental scanning are relevant in these examples as it is always a very personal decision to be tentative and polite to the addressee. Aside from using standard means of politeness and tentativeness, the use of the progressive with the stative verb can enhance a more tentative effect to the addressee. Sequential mental canning can explain the use of future tense as the speakers envisage future or potential situation's scenario.

### 6.2.3. Changing state

This pattern of meaning is particularly recursive in the *like*-sample as the verb itself reveals the feeling which can be more or less intensive at times. In the following set of examples, this meaning is revealed by the use of the progressive aspect and comparative structures:

(48)  Now that the bulk of the garden is in place, "he says," or at least the structural plants that give it shape and dimension**,** *I'm liking it more and more.* Early on there's a tendency to want *to be changing things* all the time, but now I find that it's very satisfying to just watch things grow and mature. (COCA PR WR)

It is suggested that the combination of the progressive *I'm liking it* and the comparative structure *more and more* comes very naturally as the progressive expresses the developing process, while the comparative adds an intensity to the feeling which ultimately leads to the meaning of a changing state.

The corpora provided a wealth of similar cases with slightly different comparative structures:

(49)  a. Speaking of Stone, *I'm liking him less each week.* (COCA PR WR)
      b. But the truth is that *I'm liking the way I live less and less these days***.** (COCA PR WR)

c. Everything was going great until I took it for a walk.... Just kidding.
I *am liking* my tropical fish *more*. But I don't think I'll be getting too touchy-feely with them. They live in the fish tank - the rest of the house is mine. (COCA PR SP)

d. Hopefully people *are liking* my voice and my music *more than they are thinking* about my age totally because I think that's the way I'm going to be able to stay around. Thank you. (COCA PR SP)

e. Wow! (laugh) (SP:PS1K5) No, but I can imagine that! (SP:PS1BY) (laughing) Yeah! Oh! Ooh! (SP:PS1K5) Probably share the same (unclear) actually. (SP:PS1BY) (laugh) (pause) Ooh I co --, ooh *I'm liking the idea of this more and more!* Yes! (SP:PS1K5) Oh no! (BNC PR SP)

There are two extremes of the feeling, namely positive and negative. The positive structures are more frequent such as *I'm liking the idea of this more and more!* in (49e). However, negative ones are also attested such as *I'm liking him less each week* in (49b). Either way, the progressive and comparative structures whether positive or negative seem to work complementarily and produce the effect of a changing state.

The construals that motivate this meaning are apparently subjectivity and a sequential mental scanning as, first, the speakers/characters are focused on the intensity of either their own feelings or their interlocutor's feelings by comparing it to what it was previously and currently. Secondly, their view is restricted by the given situation and they are experiencing this feeling of pleasure now. A construal of sequential mental scanning can explain the fact that speakers are able to compare the intensity of the feeling through the timeline. It must be said that all the cases of changing state were only in the present progressive form without any adverbial modifiers of time, which could mean that the role of the progressive is also to show an ongoing state.

## 6.3. Analysis of the verb *want*

### 6.3.1. Temporariness

Temporariness is the most widespread pattern of meaning in the 'want' dataset. It means that the event, which is happening at a certain period of time, is viewed as a temporal action, not a state.

(50)	a. I've just come in the door and they *want* Beethoven music on, Mozart music. Well, very cultured children. and *they're wanting* (BNC PR SP)

b. RAUL-RODRIGUEZ# I've got about 15 people *here*. They're *wanting* to kick my ass, and they're *wanting* to beat me down. (COCA PR SP)

c. We love fish. And mud, we can never get us enough of mud. I nodded my boy head at Brother. I know it, was what I said, and I shook my head so that my ears could better hear what my heart *was wanting* to say. You're right, Brother, I said, and I looked down at our boots. I saw dirt there and everywhere underneath our feet. (COCA PR WR)

Even though there are no time markers in (50a), the progressive form makes it clear that the situation is ongoing, and children are in the state of 'wanting' the music. Without doubt, the context and grounding elements, such as *here*, *there*, help to create the immediacy of the situation in (50a-c), in (50a) for example, two teachers are discussing what the children want to listen in an ongoing lesson - *Beethoven music on, Mozart music*; in (50b), a speaker is surrounded by 15 people that want to beat him now; the same goes true for (50c) where one of the brothers wants to say something particular at the moment of conversation - *I shook my head*. However, it is not only the context that conveys the meaning of temporariness. The progressive form also plays a crucial role. It seems that these contextual cues describe the setting of the situation, while the progressive reveals that somebody is in the state of wanting to do something at a given moment.

The majority of samples contained adverbial modifiers of time, such as *now, immediately, at that moment,* to help to establish this meaning. The next group of samples shows how the progressive aspect operates in conjunction with the adverbs of time to reveal the meaning of temporariness:

(51)	a. Milla stayed in bed a few more minutes, luxuriating in the peace and quiet. Right this moment, no one *was wanting* anything of her. She had thought she was prepared to care for a baby, but somehow she hadn't realized the work would be practically nonstop. (COCA P WR)

b. The first time I met Jimmy Lee, as I left, he was out in the road blowing my wife and I kisses," Long recounts. "Jim's a spirit, whereas Mose can be contrary as hell. One time, he *was wanting* a beer *badly* early one morning, and he couldn't find his keys to the refrigerator, and he was mad. He had a gun out and was going to shoot the lock off, and I told him (COCA P SP)

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c. Added to the volatile, almost certifiable, personality of Hopper was the ambition of Peter Fonda, who would never admit it but *was wanting -- at that point in his life* -- to really show his father and sister, not to mention a whole legion of critics, that he could act -- a considerable undertaking in itself. (BNC P WR)

Interestingly, (51a-c) depict situations in the past where adverbial modifiers, such as *Right this moment, one time, at this point in his life* have a role to play. Yet, if we leave out the progressive form, the utterances will still express temporariness, albeit less strongly - *One time*, *he wanted a beer badly.* It can be argued that this sentence delivers the fact in the past rather than indicating it is or was a temporary process.

A few, rare, examples were found in the study that relate to future situations where the speakers talk about how a situation could potentially develop:

(52) And I can see it in a year (pause) I'll give it, give dad er (pause) about eighteen months (pause). Yeah. (pause). and *he'll be wanting* to leave Avenue Panels. Yeah. (pause). It'll come too much.

In these examples, in discussing possible future scenario, the speakers delineate quite clear time limitations *about eighteen months* and one of them suggests that *he'll be wanting to leave Avenue Panels.* As in the samples discussing the past (51a-c), temporariness is expressed with the help of both the progressive aspect and adverbial phrases. But, of particular note for this study, we see that this pattern of meaning is recurrent in the present, past and future tense. From a CG perspective, the use of *be wanting* in (50-52) can be motivated by at least two construals – a construal of restricted viewing frame and mental scanning, more specifically, a sequential scanning. In present situations, the speaker's view is restricted by the settings and background knowledge of the situation, so speakers/characters can express the temporariness with the help of the progressive aspect. In the case of future and past examples (50c), (51), (52), they can also visualize the situation scenario either in the future or in the past by scanning the stages of the event and expressing it with the help the progressive aspect and time markers which expose an internal speaker's view on the situation.

### 6.3.2. Tentativeness

Tentativeness is another quite widespread pattern of meaning. It is defined here as the tendency of speakers/characters to smoothen the situation and to sound more polite towards their interlocutors that is why oftentimes tentativeness is expressed in requests and questions:

(53)   a. You *are wanting* coffee, macaroon, hanky pánky, and kids with one of them?

b. Look, why don't we go out and talk somewhere. " She touched my hair. " Is that what *you're wanting*? Are you trying to flirt with me, honey? "

c. The telephone rang and a distant female voice said,' Bernard Dixon?" Yes." Ah, good, *I wonder whether* you can help me. *I'm wanting to know* a little more about immunity." Have you tried a good textbook?" Well, no. Actually, somebody gave me your name. (BNC PR SP)

It is clear from this example that it is not always a direct question like in (53a), but that the progressive form makes the request less demanding and harsh. In (53a), even though it is not a question grammatically, the progressive form seems to show a gentle attitude of the speaker towards the guests. The same is true in (53b), where the speaker seems to kindly clarify what the interlocutor wants. In (53c), the sentence structure is also interesting as *I wonder whether you can help me* is considered to be a cliché for a kind request. And *I'm wanting to know* follows up that cliché phrase, so together they reveal tentativeness.

Alternatively, there are several cases with the future progressive used in offers and questions as can be seen in the following examples:

(54)   a. Will you *be wanting* anything else, sir?

b. She said, "Will you *be wanting* to look around the labs afterwards?'

It is quite possible that the future tense makes these requests even more polite as it is commonly known that longer constructions are considered to be more polite because the speakers are distancing themselves from their interlocutors (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 170).

One of the most interesting cases in the *want*-dataset are those where past forms are used to talk about the present:

(55)   So there's a lot of people that are losing here. We've got a call from Ohio. Go ahead. 5th CALLER: Ohio Hello? SUSAN ROOK: Go ahead. You're on the air. 5th CALLER: Yes. I *was wanting* to make a comment. There's been a lot of blame thrown at the players, the owners, and so on. (COCA P SP)

It is clear from the context *Go ahead. You're on the air* that the situation is ongoing, and the speaker reveals the fact that he wants to comment eagerly on something now. In this case, the use of the progressive in the past tense can be regarded as a skilful way to ask for a permission to start talking about some issue, thus, making the whole conversation sound very smooth.

It is difficult to explain what mental processes can underlie these utterances, nevertheless, it is assumed that the construal of subjectivity can be applicable here as speakers might want to hold a friendly conversation with their interlocutors, and they can be emotionally involved in it. This is why they might use other non-typical grammatical structures for this such as the progressive aspect, clichés and longer sentences as well (53a-c and 55). Additionally, it can be argued that mental scanning could be indicative of speakers' internal view of a future scenario. Hence, it might be inferred that speakers in (54a) and (54b) have already mentally construed the way a situation will develop, and thus they resorted to the future progressive form of *want*.

### 6.3.3. Emphasis

In these examples emphasis means a strong desire that speakers/characters have. One of the key factors to differentiate a meaning of temporariness from emphasis is that when it comes to emphasis the speakers/characters mean it in general terms and focus on the desire but not on the moment in time. Let us consider some examples:

(56) The others will chip in if they agree, but they will (pause) they are, they *are wanting* to set a missile to move, *they're wanting* to send a bullet, they *are wanting* to s-- to evoke emotion or anger or rage or frustration or political bias or to change attitudes now for example the interesting thing about the Princess Diana (BNC PR SP)

In this example, the speaker seems to be scared of war and is trying to blame somebody. As such it can be suggested that the threefold repetition of the structure *are wanting* produces an emphatic effect. But we cannot see that the war is happening in reality, now or over a longer span of time, therefore the progressive form reveals the strong desire.

(57) pain.' Come on, Curb,' Mala snapped.' I'm hurting too, but we're not going to get anywhere sitting around moaning." I don't much want to get anywhere,' I mumbled. She sniffed.' Yes, you do, and so do I. So we have to figure out who's after us and how we can avoid another attack.' With some justifiable complaints,

I struggled to sit up. It was just like her, to be super-efficient after an emergency, when *normal people are wanting* to curl up somewhere soft and ease their battle wounds. (BNC PR SP)

In (57), a potential emergency situation is described, so the reaction of people is depicted by *normal people are wanting.* This makes it clear that the focus is not on the time of the event but on the desire: namely what people really want to do in this situation.

It appears that the construal of subjectivity sustains the use of stative verbs with the progressive as the speakers view the situation quite subjectively and in an emotionally involved manner, such as in (56). In (57), the speaker envisages the situation from their point of view, and they compare the behaviour of *normal people* with that of another character; the notion of 'normalness' is very subjective.

### 6.4. Analysis of the verb *know*

#### 6.4.1. Emphasis

It seems that there is a heavy emphasis on the fact of being aware of something. Consider the following example:

(58)   I am *wanting* $20 million dollars in cash, which you will put into a bag and leave it two miles south of Rt 66 on the West Side of the Beltway. In the middle of the Field. Pay to me the Money by 1200 hours. *Only I am knowing* how to stop the Digger. If you apprehend me, he will keep killing. (COCA Pr SP)

It appears that it is not temporality but emphasis as the adverb *only* accentuates the fact that a speaker knows something. Again, the role of the progressive form cannot be underestimated as without it the utterance loses its expressive power – *only I know how to stop Digger.* Additionally, *want,* another stative verb, is also used in the progressive which enhances the emphasis and shows that the speakers desire the money and he is the only person who can help.

Next is an illuminating example of how the use of the progressive form can add intensity to an utterance:

(59)   Thou must mount for love, someone has said, the Bible probably, about the only book I've ever read, or dipped into at least (shoe salesmen live busy lives) -it is, as I say, how I *know*, am *knowing* her-and Biblical *knowledge*, what is it but a

bookish thing? But are these words really all that I am? Am I only, as she would say, a string of noises? (COCA Pr SP)

The speaker uses non-progressive and progressive forms of *know* one after another, which plays a crucial role in the emphasis, as in doing so, the speaker highlights the fact that he definitely knows this woman. It should be noted that the progressive plays a crucial role in building emphasis as there are no adverbial modifiers that could have expressed it, such as *for sure, no doubt, definitely* etc. We can thus agree that emphasis totally relies on the progressive form.

In a similar fashion, in (60) the character uses progressive and non-progressive forms of *know*:

(60)   Do you *know* what hell really is, Teddy? No, of course you do not." "Did you take your meds?" I said. "I put them next to your salad plate." "Hell, my friend is *knowing* that the visible world is layered with illusion. Nothing and no one is trustworthy"

Presumably, the speaker, after asking the question *Do you know what hell really is, Teddy?* answers it himself, but using a progressive form. It can also indicate the fact that the character is surprised that his friend knows about it. In this case the use of the progressive plays a role in creating emphasis and expressing surprise.

Interestingly, the study has found one example of *I wish I did something* structure. It is known that typically the structure is used with the past non-progressive form:

(61)   *I wish was knowing* euphoria and *seeing* haughty vignettes of my candidate's victory party. (COCA P WR)

But here the structure is modified by using two stative verbs in the progressive aspect *is knowing and seeing* which sounds very emphatic. It can be assumed that the use of the progressive further illustrates a person's regret.

Sometimes the context makes it clear that a speaker wants to place an emphasis:

(62)   'I was trained to see behind enemy lines,' Mr Aggarwal told me,' and I am *knowing* how to observe properly. (BNC Pr WR)

It can be said that by using the progressive, the character is trying to emphasize the fact that he or she knows something, perhaps even better than the other character does.

There are cases in the dataset that have emphatical weight relying on duration rather than the fact of knowing. This effect is reached by the combination of the progressive and perfective aspects:

> (63)  I can see it. I *know* her. *I've been knowing* her *all of my life.* I *know* that she's resilient. (PERF COCA WR)

Undoubtedly, duration is reinforced by the adverbial modifier *all of my life,* but here the emphatic effect is also co-created by the use of the progressive and non-progressive form of the verb. In addition, the fact that the character uses progressive and non-progressive forms of *know* makes this "duration meaning" stand out. If all the verbs had been used in the non-progressive form, it would have sounded less emphatic *I know her. I know her all of my life. I know that she's resilient.* Lexical repetition alone does not produce this emphatic effect related to duration, Instead, to create it, one must use both the progressive and perfective aspects. This study has found two examples where the perfective aspect does not demonstrate an emphasis on duration, rather emphasis on the fact of awareness, despite the use of the perfective aspect:

> (64)  a. BATTISTA: How are the kids *reacting* in your school, Tammy, I mean...?
>       TAMMY: We've all been really scared -- Yes. BATTISTA: Are you *talking* to
>       each other, or to teachers, parents? TAMMY: Yes, everybody
>       *has been knowing* about, like, all of the rumors and stuff. BATTISTA: OK,
>       Tammy. (PERF COCA SP)
>       b. I think that a lot of sports fans, and myself included, *we've been knowing* this
>       stuff has been *going* on in the NFL. We've been *knowing* it's *going* on in the
>       Olympics. We've been *knowing* it's *going* on in baseball forever. (PERF COCA
>       SP)

It seems that the use of both the progressive and perfective aspects highlights the fact that everybody knows something. The use of the other verbs in the progressive *are the kids reacting*, *Are you talking* in (64a) and perfective aspect *We've been knowing it's going* in (64b) further intensifies this emphasis.

Overall, construals of summary scanning and subjectivity seem to underpin the uses of the progressive form here. First, this interplay between using progressive and non-progressive forms of know by the same speaker/character signifies that he or she assesses the situation subjectively and changes the forms like in (know/knowing). Secondly, a speaker/character

appears to scan the situation by observing what is happening like in (69a) *kids are reacting, this stuff has been going on in the NFL* and arrives at the conclusion that *everybody has been knowing.*

### 6.4.2. Changing state

Another pattern of meaning that has been identified, albeit quite rarely in the dataset, is that of a changing state. In this section a changing state is defined as a process when a person gaining knowledge, increases the overall amount of information. There are only two tokens that indicate that *be knowing* means actually gaining more knowledge:

(65)  a. She didn't dislike Flora, who wasn't as brittle as she seemed,
and *was knowing enough* to play down her fashionable side to Jane. (BNC P WR)

b. English wasn't too great. If he could have spoken in French, he could have said exactly what he meant; in English, he was left with his mouth hanging open in wordless silence. Finally, Mr. Harding just walked away. Philippe turned back toward Leo. "I am *knowing* English just *as much as you*," he said, wishing it were true. "Prove it," Leo said. (COCA Pr SP)

It is assumed that the use of the progressive aspect helps to demonstrate that knowledge is an accumulative process, as if changing one state to another rather than being a state of being itself. The use of adverb *enough* and a comparative structure *as much as* alludes to the fact that the knowledge can be growing or changing. It is important to note that both the comparative structures and the progressive aspect have equal weight, as without either of them the meaning of a changing state is lost. For example, in *I am knowing English* the meaning has changed to emphasising the fact of knowing the language. As well as in *I know English just as much as you*, neither does it have an emphatic meaning nor a meaning of changing of state. It is, rather, simply a fact. It seems that the progressive in 65 (a,b) shows that knowing something, a language for example, is a developing process which is made up of several stages; the use of adverbial modifiers demonstrates how this process is progressing. Hence, the combination of the progressive together with adverbs results in the meaning of changing state.

As in the previous examples, the construal of sequential scanning seems to underpin this usage. This sequence is represented by acquiring some knowledge and a speaker/writer

appears to observe this process at some point in time by portraying its development with the help of progressive aspect together with comparative structures.

### 6.4.3. Tentativeness

The study has also found one further meaning. This, however, cannot be regarded as a pattern since it is only exhibited in a single token, but it remains worth considering. The following example demonstrates tentativeness:

(66) I think - it just seemed that the kids were given too much information, prior to CII and at CII, that it was hard for many of the jurors and also me, in many of the cases, you *know*, depending on the child, if we were *knowing* their personal experience or if we were just *hearing* what their parents had talked to them about and what CII had talked to them about. (COCA P SP)

The speaker uses a non-progressive form followed by a progressive one, to create a polite effect. It is worth noting, that the utterance contains two stative verbs in the progressive, namely, *were knowing* and *were hearing*. Even though the latter is not included in the investigation, it clearly reflects a real-life usage of stative verbs. In addition, as was noted by Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 170) the past form usually creates a tentative effect making an utterance sound more tentative. It is also assumed that the use of the progressive form further enhances this effect.

In a similar fashion, a construal of subjectivity seems to be involved here as the speaker constructed a situation in mind from their subjectively and tries to avoid being too harsh in their assumption as if hiding a possibility that the interlocutors might not know the information.

### 6.5. Analysis of the verb *recognise*

### 6.5.1. Emphasis

In the samples for other verbs, one of the most widespread patterns of meaning is emphasis. In this case, it is the emphasis either on the fact that finally speakers or characters recognise something or somebody, thus becoming aware of it, or new things deriving from this recognition. The next examples demonstrate awareness of something:

(67) a. I was *getting* better, I was *getting* over certain things and I realized that it was the doctor, and I told him that I *was recognizing* him**.** (COCA PR SP)

b. After stresses like that, the imagination may very easily begin to add details."
*I'm recognising* things I did see, and never had time to recognise then. (BNC PR WR)

c. Your eyes have gone dark, and your mouth looks thinner and you're pale again; I've noticed that that always happens when you're unhappy,' he said.' I suppose that *I've just been recognising* that the sort of feeling your mother had for your father is... she paused as she searched for as unemotive a word as possible.' (BNC PERF WR)

These three examples show that at some point the speakers/characters have become conscious of some fact. In (67a), a patient is reflecting on their recovery from amnesia using all the verbs in the progressive form; in (67b) and (72c) the speakers/characters recognise something that they have already experienced before. What makes (67b) interesting is the co-occurrence of *recognise* in both progressive and non-progressive forms, which highlights this emphasis. In (67c), the use of the present perfect progressive form, *I've just been recognising*, adds even more to this emphasis and maybe hints that the character has a strong insight regarding that situation. In all three examples the emphasis is obviously given to the fact that they start recognising something or someone.

This is different to the following example, where the use of the progressive form is still emphatic, but the focus is shifted to the increasing recognition itself:

(68)   a. Oh, you would never *recognise* me as a man. In fact, people pass me - people who, like *worship* me at night would never *recognize* me during the day, which I really love, you know. But *recently*, on HBO and some other shows, they've been showing me out of drag and people *have been recognizing* me, which is kind of- (COCA PR SP)

b. "You have no idea who you'd be if you weren't always aware of the fact that people *were recognizing* you, *judging* you and *comparing* you with what they saw on television.' And she's right. I don't have any idea." (COCA PR SP)

In (68a), grounding elements such as *HBO, some other shows showing me out* and the verb *worship* help us understand that the speaker is a celebrity. The lexical repetition of the verb *recognize* three times and the use of the present perfect progressive highlight the fact that the popularity of the person is growing now. In (68b), the stative verb *recognize* is used in the progressive together with two other verbs and this also draws our attention to the fact that this person is very popular. To create this shade of meaning – emphasis on the extent of

66

recognition – several factors apart from the progressive aspect such as grounding elements, the verb *worship* and lexical repetition come into play. However, it is quite challenging to assess the individual role of each factor in creating this effect, but since progressive form is quite pervasive, it seems that it has a major role.

There are two construals in action here. In (67), a construal of subjectivity appears to explain the use of the progressive as the speakers/characters are first aware of their state of memory subjectively and notice the moment when the memory goes back to them. In (68), a construal of a restricted frame can be involved as the speaker observes the situation through the time *recently, you weren't always aware of the fact* and through space *on HBO, and some other shows* restricting their view to the extent of recognition.

### 6.5.2. Temporariness

The next most salient pattern of meaning is temporariness, when speakers or characters enhance the fact that the event is happening at a particular period of time. One of the clearest examples is the following:

> (69)   *Now* what a strange thing to say. Way more than the usual store owner "Can I help you," sort of thing. Nope, he *was recognizing* in her the same things she *was seeing* in him." Yes, you can tell me you're going to be open awhile longer. (COCA P WR)

Both verbs *was recognizing* and *was seeing* are used in the progressive and are both stative which can again suggest the fact that they are not perceived as states but as ongoing activities. Moreover, using them both in one sentence bolsters the effect of temporariness as it becomes clear that the events happen simultaneously.

In a similar vein, another example shows an ongoing situation: how the public recognise a particular picture when observing an artist's studio:

> (70)   At first, I used to grind my teeth and think, oh God, we've got to move on from Emerson. But then I thought, *they're recognising* something about my pictures or the place, and now I don't mind'. (BNC PR WR)

Viewed through the eyes of the artist, this scene in the book shows that the public is actually recognising his work because the artist sees a different reaction of the viewers -
*they're recognising something about my pictures*, which the artist is not used to. The artist happens to capture this moment when the audience started to recognise his pictures and it can explain why he opted for the progressive form.

Clearly, in (69-70), the speakers'/characters' view is focused on the ongoing nature of the situation: it can be proved by the context in (70) and adverbial modifier *now* in (69). Moreover, if we replace these adverbs, the effect of temporariness will still last as the progressive form is responsible for creating this effect. Thus, it can be said that their view is restricted. As such, the construal of restricted frame can explain the use of the progressive with stative verb.

### *6.5.3. Tentativeness*

The last pattern of meaning that seems to be particularly prominent in the data is tentativeness, the way speakers/characters attempt to express their doubts in a more moderate way. Let us consider the following examples:

> (71)  a. And it's a safe area where they say no fishing or spearfishing, and they
> become trusting. And they will approach trusted divers. *Whether*
> *they 're recognizing them* as individuals, I don't know**.** (COCA PR SP)
> b. Good afternoon, Auntie, "I greeted her. # The way she looked at me made my
> hair stand on end, as *if she was recognizing* me for someone I was not. "What
> are you doing?" she asked. # "I'm going home," (COCA P WR)

In both (71a) and (71b), the verb *recognize,* apart from co-occurring with the progressive, is used in a syntactical structures – indirect question and conditional, respectively, which causes the whole passage sound very tentative, almost as though the speakers are attempting to disguise the fact that they do not know what is happening.

In the next example, we can observe how a speaker is possibly trying to hide their doubts that he or she cannot recognise somebody:

> (72)  "Portillo offered up a handheld screen. "A young woman named Batool
> Kadivar? *Would we be recognizing* Miss Batool Kadivar? "# "I can't even
> pronounce that," Felix said. (COCA MOD SP)

Certainly, the use of the progressive *be recognizing* in combination with the modal verb *would* and a question itself make this utterance very polite and tentative. However, this utterance will lose its tentative effect without progressive – *Would we recognize Miss Batool Kadiver?* The fact that stative verbs used in the progressive possess a tentative meaning has been stated by Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 170) who note that using the progressive helps to avoid "any danger of apparent brusqueness".

Finally, it seems that subjective perception of the situations in (71-72) can explain the use of the progressive form as a personal desire to soften a possible embarrassment or to avoid confusion. Construal of subjectivity can be applied here as a person construes a situation subjectively and in (71-72) aspires to do it in a more moderate manner.

## 6.6. Analysis of the verb *understand*

### 6.6.1. Temporariness

In the *understand* dataset temporariness was the most commonly encountered meaning, which is understood as the temporary nature of the situation where the speakers/characters are in the process of understanding something while in discussion.

The first two examples clearly show that the progressive aspect makes the events temporary:

> (73)   a. Did you know, did you get it (unclear) Mm. (unclear) you're not sort of
> ploughing through you're you know, you're *picking* it up and your bringing
> it (unclear) I like the way you the way you're *assimilating*
> it. (SP:K6JPS000) Mhm. (SP:PS5LU) That you're not sort of, Oh just I'll
> memorize this lot. But *you 're understanding* it and *you're fitting it* in with what
> you already know. Which is the only way to do it. (unclear) (BNC PR SP)
>
> b. Clearly things *are changing*. Tribes are *understanding* and *realizing* that they
> need economic development on reservation and that there's a certain trade-off.
> Like any culture, no culture is stagnant. (COCA PR SP)

Most of the verbs are used in the progressive aspect which creates a temporary effect: y*ou're picking it up, you're assimilating* in (73a) and *things are changing, and realizing* in (73b). Secondly, it is also important to note that there are no time indicators that could relate to the immediacy of the situation. The absence of adverbial modifiers of time where the role of the progressive is more prominent is quite often encountered in fictive conversation as well:

> (74)   a. I guess I'll be giving up English entirely # from here on out. # "Can you say
> that again, and maybe a little slower? "I ask. # "Are you returning to the
> motherland?" # I nod, pretty sure *I'm understanding* him. # "Good, welcome! I'll
> show you where to bunk. Then I'll take you to # the captain. You'll pay him for
> your ticket. "# I look back down to the two guards still watching me on the
> wharf. I # wave, (COCA PR WR)

b. But this was altogether different...' So, these crates contain your prize exhibits for the business fair? *Am I understanding this correctly?'* Her voice shook with suppressed anger.' At last, I think we can safely say that
you are *understanding* the situation correctly.' Roman's voice was bitingly sarcastic. (BNC PR WR)

In (74a-b), the characters are involved in conversation and the use of the progressive form comes very naturally as an answer to the question. In this respect, (74a) is a good example because the character asked to speak slower just to be able to understand what is being said Finally, getting a slower response showed that he is understanding *I'm understanding him*. In (79b), both the question and the answer are in the progressive which alludes to the fact that both speakers are engrossed in the situation and trying to clarify the problem.

Temporariness is also found in the past tense as well:

> (75) a. Before long, Kanzi *was doing* many of the things humans do with language. He *was talking* about places and objects that weren't in sight. He *was referring* to the past and the future. And he was *understanding* brand new sentences made up of familiar words, like Coke. (COCA P SP)
> b. I *was watching* my wife to see if she was *understanding* what I *was going* to do, and yes, she *did understand* because she flinched as soon as I pulled out the cook's knife, the stainless steel blade bright and freshly sharpened just that day, because my wife loved those knives. She would get them in the divorce settlement (COCA P WR)

As in the present tense tokens, the past tense tokens (75a-b) several activities were taking place at the same time and the progressive seems to be almost the only way to illustrate that this was temporary. In (75a), four activities *doing, talking, referring, understanding* indicate that they were happening not exactly at the same moment but rather over a limited period of time. In (75b), the visual description of the situation in conjunction with the progressive form *I was watching my wife to see, what I was going, if she was understanding* make it clear that understanding took place at that particular moment. It is worthy of note that there are no time indicators here as well which could again possibly demonstrate that the progressive has a prominent role to show the temporariness of the situation.

A construal of restricted viewing frame could be more applicable here, since it is clear from the context that speakers/characters are trying to understand their interlocutors and follow-up

the conversation to enable flowing communication. They are restricted by the current situation i.e., what is happening around them, what they are seeing at the moment, and the reaction of their interlocutors. As such the use of *understand* in the progressive can reflect a mental process that is happening in a person's mind.

### 6.6.2. Emphasis

The next pattern of meaning is emphasis, where the speakers/characters appear to stress the fact that they have clearly understood something:

(76) a. Jeff became aware that Yelena had yet to say a word in response. "Is any of this getting through to you? I mean, I know English isn't your native language, and I assure you, *I'm understanding every word of it,*" Yelena said. "I read H. G. Wells, I read Dr. Isaac Asimov, I read Mr. Robert Heinlein. Most of their works aren't available in the Soviet Union-but I have read every one since I've been in the West. (COCA PR WR)

b. First, it provides a unified theory of the structural and individual rights provisions of the Constitution. Second, it helps us understand the reason that differing interpretations are offered for a single provision. For instance, those emphasizing the self-governance rationale for the First Amendment *are understanding* it primarily as focused on preventing rent-seeking by rulers (category iii). Those emphasizing self-expression *are understanding* it primarily as protecting nonconformist minorities against the expropriation of some of their self-ownership rights (category ii). Third, the theory illuminates the trade-offs a constitution makes in attempting to prevent different categorie (COCA PR WR)

c. It follows from causalism and functionalism, seemingly absurdly, that our private visual experience is identical. (iii) Suppose I do not understand Chinese, but, solely on the basis of the shapes of the letters, and rules connecting them merely as shapes, do the right things. For example, I pass through a sequence of states identical to one passed through by a native Chinese speaker in being presented with a question in Chinese and giving the answer in Chinese. *It follows,* on causalist and functionalist views, that *I am understanding* Chinese, which again seems absurd. (BNC PR SP)

The meaning is not of temporariness since the characters are talking about a general understanding of things, namely about understanding the language in (76a) and (76c), and understanding interpretations of Constitution in (76b). Therefore, the speakers do not underline the fact that they are understanding something now, but rather trying to emphasize the fact that they have understood it. The emphasis is realized by the use of progressive. It is particularly clear in (76c) where a speaker is describing a hypothetical situation regarding the opportunity to know the Chinese language, and while elaborating on it, he draws a conclusion that he can understand it *It follows, on causalist and functionalist views, that I am understanding Chine*se.

The construal of subjectivity can underpin the use of the progressive form with the stative verb. It seems that to emphasize something the speakers/characters need a subjective assessment of the situation as in (76a-c) where they are hypothesizing on something and trying to prove their hypothesis, using the progressive form. The construal of subjectivity is also important here as it shows that the speakers are able to realize that they can have a particular view of the situation as in (76a) where a speaker, being a native, is aware of it and feels to be superior compared to his interlocutor *and I assure you, I'm understanding every word of it.*

### 6.6.3. Changing state

This study distinguished one further pattern of meaning - a changing state which pertains to the developing essence of understanding. This meaning is partially expressed through the use of the adverbs:

> (77) a. "They didn't know how to catch or pass," said Velando, also the school's girls' soccer coach. " I feel like *now we are understanding* the game *better* and we're able to think more as a team, moving from the basics into the actual game."
> (COCA PR SP)
> b. people chanting in the streets about? Amb AL Well, I really don't *understand* why other people don't leave diplomats do their work. After all, we have been in contact. We *have been discussing* the matter with the chairman of the special commission, and I believe we *are understanding* each other *far better* than anyone else KING OK, but you saw the news as well as anyone. (COCA PR SP)

Even though the present progressive, adverb *now,* and the context make it clear that the situations are happening now, we cannot ignore the presence of comparative structure *better*

in (77a) and *far better* in (77b). The comparatives illustrate that understanding can be not only temporal, but also something that changes gradually over time.

It is hard to differentiate between temporariness and changing state. In the case of changing state meaning is expressed not only with the help of the progressive aspect but also via setting elements such as adverbs. However, since the nature of aspect is multifaceted (as discussed in Chapter 2) we can state that this shade of meaning can be distinguished from temporariness.

The construal that underpins the use of the progressive seems to be a sequential mental scanning. The speakers are likely to look at the situation within a period of time, given the fact that they can possess background knowledge of the events, can trace how this situation has been developing in the course of time. Consequently, they can see how understanding is growing or changing.

### 6.6.4. Tentativeness

The last pattern of meaning that has been identified in this sample is tentativeness, when speakers/characters tend to be polite and smoothen the situation and avoid brusqueness. First, it should be noted that the progressive aspect is not the only tool to express this meaning, interestingly, there are many cases where it is expressed in the form of a question *If I am understanding you correctly*:

(78)   a. "I felt at home, as I'd never felt before in my life, actually." *"If I am understanding you correctly,* they treated you like a daughter. Am I right, Meredith?" "Not a daughter, no, they weren't that much older than I was. More like a sibling, a younger sister." (COCA PR WR)

b. So -- so *if I am understanding this correctly*, General Miller, you still ascribe to the position that this was a case of a handful of military police, Reservists who were inexperienced who took these orders and somehow twisted and distorted them? Maj-Gen-MILLER: Those investigations are ongoing, Katie, as you know. (COCA PR SP)

c. Well, *from what I'm understanding from* the people that have seen the exhibit, you mix all of those pictures in with all of the exhibits of Mapplethorpe, and apparently it- *from what I understand,* blends in quite well. 2nd CALLER: I think some of the pictures are great. I mean, the man was (COCA PR SP)

In (78a-c), all the utterances containing progressive forms are addressed to the interlocutors in the first person. Seemingly, this helps to establish a better connection with the addressee and

avoid confusion. If one uses it without the progressive aspect, the utterance would lose its tentativeness *If I understand you correctly*. Certainly, due to its syntactical form it still sounds polite, however, the progressive aspect can more strongly emphasise this politeness.

It is assumed that construals of subjectivity and restricted viewing frame come into play. They can be applicable here as the speakers perceive the situation subjectively and know their reaction in discussion can hinder or advance communication. Also, it is quite apparent that they really understand their interlocutors and are trying to follow-up the conversation.

## 7. Discussion

### 7.1. Discussion of the quantitative findings

The study has analysed six stative verbs in combination with the progressive in BNC and COCA. After the elimination process the sample comprised of 1987 tokens. Most of the dataset is compiled by the COCA sample, 81%, which accords with Biber et al. (1999: 462) who demonstrated that generally "AmE strongly favors the progressive in comparison with BrE", and also with Quirk et al. (1985: 198), who note that the progressive in general is "marginally more frequent in conversational AmE than in conversational BrE". Additionally, the size of COCA is 100 times bigger than BNC which could also explain why the sample for this study mainly consists of COCA tokens.

Overall, figure 8 showed that the occurrence of the five stative verbs in the progressive is quite rare in BNC and COCA as their incidence ranges from 0,0012 to 2 cases per one million words. The only exception is *want* in BNC whose occurrence is much higher than other verbs and amounts to 32 cases per one million. It should be noted that BNC contained more cases of stative verbs as the size of the corpus is 100 times less than COCA.

The distribution across the registers showed different proportions: tokens are evenly distributed among the spoken and written registers in COCA, but BNC demonstrated a clear preference for the written register which accounted for 60% of tokens. Potentially this preference in BNC can be explained by the nature of genre; even though the majority of the BNC tokens appear in fiction, it is usually in conversations between characters, as in the following example:

(78)  "I felt at home, as I 'd never felt before in my life, actually." *"If I am understanding you correctly*, they treated you like a daughter. Am I right,

Meredith?" "Not a daughter, no, they weren't that much older than I was. More like a sibling, a younger sister." "How old were the Silvers? " (BNC PR WR)

Another influential factor that could explain the differences in register distribution has been observed by Granath & Wherrity (2014: 18) who suppose that automatic grammar checkers can 'clean' written texts and thus influence the distribution.

The register distribution might be dependent on the individual meanings of verbs as some of them clearly favoured either of the registers. *Understand* is a good example, as it appears to favour the spoken register in both COCA and BNC. A potential reason for this could be its special role for communication as it can be used to dictate the flow by showing that one of the interlocutors *is understanding* the other. However, it remains very challenging to assess the role of the meanings as the written register presents plenty of tokens from conversation between characters. It is assumed that the same trend of *want*, *recognise, hate,* and *know* having a preference for the written register in both corpora, and the preference of *understand* and *like* for the spoken register in both corpora could signify a language change.

Additionally, both corpora consist mainly of written texts from various genres, namely 90% of BNC corpus is comprised by written materials and COCA has about 75% of written texts. This could explain the prevalence of stative verbs in the progressive in written register in BNC. At the same time, it is surprising that even though the COCA corpus is mainly created by written texts, it has an equal distribution of stative verbs between the written and spoken registers which in turn could indicate that stative verbs with the progressive are more frequent in the spoken register.

The present tense appears to be the most popular in both corpora, a finding which echoes other studies Biber (1999: 456), Gavis (1998: 298-300), Leech et al. (2009: 124), Bernal (2015:104), Smith (2002: 327) and perhaps can be interpreted by the nature of present tense which is very close to the ongoing nature of progressive Radden & Dirven (2007: 192), Huddleston & Pullum (2002: 170), Quirk et al. (1985: 202).

Even though the analysis has demonstrated a clear dominance of present tense, this study has come across a variety of tenses, modal, infinitival and other verbal structures that stative verbs in progressive can combine with (figures 12, 13). This can be indicative of a growing trend to use stative verbs for different purposes in everyday situations, thus they can appear in different grammatical environment which was discussed in Gavis (1998: 8), Anderwald (2017: 194), Granath & Wherrity (2014: 18).

The prevalence of the pronoun *I* can mirror the overall tendency of using this pronoun but there can be an alternative explanation. Statives with progressive can be well attested in use but it is still not a common phenomenon, because these combinations can result in a number of special meanings that have been discussed in sections 6.1. – 6.6. So, these special meanings can be construed individually that is why users of language opt for *I* more often to convey their own message. A similar view is shared by Gavis (1999: 345) who is talking about a "linguistic creativity" of speakers to convey a particular meaning. In addition, a brief exploration of the non-progressive uses of the verbs in the corpora revealed that *I* is more common with these verbs, meaning that it can be assumed that progressive uses just follow this trend. Being a constituent of the aspect (Langacker 2008: 149), pronouns are assumed to be closely related to construals as they demonstrate the person's perspective of the situation and can help in identifying the construal. Interestingly, COCA demonstrated rare cases of the impersonal pronoun *it* with *recognize,* such as *it's recognizing a voice or a making a chess move,* where *it* refers to a computer. In this case, metonymy can allow the verb to combine with the pronoun.

## 7.2. Discussion of the qualitative findings

This study has identified three construals that can potentially motivate the use of stative verbs with progressive. These construals are illustrated in the following figures
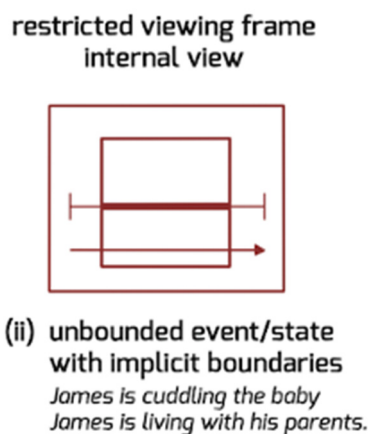


**Figure 18.** Construal of restricted viewing frame (Radden & Dirven 2007: 178).

A construal of restricted viewing frame indicates that a viewer is close to an event, giving a more restricted viewing frame without the endpoints being visible. The bold line represents a speaker's focus on a particular event rather than its starting and ending points. For example, in (40a) *How you are liking Grimland?* or (40b) *How you are liking Ro-mah-nia?* the speakers are focused on their feelings towards a place their interlocutors have at the moment of

speaking. In (40a) and (40b), one cannot know when they have started to like those places but for the time being the focus is on the ongoing state of affairs – whether they are liking the places now. That is why this construal underlies the temporal nature of events.

The next construal is depicted in figures 19a and 19b:



**Figure 19 a,b.** The construal of sequential mental and summary scanning

A construal of sequential mental scanning is depicted on a timeline (t), where the dots stand for phases of an event and the arrows represent a speaker's mental scanning, as they follow the development of an event in their mind (19a). (19b) shows a summary scanning construal, where the dashed arrows mean that a speaker skips all the phases and arrives at the final phases of an event, which are marked with a bold arrow at the end of the timeline. Importantly, speakers, depending on a situation, can scan it in different time slots - past, present or future. As an illustration of summary scanning, (64b) shows that a speaker is aware of what is going on and selects this information to talk about and does not depict the stages of how they acquired this information, which also explains the emphatic meaning of the utterance.

(64b)  We'*ve been knowing* it's going on in the Olympics.

By contrast, in (65a), a speaker traces the stages of the situation back in time and comes to the conclusion that Flora *was knowing enough* thus resulting in a changing state meaning.

(65a)  She didn't dislike Flora, who wasn't as brittle as she seemed,

and *was knowing enough* to play

The following figure depicts the third construal identified in the sample:
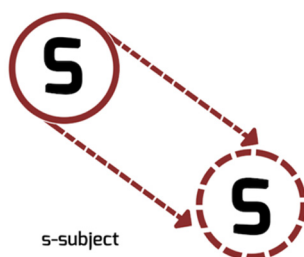


**Figure 20.** The construal of subjectivity

Figure 20 demonstrates a construal of subjectivity where the S in the bold circle indicates a subject of perception, while the S in the dashed lines depicts a subjective view of a situation that has been constructed. In (56), the speaker views a situation quite subjectively and, based on personal assumptions, is quite sure that somebody *is wanting a war*, even though we, the readers, cannot see any evidence for this subjective view of the situation.

(56) they *are wanting* to set a missile to move, *they're wanting* to send a bullet, they *are wanting* to s-- to evoke emotion

The next figure summarises the meanings and possible construals that can underpin them:

**Table 9.** Findings: patterns of meaning and construals.

| Hate | Like | Want |
|---|---|---|
| 1. Emphasis subjectivity and summary scanning<br>2. Temporariness a construal of restricted frame | 1.Temporariness restricted viewing frame and subjectivity<br>2. Tentativeness construals of subjectivity and sequential mental scanning<br>3. Changing state subjectivity and a sequential mental scanning | 1.Temporariness restricted viewing frame and mental scanning (future)<br>2. Tentativeness Subjectivity and mental scanning (future)<br>3. Emphasis Subjectivity |
| **Know** | **Recognise** | **Understand** |
| 1. Emphasis summary scanning and subjectivity<br>2. Changing state sequential scanning<br>3. Tentativeness subjectivity | 1. Emphasis Subjectivity and restricted frame<br>2. Temporariness construal of restricted frame<br>3. Tentativeness Subjectivity | 1. Temporariness Restricted viewing frame<br>2. Emphasis on the fact of understanding subjectivity<br>3. Changing state sequential mental scanning<br>4. Tentativeness subjectivity and restricted viewing frame |

As can be seen, the six stative verbs have produced recurring patterns of meaning – temporariness, emphasis, changing state and tentativeness. Temporariness appears to be in every verb sample, probably because this is a basic meaning of the progressive (Comrie 1976: 38). However, it can also be seen that this pattern of meaning is not always the most popular among the verbs, for example, in the *hate, know* and *recognise* datasets the most widespread meaning is emphasis. This can be partially explained by the individual meaning of the verbs, by the settings of situations and their registers. Statistical analysis showed that these three

verbs favoured the written register in both corpora, so maybe it is more important to express emphasis in a written text to convey the necessary message to the reader, rather than to show the immediacy of the situation. Also, it could be the meaning of the verbs that restricts temporariness. The verb *hate* is an emotion verb, which makes it more prone to an emphatic interpretation; *recognise* is a mental verb which means that there should be a very special situation to say *I'm hating him (now)* or *I'm recognising him (now)* which means that it is still possible to say, but not so frequent. The same goes true for *know* as its data-set did not show any temporariness in the meaning patterns. This can be explained by the fact that it is quite doubtful that knowing something can be temporal. For these reasons it is more 'convenient' for these verbs to indicate emphasis rather than temporariness.

Since temporariness was the most frequent meaning, it could be considered the primary meaning, which allows for other readings such as changing state and tentativeness. In fact, it seems that when a state becomes temporary it is logical that the expressed meaning would sound less forceful and more tentative as in:

> (43) "Dear Dad, I think *I'm liking* camp pretty well but it's hard to tell. (COCA PR WR)

Here, the character is at the camp, which is a temporary situation, and taking in account *it's hard to tell*, it could be said that the character attempts not to sound harsh. This example clearly shows the link between the meaning of temporariness as the centre, and tentativeness as an extension of this meaning.

Similarly, the meaning of changing state is related to temporariness because apparently what is temporal can be presented as changing:

> (49) Speaking of Stone, *I'm liking* him less each week**. (COCA PR WR)

In (49), the adverbial modifier *each week* indicates the temporal essence of the situation and the *-ing* form paired with *less* turn can allow to perceive this combination as a changing state. However, this is a good example of how different constituents, the progressive aspect, stative verbs and adverbial modifiers, can work together to produce a certain meaning, and it is quite hard to differentiate the individual role of each one. However, the meaning of emphasis seems to be less relevant to temporariness as its nature is primarily related to emotions rather than time as in (56):

> (56) they *are wanting* to set a missile to move, *they're wanting* to send a bullet (BNC PR SP)

Here, one cannot see any indication to the time of the events; the entire focus is on feelings and expressions. Moreover, the repetition of *they're wanting* three times can also show that the emotion is so strong that the speaker needs to repeat it several times and as a result there is no connection to temporariness. However, emphatic meaning can be dependent on the meaning of a verb: if the verb indicates emotion like *hate*, temporary emotions can become more vivid as in (38b):

(38b) Andy MacPhail *is hating* life right *now*.

It seems that the character is experiencing this emotion right now, so this emotion can last for a very short period and as a result it is more emphatic. Since emphasis can depend on the meaning of verbs, it could be said that emphasis stays aside from temporariness, but still builds up a semantic network of stative verbs with the progressive which is depicted in the next figure:
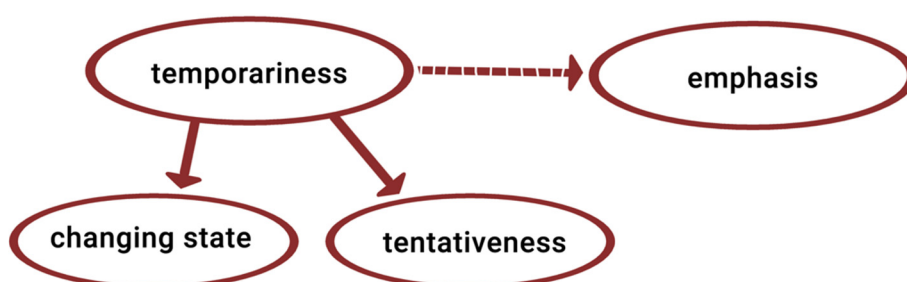


**Figure 21.** The semantic network of the progressive

In sum, using Langacker's terms, this network is based on meaning instantiation and extension (Langacker 2008: 19-20). Temporariness is instantiated (or specified) by tentativeness and changing state, and at the same time it is further extended by emphasis, which is a completely different meaning. Most probably it is stative verbs that allow these readings. This mirrors the idea of Kranich (2010: 249) and Granath & Wherrity (2014: 11) who state that the there is no primary meaning of the progressive, but most probably there are two separate meanings – aspectual and subjective. However, using Langacker's semantic network allows to create a complete picture of the meanings of the progressive with stative verbs and to see the interdependency of the patterns of meanings.

With regard to the first research questions, it can be said that the meaning of the verb is not changed entirely, but instead that it is somewhat modified. In this respect, Quirk et al. (1985: 202) call this "a special effect of stative verbs with progressive", while Granath and Wherrity

(2014: 11) claim that it is different messages that speakers want to deliver. In a similar fashion, Lee (2001:150) argues that this can be interpreted as special readings and Radden & Dirven (2007: 195) state that the combination of stative verbs with the progressive can result in various implicatures. Moreover, these modified meanings occur in spoken and written registers both in COCA and BNC.

As for the second research question, it seems that the same construals adhere to the same patterns of meaning. For example, tentativeness is always motivated by a construal of subjectivity, temporariness by a construal of restricted frame, changing state by sequential scanning. But sometimes there can be overlapping of two construals as in (76c):

> (76) c. It follows from causalism and functionalism, seemingly absurdly, that our private visual experience is identical. (iii) Suppose I do not understand Chinese, but, solely on the basis of the shapes of the letters, and rules connecting them merely as shapes, do the right things. For example, I pass through a sequence of states identical to one passed through by a native Chinese speaker in being presented with a question in Chinese and giving the answer in Chinese. *It follows,* on causalist and functionalist views, that *I am understanding* Chinese, which again seems absurd. (BNC PR SP)

This case can potentially have three readings either changing state, tentativeness or emphasis. It can be changing state in the sense of going from the state of not knowing Chinese to knowing it. Next, the meaning can be tentativeness as the speaker can only hint to the fact that they know Chinese. Additionally, the fact that the whole utterance is only a hypothetical discussion can explain the emphatic meaning as the speaker draws the conclusion of the discussion by saying *I am understanding Chinese*. Thus, the construal of subjectivity and mental scanning can underpin this case as subjectivity can motivate the emphatic and tentative interpretations of this situation, while mental scanning can also result in a changing state and would mean going from the state of unawareness to awareness.

Another illuminating example of construal overlapping has already been discussed above:

> (43) "Dear Dad, I think *I'm liking* camp pretty well but it's hard to tell.

In effect, the construals of restricted viewing frame and subjectivity could well be activated here which may explain why it is so difficult to delineate the meanings – tentativeness and temporariness. Based on a construal, this situation could be understood as being tentative or

temporal, or alternatively having both of the meanings. The overlapping of construals is shown in the next figure:



**Figure 22.** The overlapping of construals

Depending on a number of construals, it can trigger various readings of the same situation.

Finally, the same number of construals can signify that the same cognitive operations take place regardless of the situations, verbs, grounding and setting elements, which accords with Heine (1997: 148), Radden and Panther (2011: 8), Dirven (2004: 1), Langacker (2013: 4) who all claim that language is a window to cognition. Ultimately going back to the discussion of relativistic and universalistic positions in Chapter 1, it is not that important to say whether mind or language is primary. Rather, the interplay of construals allowed us to look into the way we cognize this world and verbalize it in the forms of different lexis and grammar. The Cognitive Grammar theory with its cognitive construals can explain us better why such traditionally incompatible structures can appear and which readings these structures can convey.

## 7.3. Problems and limitations

One significant problem that this study has encountered is the multi-faceted nature of aspect. The analysis of the scholarship indicates that there exist different views on aspect and that it is a system consisting of different components: grammatical aspect, lexical aspect (or aktionsart) (Brinton 1988: 3), grounding and setting elements (Radden and Dirven 2007: 49), aspectualizers (Brinton 1988: 57). Langacker (1982, 2002, 2008) also takes a very wide view of aspect and takes seven constituents into consideration as shown by figure 4.

Ultimately, it was very challenging for this project to extract the role of the progressive form from the utterance. Adverbial modifiers, or setting elements, appeared to play a crucial role in distinguishing the meaning pattern of 'changing state' as in :

(48)   *I'm liking* it more and more.

Without *more and more* the interpretation of this sentence would be temporariness. But since this was quite a persistent pattern in the sample and noting that real usage is important in CG, and the complexity of aspectual system, it seems reasonable to distinguish this interpretation of meaning, even though the role of the progressive is complementary. Langacker (2002: 88) also indicates a key role of adverbial modifiers that can "force" a particular construal. However, it can be suggested that a construal can motivate the use of the adverbial modifiers too.

A further problem related to assessing the individual role of the progressive in combination with the perfective aspect and other verbal structures (modals, infinitive, semi-modal structures) shown in Tables 12,13. This study has not taken into consideration these combinations as it was beyond the scope of its research questions. However, these findings indicate potential for future investigation.

Finally, this study has not considered the manner in which the tokens are distributed between genres, which could have brought additional insights to the understanding of how statives are used with the progressive. As we have seen, 60% of the tokens in the BNC data are drawn from written registers, therefore, knowledge of the specific written genres could have expanded the findings.

## 8. Conclusion

This study set out to investigate the six stative verbs *(hate, like, want, know, recognise, understand)* in BNC and COCA, both in spoken and written registers to identify novel meanings of such combinations and to find cognitive construals that can motivate the use of progressive with stative verbs. To this end the study was able to analyse 1987 tokens quantitively and qualitatively.

The statistical analysis demonstrated that stative verbs in the progressive are quite a rare phenomenon in both corpora but *want* appeared to be a significant exception. Notwithstanding the scarceness of cases, BNC showed a higher number of tokens.

One of the main findings was that the meanings of verbs did not change drastically, rather novel interpretations of meaning were produced, as progressive aspect brings in a dynamic aspect to the stative verbs and this yields new interpretations such as temporariness, emphasis, changing state and tentativeness. These new interpretations comprise the semantical network

where changing state and tentativeness are instantiations of temporariness, and emphasis is an extension of the meaning.

With regard to the second research question, this study identified three cognitive construals that can potentially motivate the use of the progressive with statives i.e. those of restricted viewing frame, subjectivity and mental scanning (sequential and summary). Depending on the meaning of each stative verb and the grounding and setting elements of the sentences, there can appear to be an overlap of these construals and two construals can operate together.

The major limitation of this study which might have affected the assumptions regarding the meaning and underpinning construals is that a strong influence from other aspectual constituents such as grounding and setting elements, perfective aspect, verbal structures can have a bearing on the overall meaning of the structures.

The examination of the stative verbs in the progressive revealed that it should be treated at a broad scale, encompassing cognitive construals, the historical development of the structure at hand, the multifaceted nature of aspect and cultural peculiarities. Using the Cognitive Grammar theory allowed to see how we cognize the world and verbalize it with the help of grammar and lexis.

It is suggested that this study has shed light on the use of the stative verbs with progressive from a Cognitive Grammar perspective. It seems that further investigation of other stative verbs in the progressive and their distribution in spoken and written genres can extend the understanding of this phenomenon. Additionally, this phenomenon can be investigated in the non-native corpora to compare the use of the progressive with stative verbs among native and non-native speakers. Consequently, this can complete the descriptive grammar handbooks and can be used in teaching English as a second language.

**Word count: 29 786**

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# 9. Appendix

## 9.1. Abstract

This thesis conducts a corpus study of six stative verbs *hate, like, want, know, recognise, understand* in combination with the progressive in BNC and COCA. The purpose of this study was to identify any novel meanings in the structures, such *as I am wanting, She is liking* etc., and to find construals that can underpin such traditionally incompatible combinations. The analysis was based on the conceptual framework of Cognitive Grammar proposed by Langacker (2008). The sample for this study was comprised of 1987 tokens which were analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. The qualitative analysis showed that these structures are quite scarce in the corpora, though BNC demonstrated a higher incidence compared to COCA. The findings of qualitative examination demonstrated that there were no novel meanings in the structures, rather different readings which built up a semantic network - temporariness including tentativeness and changing state, and emphasis. Additionally, construals of restricted viewing frame, subjectivity, mental scanning seem to motivate these structures.

## 9.2. Zusammengfassung

Diese Arbeit führt eine Corpus Study von sechs Zustandsverben *hate, like, want, know, recognise, understand* durch, in Kombination mit Progressive Aspect in BNC und COCA. Der Zweck dieser Studie war es, neue Bedeutungen in den Strukturen zu identifizieren, wie *I am wanting, she is liking* usw., und Construals zu finden, die solche traditionell inkompatiblen Kombinationen untermauern können. Die Analyse basierte auf dem von Langacker (2008) vorgeschlagenen konzeptionellen Rahmen der Cognitive Grammar. Die Stichprobe für diese Studie bestand aus 1987 Token, die quantitativ und qualitativ analysiert wurden. Die qualitative Analyse zeigte, dass diese Strukturen in den Korpora ziemlich selten sind, obwohl BNC eine höhere Inzidenz im Vergleich zu COCA zeigte. Die Ergebnisse der qualitativen Untersuchung zeigten, dass es keine neuen Bedeutungen in den Strukturen gab, sondern unterschiedliche Lesarten, die ein semantisches Netzwerk aufbauten - Temporärität einschließlich Versuchsweise und Zustandsänderung sowie Betonung. Darüber hinaus scheinen Construal mit eingeschränktem Betrachtungsrahmen, Subjektivität und mentalem Scannen diese Strukturen zu motivieren.