N° 17, 1991 ISSN 0226-7144

LANGUES

ET

LINGUISTIQUE

TIRÉ À PART

Université Laval, Québec, Canada

LANGUES ET LINGUISTIQUE, no 17, 1991: 99-137

CAN THE PROGRESSIVE EXPRESS A STATE?

Walter H. HIRTLE
professeur titulaire
Claude BÉGIN
étudiant de 3e cycle

Dans les écrits des linguistes et des grammairiens sur cette question, les avis sont partagés. Pour essayer de voir plus clair, nous définissons d'abord les notions de *stative* (=statique) et *non-stative* (= dynamique) en termes de simultanéité et de successivité respectivement. Ces deux rapports temporels de base fournissent un point de départ pour l'examen détaillé de l'emploi de certains verbes signalés comme «incompatibles» avec la forme progressive : *like, dislike, prefer, love, hate, despise, fear, believe, doubt, remember, forget, understand, know, have to, seem.* Le résultat de cet examen indique que, au moins dans le cas de ces verbes, la forme progressive ne peut pas exprimer un état.

CAN THE PROGRESSIVE EXPRESS A STATE?[1]

Walter H.HIRTLE
Claude BÉGIN

INTRODUCTION

Poutsma (1926:339) pointed out that the progressive (e.g. "he is smoking a cigar.") "is more or less incompatible with verbs which express a passive or stationary attitude of the person or thing concerned" because it is "associated with action or change proceeding from real or supposed activity". Visser (1973:1969) presents a list of nearly two hundred verbs which do not

> express a real activity.... In order to account for their use in the expanded form one has to go in quest of the various senses and sub-senses that are tinged with a notion - however slight - of activity.

A number of other grammarians have adopted a similar distinction, expressing it in terms such as state/process, stative/dynamic, state-like/action-like, and pointing out that the progressive cannot express the former type of event.

On the other hand, confronted with cases where there is no apparent activity sense, some writers maintain that although the progressive is for the most part limited to dynamic events, it can, on occasion, express stative events. Comrie (1976:38), for example, states that "many stative verbs can be used in the Progressive to indicate a contingent state", an echo of Leech's remark (1987:26) that the progressive can be used with verbs "referring to a temporary state". Smith (1983:497) is more explicit concerning the "non-standard aspectual choices" to be discussed in the present article:

> Progressive statives present a state as an event, endowing the state with the properties of events. The relevant properties of events seem to be activity and successive stages, which together constitute the dynamics to differentiate events from states.

Brinton (1987:208f) summarizes this viewpoint as follows:

> ... the temporary or contingent meaning of states in the progressive follows from their activity reading.... states, which are not dynamic, are presented as dynamic or as if dynamic.

Unfortunately, these authors do not make it clear how a state presented as dynamic, with an activity reading, can yet remain a state.

In this article it is claimed (a) that such views are based on an inadequate conception of a state, which must be defined in terms of what characterizes a verb, namely a representation of time; (b) that the progressive cannot, because of its very nature, be used to express a state so defined; (c) that any use of the progressive with the verbs to be discussed here is permitted, as Visser suggests, by a slight lexical shift from their more usual meanings. Since, however, Visser and the others adopting this point of view do not provide an analysis of particular verbs in support of their claim, the present article will be devoted to presenting data of this sort for a dozen or so verbs. We shall begin by discussing the notions of "state" and "progressive".

A STATE AS A TEMPORAL ENTITY

Inherent in any attempt to explain the use of a grammatical form in terms of meaning is the distinction between lexical and grammatical meaning.[2] The lexical meaning of a verb, its *lexeme*, appears to be a complex set of impressions[3] which are distinctive for each verb of the language and which, as in the case of the copula *to be*, may be reduced to a minimum. Each time a verb is used, its lexeme is actualized in one of its particular senses, in a particular arrangement of its impressions, though exactly how the speaker realizes this is anything but clear. The grammatical meaning of a verb consists of the abstract meanings provided by the systems of tense, mood, voice, etc.--the different categories that make up the verb as a grammatical entity so that it can express "happenings which take place in time" (Quirk et al. 1985:177) here called *events*.[4] Since our concern is with the simple and progressive forms, we shall focus on how their abstract grammatical meanings combine with — or better, inform — the particular lexical sense of a verb in a given use. It is interesting to think of the relation between lexical and grammatical meanings as one between matter and form, between what the speaker has thought and how he has thought it.

A good starting point to discuss states is one on which most authors appear to agree: a state involves no change. From this it

follows that any non-stative event involves change or the possibility thereof. To see what this entails insofar as the English verb is concerned, one must examine the relations between the lexeme and the representation of time provided by the simple form. An analysis of the dynamic/stative distinction leads to the view that a developing activity is essentially an event involving "successive stages" or phases, an event, therefore, whose lexical elements arise successively in time. On the other hand, in an unchanging state, which is "like-parted" (Quirk et al. 1985:198) or monophase, the various impressions must be seen to arise simultaneously in time, to coexist in each and every instant of the event's duration. In other words, what takes place in time varies (or may vary) from one instant to the next in a non-stative, metaphase event, so that all the instants must be represented in order to have a full view of the lexeme, as the following representation suggests:

$$I_1 + I_2 + I_3 + ... + I_n = 1$$

(I_1 stands for the first instant of an event, I_2 the second instant, etc., and 1 symbolizes the whole.)

The lexical content of a state, on the other hand, where one has a full view of the lexeme at each instant of the event's duration, can be depicted as follows:

$$I_1 = I_2 = I_3 = ... = I_n = 1$$

Based on an analysis of the relation between the lexical and the grammatical, this description goes beyond the largely impressionistic depicting of event types, so common in the literature, because it shows that the two types are the expression of two necessary temporal relationships: successivity and simultaneity. And since no other relations are possible in time, it can now be understood why there are only two types of event in English and why every verb must express one or the other.

For the present purposes, then, a state can be defined as an event whose lexical elements are represented as existing simultaneously. From this it follows that the movement into the state and the exit from the state, moments involving change as Smith pointed out, do not form part of the state as represented in English. On the other hand, it does not follow from this definition that a state is necessarily "durative", as Comrie (1976:50) has claimed, since one instant's duration suffices to lodge all the verb's content.[5] At this point, the question of how to name these two types of event arises. The most widely accepted names, "stative" and "dynamic", characterize them by means of expressive

effects in the resulting sentence, and this has led to a difficulty. Because it suggests 'something unchanging', the term "stative" is adequate to characterize all manifestations of a monophase type of event. For the other type of event, the term "dynamic", which suggests 'change' but has overtones of 'continuous change' and even of 'voluntary behavior', fittingly depicts many expressive effects, but not all, and particularly not those found in the sort of usage discussed here, where the effect of on-going activity is not clearly felt. That is to say, the change involved in the verbs to be discussed is often covert, or supposed, or merely possible; it is anything but 'dynamic', and so such uses have been too hastily classified as "stative".

To avoid the sense of "dynamic", which is too concrete, one might adopt "non-stative", but this term names by default rather than by evoking the defining characteristic of its referent. Similarly, terms such as "action-like" or "activity-like", which name by analogy, merely appeal to our implicit knowledge of what an action or an activity is. Perhaps the best solution is to be found in technical terms to designate the defining characteristic of each type of event: *metaphase* for an event involving, or susceptible to, a change in phase, either covert or overt; *monophase* for an event represented with no change, the same phase occurring throughout its duration.

STATES AND THE PROGRESSIVE

Since the progressive form was first analyzed as an *imperfective* (cf. Hirtle 1967), many new facts of usage have been observed which provide a more and more extensive ground for contrasting it with the simple form, the *perfective*. As a consequence the original insight has been rectified, refined and deepened.[6] Therefore, this study continues exploring the theory to see not only if it is compatible with the facts in a new area of usage, a minimal requirement, but also if the notions of perfectivity and imperfectivity can actually throw light on observed uses and help explain them.

These key notions of 'perfective' and 'imperfective' require clarification before the examination of particular uses is undertaken. These terms, as applied to the simple and progressive forms of English, should not be taken as suggesting merely total vs. partial duration of the event expressed by the verb. The simple form is a perfective in the sense that it depicts the duration required to represent in time *all* the lexical impressions or "matter" of the event. It can do this in two ways, as we have just seen: by representing the successive phases of the event throughout its total duration, in which case the result in discourse is a

metaphase event; or by representing one moment of the event's duration where all the impressions coexist, in which case the result will be a monophase event. The progressive is an imperfective in the sense that it depicts the duration involved in *some but not all* of the event's lexical elements. As a consequence, it always evokes part of the duration of a metaphase event with the possibility of some change or development to come, but it cannot express a monophase event because, regardless of whether the total duration or only one instant of a state is evoked, its full lexeme is necessarily represented in time and so cannot correspond to a suggestion of imperfectivity. Thus, the present examining of usage with fourteen so-called incompatible verbs to see if there is a shift in meaning, however slight, when they are used in the progressive — or if, in fact, this form can express a state — constitutes a further testing of an already established theory of the simple and progressive forms. And since it is based on a more general view of the relation between the lexical and the grammatical, it calls into question the approach of the Psychomechanics of Language, which views the grammatical system as providing mental forms for coming to grips with, prehending, the lexical matter arising from the representation of our experience.

TESTING WITH MEANING

Since the postulated distinction between the simple and the progressive is one of meaning, it follows that any use must reflect this distinction. For most verbs, the distinction between 'perfective' and 'imperfective' is often fairly concrete: that between partial and total duration. With the verbs we are examining here, however, this distinction is usually more abstract and subtle. It concerns an event that offers the possibility of some subsequent development or change and one that does not. Thus, a crucial step in this type of analysis is the comparing of nuances of meaning, a process which is introspective by nature but not unscientific because, provided the observations of meaning find a consensus among qualified observers, they can constitute a valid data base for scientific reflection and explanation. This comparing assumes that the lexeme is not categorized once and for all as monophase or metaphase but rather can be actualized now as one, now as the other (cf. Mourelatos 1978 and Dowty 1979).

The subtlety of the distinctions of meaning combined with the rarity of usage in the progressive means that self-made data in the form of examples with no readily discernible context or situation are even less trustworthy here than elsewhere.[7] It also means that in order to get a sufficient number of attested examples one must rely almost

exclusively on written sources simply because one can scan a text more rapidly than one can listen to a conversation. Basing an analysis on only one or two attested examples is risky.[8] Furthermore, to discern with any assurance the nuance of meaning intended by the writer, it is often essential to have a fairly extended context and this is more readily available in the written language. Finally, it should be clear at the outset that, no matter how extensive the search for examples may be, one can never observe all uses of a verb since usage is by definition open-ended, creative. By the same token, no matter how much supporting evidence is accumulated in favor of a theory of usage based on the meaning of a form, the proof will never be absolute because, as in any other science based on observation, the possibility of new, contradictory data arising can never be reduced to zero.

VERBS EXPRESSING AN AFFECTIVE ATTITUDE

In the light of the above analysis of what constitutes a monophase event, we can better understand Jespersen's remark (1954:221) that "verbs which express psychological states ... are generally used in the simple tenses only". If our analysis is valid, such verbs will necessarily express a metaphase event when used in the progressive. To test this, we shall first examine usage for a number of verbs expressing an affective attitude (cf. Visser 1973:1978): *to like, to dislike, to prefer, to love, to hate, to despise, to fear.*

Several grammarians[9] have commented on *to like*, the consensus being that the progressive is found in cases when the verb has a sense of something developing rather than its usual sense of a mental state or attitude, expressed by the simple form. An examination of particular examples bears this out and permits us to specify the activity involved. Thus in:

How *are* you *liking* your new job? (Hornby 1954:118)

the speaker is asking about the subject's present reactions as an indication of whether he is forming a positive or negative attitude. That is, the verb here evokes not the subject's attitude or state of mind but the prior process of forming an attitude. This event necessarily involves successive phases and so can be evoked as incomplete at a moment when the attitude is not yet formed. The simple form, on the other hand, would evoque the subject's settled attitude concerning his new job. Similarly, the question:

Do you *like* fish?

"asks about a taste that is assumed to be formed and to have reached completion," according to Hornby. Such mental states involve no change or successive phases and so can be represented only as perfective.

The sense of forming an attitude comes out clearly in:

> There was nothing disagreeable in Mr. Rushworth's appearance, and Sir Thomas *was liking* him already. (Poutsma 1926:342)

The adverbial "already" makes explicit the impression of a recent encounter, a new situation which leaves room for further possible development and so calls for the progressive here. Similarly in:

> Sounds as if he's *liking* it out here, so I suppose he'll take his family out. (Visser 1973:1980)

the verb suggests something like 'getting to like', 'forming a favorable attitude toward' new surroundings. Again, the simple form here would suggest that the subject had his mind made up, the state resulting from forming an attitude. The same could be said of the following:

> His pleasure, silent as it was, communicated itself to her instincts, her usual delight in the movement of her muscles became keener, because she knew that he *was liking* the way she walked. (Buyssens 1968:62)

Here and in the following example, there is no explicit indication that the situation is new. It is the metaphase representation imposed on the lexeme by the progressive which gives the suggestion of reacting to something in a new way or for the first time, of forming an attitude:

> Nan wondered how Simon's family *were liking* her and sensed a certain reservation about his mother. (Buyssens 1968:33; cf. 'what sort of opinion they were forming of her')

In all these examples, the distinction between progressive and simple clearly opposes metaphase and monophase events, but it should not be assumed that this is necessarily the case. Although no attested examples have come to hand, there is no reason why the simple form of *to like* cannot evoke the complete duration of the opinion-forming process, as it would in:

> There was nothing disagreeable in Mr. R's appearance and Sir T. *liked* him immediately.

The sense here would be 'got to like him', a metaphase event carried out from beginning to end.

Although most of the examples of *to like* in the progressive evoke this sizing up of a new situation, a few bring to light a slightly different sense of the verb. Thus in:

> That's because you don't know any, said Christopher, who *wasn't liking* Lewes at that moment. (Kruisinga 1931:362)

The adverbial phrase "at that moment" suggests that the subject had formerly liked Lewes but that he was reacting unfavorably at that point. Whether this unfavorable reaction would result in a different attitude or not is left open because the verb here expresses the incomplete process involved in changing an attitude. Similarly in:

> What a lovely day! *Are* you *liking* the world any better? (Jespersen 1954:222)

The suggestion is that the subject had a negative attitude on the previous day, and so the speaker asks if the subject is in the process of changing his attitude. The simple form here would have evoked a momentary state of mind: 'have you changed your attitude?'

To distinguish between the two senses brought out by the progressive — forming an attitude and changing an attitude — one often needs an extended context. For example in:

> It was slower going home, but we made it by sundown. I asked to be dropped at the campus and Randy did that for me. We didn't waste much time with good-bying. I *wasn't liking* Randy and Dee *wasn't liking* me. The Bentley breezed away. (Scheffer 1975:69-70)

it is not clear whether these are new acquaintances forming an attitude toward one another or whether they are old friends experiencing a momentary cooling of their relationship. Likewise, in the following example either interpretation is possible depending on whether this is Martha's first visit or not:

> Martha, meanwhile, *had not been liking* Switzerland, perhaps because it suited her, physically, too well. There was something, she felt, rather indecent about enjoying such perfect health as she enjoyed at Leysin. (Huxley 1965:147)

All but one of the twenty-four examples collected clearly express either the forming or the changing of an attitude. The only example found so far which might be interpreted differently is the following:

> First she likes this and then she likes that; right now she's *liking* Marlon Brando. (Visser 1973:1980)

The progressive here might be interpreted in its 'getting to like' sense if it is assumed that the subject is just becoming acquainted with Marlon Brando. On the other hand, the speaker's intent is to suggest that the subject frequently changes her mind, so the progressive is probably meant to suggest 'I don't know how long it will continue.' In order to bring out an impression of temporariness in this way, the end of the event must be represented as imminent but not yet realized. That is to say, the last moment of the event is evoked as in the offing, and since this moment involves change, the event is felt to be non-stative, metaphasic, hence the use of the progressive.[10]

Our examples of *to dislike* fit the pattern observed above. The following illustrates the attitude-forming use that arises in new situations:

> "And are you enjoying your visit to India?" Lady Pinfield turned to ask Kilwhillie, her right hand neighbour.
> "I'*m not disliking* it so much as I expected," he replied.
> "You expected to dislike India?" Lady Pinfield exclaimed. "I never heard of anybody who expected to dislike India nowadays." (Mackenzie 1954:133)

As this is K's first visit (cf. "You expected to dislike India"), he is changing his former prejudices into a better attitude. Likewise, the next example can probably be interpreted as implying a new situation, the adverbial "more and more" bringing out the developmental nature of the reactions as the subject moves toward a settled attitude:

> She's *disliking* the other woman more and more every minute. (Goyvaerts 1968:123)

On the other hand, in:

> The coroner sat for a few moments looking at the envelope. He said, "This is addressed to Dr. Milne. Did he think you were a doctor?"

> "No," said Milne with a shadow of a smile. "He knew I wasn't. That just means that he *was disliking* me when he addressed the envelope. 'Doctor' was an insult with him." (Balchin 1945:241)

It would appear that the subject, who knew Milne, was experiencing momentary reactions of dislike, something that presumably did not reflect his usual attitude. Our only other example of this verb in the progressive might be taken in either sense, depending on whether the protagonists are new or old acquaintances:

> As we separated, the room was full of hostility: we *were disliking* each other, and knew it. (Lessing 1981:306; example provided by Lori Morris)

Whatever the intended meaning here, the choice is between two expressive effects involving developmental senses depicted as imperfective by the progressive.

To prefer usually expresses a settled attitude, the stative sense of "to like better" (WT = Webster's Third), which calls for the simple form, as in:

> He prefers sports to reading. (WT)

This contrasts sharply with the sense in the only example with the progressive found so far:

> In time I could earn my keep in that world as well as the next man. All I had to do was to shut my eyes and walk in. Why did the way in seem so hard? I was in anguish. I seemed to be throwing away the substance for the shadow. What I *was preferring* was an emptiness of which I could give no intelligible account whatever. (Murdoch 1954:198)

Here the sense is "to choose above another" (WT), "to give preference to" (OED) and so the example has the reading 'what I was in the process of choosing, giving preference to'. The subject's attitude is not yet settled, and there is a suggestion that he will not carry it through, a consequence of the use of the imperfective.

As several grammarians have pointed out, *to love* usually evokes a settled attitude, a "psychological state", and so takes the simple form. But as we shall see below, it can also express a metaphase event in the simple form. In the progressive, *to love* can

express the 'process-leading-up-to-a-state-of-mind' pattern observed with *to like*, either with the sense of forming an attitude as in:

> I'*m* simply *loving* Sitrano, or is it Chitrano? My Italian's rotten. And I've been out here since January. (Mackenzie 1940a:181)

or that of changing an attitude (here intensifying it):

> She could have hit him. Yet, at the moment, she *was loving* him more than ever. (Diver 1927:150)

However, about half the examples express a different sense, "some activity consequent on" the attitude, as Poutsma (1926:342) puts it. Thus in:

> Your cousin Richard *has been loving* you as plainly as he could for I don't know how long. (Visser 1973:1980)

the sense is 'has been making his love for you as plain as possible'. Similarly in:

> She *is loving* him [her baby] more than ever she did before though she doesn't like to hold him like I do. (Ibid.)

one understands the verb to evoke the physical manifestations of her love, not some change in attitude.[11] And in:

> She *was loving* him into recovery. (Bennett 1926:298)

overt activity arising from the subject's affection is clearly implied. *To love* sometimes has the sense of 'make love' and evokes the activity of sexual intercourse:

> Even now, when *he's loving* me he realizes that I've been sent by Sam to trick him. (Hinde 1970:186)

On the other hand, the activity consequent on the attitude may be largely covert, as in:

> Though I shall not be with you...you will know that I *am loving* you still. (Poutsma 1921:90)

where one imagines the subject thinking and dreaming about the loved one. The difference between this sense and that of forming an attitude comes out clearly in:

> While I was mourning her, she *was loving* another. (Jespersen 1954:222)

Should this have the reading 'falling in love with' or that of 'showing her love for'? One needs a more extensive context to decide.

Thus, it seems that when speakers have the impression of an incomplete developmental happening either leading up to, changing, or resulting from an attitude, they use the progressive with *to love* . At any rate, all attested examples that have come to hand so far, express a metaphase event of this sort. As for the simple form, one other example deserves a comment. The OED describes the sense in:

> Putting his arms round her neck, [he] 'loved' her with his cheek against hers.

as "to embrace affectionately (a childish use)", certainly an event involving activity. This example shows that the simple form of *to love* is not limited to the expression of stative events.

To hate in the progressive can also express subsequent activity, "visible or audible signs of the disposition in question or of emotional reactions" (Visser 1973:1978), as in:

> You've seen me when I *was hating* something... I *was hating* her. (Spillane 1966:173)

It can express a momentary reaction which, if carried on would lead to a change of attitude. For example:

> I can't stop admiring him when I'*m not hating* him. (Poutsma 1921:90)
> "Stop, will you? Or I shall throw this inkpot at you." And when Aunt Ellen did stop, she was half sorry, because she *was hating* her so much that she was really wanting to throw the inkpot at her. (Mackenzie 1920:221)

It can also express the incomplete process of forming an attitude, the sense of 'beginning or getting to hate':

> I'*m hating* this house party. (Kruisinga and Erades 1953:260)

> The rain came hissing down and, mingled with the echo from the Piccadilly Traffic, had the personality of a voice. There must be many others in London tonight who *were* hearing that same voice and *hating* its cruel, sluggish indifference. (Walpole 1927:189)

As in the case of *to love*, what lies behind the expressive effects observed here (acquiring an attitude, momentary reactions that might lead to changing an attitude, manifesting an attitude) is the impression of possible developments in the offing, of part of the event being not yet realized.

Two of these expressive effects have been found in examples with *to despise* in the progressive. Thus in:

> We were rather chums - and she gave me that case to put her picture in. So I did (He jerks it out, staring at her to see if she *is despising* him.) (Buyssens 1968:60)

the suggestion of a momentary reaction comes to the fore. And in the following, the idea of expressing disaffection seems to be what the author had in mind:

> I had not thought Mr. Darcy so bad as this - though I have never liked him, I had not thought so very ill of him - I had supposed him *to be despising* his fellow-creatures in general, but did not suspect him of descending to such malicious revenge, such injustice, such inhumanity as this. (Austen 1958:80)

There seems to be no reason other than scarcity of usage (only four examples of *despise* in the progressive found so far) to account for the fact that no example with the 'forming an attitude' sense has turned up.

To fear is just as infrequent in the progressive since it usually evokes a settled attitude, the state of "being afraid that" as in:

> I *fear* we are all in your black books. (OED)

According to Poutsma (1921:89), the progressive form is possible if the verb implies "not only a mere attitude, but also some activity consequent on that attitude" as in (Ibid. 90):

> *Was* she *fearing* that if her poor young sister-in-law did die, a weight would rest on her conscience for all time?
> I feel that you *are* all *fearing*.

Visser too (1973:1978) sees, in such examples, behaviour manifesting the attitude of the subject. On the other hand, in an example like:

> We see no evidence that people *are fearing* to travel by sea. (Poutsma loc. cit.)

the sense seems to be rather 'that people are becoming afraid to travel by sea', suggesting the forming of an attitude. Similarly in:

> Yet would a woman like Miriam have found in him anything to love if he were as superficial as he *was fearing* ? (Mackenzie 1937:425)

the most likely interpretation is 'if he were as superficial as he was beginning to think he was'. This suggests that *to fear* patterns like the other verbs in this group.

So much then for verbs of affection and disaffection. Although there are differences arising from their lexemes — *like, dislike* and *prefer* do not appear to take the 'manifestation' sense — all uses of the progressive do evoke a metaphase event at a given moment of its development. Thus, the data does support the 'imperfective' postulate, which helps to interpret the data by showing the relation between the sense of the verb when used in the progressive and the ordinary, "private state" sense. We shall now turn to a number of verbs that commonly express what Quirk et al (1985:203) calls "intellectual states".

VERBS EXPRESSING INTELLECTUAL STATES

To believe is commonly used in the sense of 'to hold as true' as in:

> He *believes* ... that 'probability is the guide of life.'
> (OED)

where the verb expresses a mental state. It is also not infrequent in the sense of 'to give credence to, to accept as true', where it evokes the mental process leading up to and resulting in the state of belief, as in:

> The Guide Chef [sic] evidently *did not believe* a word of it.
> (OED)

In the progressive, *to believe* can be used to evoke as incomplete this process of giving credence to. Thus in:

> She'd watched him as she told him to see if he *was believing* her. (Hinde 1966:87)

the suggestion is that she monitored his reactions during the telling to see if he was accepting what she was saying as true. The following example is similar:

> I wondered if I had heard aright. It was colossal. Yet, as he spoke, Getliffe *was believing* every word. That was one of his gifts. (Snow 1950:303)

It is quite conceivable, in situations such as this, that one might accept everything as true up to the final remarks, when one realizes it is a tall tale.

In some examples the two forms of the verb can be contrasted. Thus in:

> "Wacey, why *must* you always *believe* what you want to believe?" He laughed bitterly. "That's a good one to pull. Why, the whole trouble between us just now is that you *are believing* what you want to believe." (Mackenzie 1940a:156)

the simple form evokes the process of giving credence to certain things in a settled way of reacting, a habit, i.e., a monophase event, whereas the progressive evokes the same way of reacting not as settled but as open to change, as a metaphase event. In the following example, the progressive provides a difference nuance:

> It's no use your trying to argue me out of what I *believe.* I know *I'm believing* what it's right for me to believe. (Mackenzie 1922:104)

Here, it is no longer a question of forming a belief, but rather of maintaining an already acquired belief. In the simple form, the verb expresses belief as a settled state of mind, whereas in the progressive, it evokes the acts of faith necessary to conserve his belief. The effect of the progressive is particularly delicate here since it both implies what the speaker believes could be open to question and expresses the never-ending series of reaffirmations of belief required to maintain it. In the following, it is not the acts of an individual but rather, as the plural

subject indicates, those of a whole population which are seen as incomplete:

> I don't believe it; probably you don't either. And fewer people *are believing* it every day. (McKenna 1926:66)

Because it provides an imperfective view of the act of giving credence, the progressive can suggest an attempt to believe which may or may not succeed. Thus in:

> That she knew things which had made her start away from him, spurred him to triumph over that repugnance; and he *was believing* that he should triumph. (Poutsma 1921:89)

the nuance seems to be 'he was beginning to believe' or 'he found himself believing', with a suggestion of uncertainty whether the believing would be further confirmed or not. The following final example might be open to two interpretations:

> One foreign diplomat said to me today: "The Administration *is* now *believing* its own propaganda and seems to be living in a never-never land of its own making." (Ota 1963:93)

Taken in the reading of 'beginning to believe', it would suggest that more and more members of the Administration are accepting it as true. More likely in view of the context, however, is the reading that the Administration as a whole now accepts its propaganda as true but with the added nuance — the effect of the progressive — that the believing must change before long. The expressive effect of something temporary arises, as we have seen above, because in an otherwise unchanging event the progressive permits the evoking as imminent the final moment involving the movement out of the event. This effect contrasts sharply with that of a settled belief which the simple form would evoke here.

To doubt, like *to believe*, usually expresses a state of mind and so is rarely used in the progressive. When it does occur as an imperfective, it evokes the mental activity leading to a state of doubt. For example, in:

> Don't think I'*m doubting* your steadfastness, old man, I believe in it. (Mackenzie 1922:103)

the sense of the progressive - 'don't think I am calling into question your steadfastness' - is contrasted with the unchanging state evoked by "believe". Similarly, in:

> No one *is doubting* Officer Johnson's emotional stability. (*National Enquirer* Oct. 9, 1979:3)

the suggestion is 'no one is even beginning to question', whereas the simple form would call to mind the resulting attitude: 'no one lacks confidence in'.

Poutsma (1921:26) points out that *to remember* can have the two senses 'to recall to the memory' and 'to have in the memory' and comments: "in other words it often indicates a state of the memory which is the consequence of the act of recalling to the memory." The reason it is considered an 'anomalous' verb is that the act of recalling whereby some item is brought to consciousness is itself necessarily unconscious and so can be known only as a complete act through its result. Thus, as Hornby (1949:175) points out, even "where there is the idea of unfinished activity typical of the Progressive we must say: 'He's trying to remember where he left it,' not 'He is remembering'." And yet when used in the progressive *to remember* evokes the nuance of further possible development because of the plurality or the complexity of what is being recalled. That is to say, in each of the thirty odd examples collected, there is a suggestion of the possibility of recalling further details. This comes out quite clearly where there is a plurality of items, as in the following:

> "Other clergymen," she said, "are so odd compared with ours."
> I could see she *was remembering* the whole strange world of clergymen: Mullahs, Buddhists, Orthodox, Copts, Romans, Old Catholics, Anglicans, Lutherans, Presbyterians, Rabbis.... (Macaulay 1956:78)

Sometimes, not the individual items so much as what is associated with them is suggested by the progressive:

> They *were remembering* the long soft doorway kisses. (Hinde 1957:21)

Likewise, in:

> She *is remembering* the lawyer who swindled them, and Marsac, and Agostino, and the Biltons, and a dozen others. (Mackenzie 1927:421)

the suggestion is not simply that of recalling individuals (the simple form would evoke this) but rather of calling to mind various characteristics and details about them. In the following example, where the progressive is found with a direct object in the singular, the subject is depicted as recalling, one by one, various impressions involved in the visit:

> As he walked to the lawn mower he was not thinking of the Bens; he *was remembering* the visit from the O'Connal boy with the dark and serious eyes. He found that memory comforting. (Visser 1973:1977)

This comes out quite clearly in the following example, the whole point of which is to evoke, not just the "thing" but all the facets of it:

> I do think it's fortunate that I've never had to give evidence in a court case. I'd just worry myself to death in case I *wasn't remembering* a thing just right. (Christie 1970:48)

In the next case, the subject recalls a fact but the progressive suggests that he is only then in the process of realizing what it implies:

> Into the rapids of Woodbury's confidences Joe Easter's voice cut like the stem of a canoe: "I never wear boots in summer. Always moccasins in the canoe, and rubbers over 'em ashore." (Ralph *was remembering* that he had paid thirty-five dollars for the noble boots recommended by Woodbury.) (Lewis 1926:89)

Ralph here seems to be realizing that he has been taken in by Woodbury. Similarly in:

> Latimer (taking the covers off the dishes): Omelette, fish, kidney and bacon?
> Anne: Now you're forgetting.
> Latimer (putting back the covers): No, I*'m remembering*. Toast and marmalade — isn't that right? (Buyssens 1968:63)

Latimer presumably recalls (or at least pretends to recall) not only the fact that he is on a diet but also what this entails, namely, putting the covers back on the dishes without helping himself. These examples, typical of those that have come to hand so far, help to show how subtle the impression of imperfectivity can sometimes be.

Like *to remember, to forget* can express both the idea of a mental process, 'to let slip from one's memory' (e.g. "He told me his

name but I immediately forgot it") and the idea of the resulting state, 'to have no remembrance of' (e.g. "I forget his name"). The progressive, of course, is found only with the process sense, and as Hornby (1949:174) first pointed out, can be used "when the reference is to a body of facts," a plurality of items, as in:

> I'*m forgetting* my Persian.

Here the forgetting is incomplete since not all the facts have yet slipped the subject's memory. Again the plurality may be the various facets and details implied by a single entity:

> I'*m forgetting* what India's like. (McKenna 1917:183)

In this example, the progressive with its suggestion of a partial forgetting contrasts markedly with the simple form, which would suggest a complete mental blank. More commonly, the progressive is used in the second person to remind someone of some fact:

> You *are forgetting*, sir, that only Constable Dobson has actually seen the prisoner. (Visser 1973:1975)

It is as though the speaker wishes to tell the person that he is in the process of letting the fact slip from his memory at the moment of speaking, a much more tactful way of reminding him than to presume that the forgetting is complete and to present him with its result (e.g. "you have forgotten"). The ambiguity of the following example (more context would undoubtedly clear it up) brings out these two expressive effects:

> You *are forgetting* the moral arguments. (Adamczewski 1948:259)

This would most likely arise in the midst of a discussion to remind someone that he is neglecting certain arguments. It might also evoke the gradual loss of knowledge of a series of arguments on the part of someone who had studied moral philosophy some years before. The progressive most frequently occurs when the speaker interrupts himself in the process of letting something slip from his memory:

> "Come, come, I *am forgetting* my promise!" cried the doctor. (Visser 1973:1975)

The use of the past tense brings in a slight nuance of distancing in such cases (cf. Hirtle 1967:77 for comments):

> He poured out a cup of tea.
> "I *was forgetting*," she said. "I am forbidden tea. I mustn't drink it." (Bennett 1911:600)

As in the case of the non-past, however, the fact of representing the forgetting as incomplete and evoking what was being forgotten indicates that the subject now remembers. Such is not necessarily the case when the subject is in the third person, but the use of the progressive does suggest that the forgetting was not subsequently carried through to its result phase, as in:

> She rose, beckoning to him. He picked up the book and her bag, both of which she *was forgetting*, and followed her out. (Bennett 1930:397)

Again the imperfective nature of the progressive is reflected in all the examples found, which evoke an incomplete process; the simple form is used to express either a complete process or a resulting state.

Scheffer (1975:74) points out that "*understand* is rare in the progressive as it denotes a static idea, a mental or psychic state." When used in the progressive, however, *to understand* always evokes a metaphase event. That is, it "refers not to a state, but to a developing process, whose individual phases are essentially different from one another," according to Comrie (1976:37), who gives the following example:

> I'*m understanding* more about quantum mechanics as each day goes by.

Here, the developing process is depicted as incomplete because it is felt that in quantum mechanics there are yet more facts to be grasped. Similarly in the following example, the subject is intent on showing that she has grasped each point of the message so far:

> "I see," said Mary Thriplow sympathetically and intellectually. She was almost too anxious to prove that she was listening, that she *was understanding* everything; she saw before there was anything to see. (Huxley 1947:316)

In some cases, the progressive evokes rather what follows on from the fact. Thus, in:

> Unexpectedly, I'*m* suddenly *understanding* that Smithie's dead. I haven't known it till now. (Hinde 1970:124)

the idea is not that the process of grasping the fact of Smithie's death is incomplete, but rather that the implications of this fact suddenly come crowding in one after another. Both these expressive effects are found in the following passage:

> "Sam's in trouble," Bluey says, but I hardly listen because I'*m understanding* so many things: why Bluey is usually up, for example, but just occasionally for no obvious reason is low and quiet and depressed. He must be taking them most of the time. And why I once hear someone call him Bluey the Pill... I'*m understanding* that if he's high most of the time, that must be the way he always wants it. (Hinde 1970:113)

The first progressive here depicts the grasping of "so many things" before it is over, at a point in time where there are more things to be understood; the second suggests that the subject, having grasped the fact that "that must be the way he always wants it," is beginning to realize its implications, perhaps for Bluey's character and behaviour, whereas the simple form here would limit the understanding to the bare fact.

To know is probably the most notorious verb of mental event insofar as usage with the progressive is concerned. Since in the quasi-totality of its uses it expresses a monophase event — "all phases of the situation *John knows where I live* are identical" as Comrie (1976:49) points out — several scholars have declared that it cannot take the progressive.[12] More careful observation has led Visser (1973:1973), Mourelatos (1978:419) and others to allow for a shift to an 'activity' sense, and this is borne out by a number of examples. One of the clearest cases, given by Osselton (1980:454), shows *to know* with the sense of the process that leads up to the state of knowing:

> He had to remember that this man, helpless, an object on the operating table, *was knowing* the meaning of loneliness.

Osselton reports that this example "was readily interpreted by all correspondents as meaning 'was experiencing at that moment', that is, in his helpless state on the operating table." The suggestion of 'experiencing, becoming cognizant of' brings out the process sense of the verb here. As Osselton observes, the simple form *knew* "would have simply implied that the man had learnt the meaning of loneliness at some earlier unspecified stage in his life," that is, would have evoked the state resulting from a prior process of learning. The sense of the learning process also comes out in the following example which arose during an interview on television (*Man Alive*, CBC January 13,1975) in a discussion about when a person is considered human:

> When a baby is enjoying the feeling of being touched, it *is knowing* that it is human.

In the next example, this sense is evoked explicitly:

> He could almost *see* the learning process, in the way she said to him, frowning, "I'm your girl, Will?"
> Markham said with quick eagerness, "Don't you know that, Andree?"
> She shook her head at him slowly, looking into his face as if she were trying to see him clearly, and then, unexpectedly, she pulled out of his grasp with such strength that Markham fell back a step.
> "Yes, I guess I do know it now," she said deliberately, as if she *were knowing* it better with every word. (Gordon 1952:51; cf. Buyssens 1968:119)

The following example can be interpreted in much the same way:

> She had a few words, very pleasant, with me, but I had a horrid feeling she *was* seeing right through me and *knowing* all about me. (Adamczewski 1978:483)

The verb in the next example suggests more an awareness than an intellectual knowledge and so might be paraphrased by 'becoming aware that':

> Beneath his face, his child's soul was sobbing with gratitude to the woman, and burning to come to her again; just as his outcast soul *was knowing* he would keep clear of her. (Goyvaerts 1968:112)

When the object of *to know* is a person, the verb can take on the sense of 'becoming acquainted with', as in the next two examples:

> She smiled, and she felt as if she *was knowing* the panjandrum better. (Bennett 1930:566)
> While this derisive quarrel went on, as it always did between Steve and Kitty, Hank and Dan *were knowing* each other very well in a few widely spaced and brief words. (Hogan 1964:174)

The following example may have this sense, or the closely related sense of 'meeting':

> "Does he sit on you?" said Val shrewdly. "I *shall be knowing* him at Oxford." (Mossé 1938:241)

The sense of 'becoming known' is expressed by the passive in the following passage:

> And gradually the knowledge became clearer, and the things known more definite and familiar. More and more familiar, until awareness hovered on the verge of recognition. A clotted thing here, a disintegrated thing there. But what things? And what were these corresponding opacities by which they *were being known* ? (Huxley 1945:141)

The expression "awareness hovered on the verge of recognition" shows that the process of recognition is felt to be incomplete, and it is this impression of something imperfective which calls for the progressive. The sense of 'realizing' occurs in the following, along with the hyperbole effect typical of combining the progressive with the adverb "forever":

> It seemed to her that she *was* forever listening to the sharp sound of a door closing, and then *knowing* she was alone. (Ogilvie 1945:141)

Another example:

> He looks the other way; he's *not knowing* me again. (Goyvaerts 1968:123)

can probably be interpreted 'not recognizing me, ignoring me', but without more context it is impossible to be sure.

The most curious example that has come to hand is the following:

> It is a fundamental limitation in our knowing that our act of knowing is distinct from ourself. My knowing is something that I do, but it is not I. This may at first glance seem either no limitation at all, or at best, mere hair-splitting. But in fact it is a very powerful limitation. If my knowledge were the same as I, I should not have to make the distinct effort of setting about knowing: I should be engaged in the act of knowing, and of knowing all that I know, all the time; nor should I ever forget anything if my knowing were myself. Because it is not, I *am* sometimes *knowing* and sometimes *not knowing* , always under

> the necessity of making a distinct effort in the matter, often totally incapable of making the effort. (Sheed 1947:51)

Clearly, for this writer the fact of knowing something implies not a state of mind, but an act. That is to say, the progressive here does not, as in all the examples so far, evoke a process leading to the state of mind, but rather a process of actualization permitted by the faculty of knowing. Thus one way of paraphrasing the example would be 'I am sometimes actualizing my capacity of knowing and sometimes not actualizing it.'

A word of caution is necessary here concerning the collecting of data. Among the examples that have come to hand is the following from Visser (1973:1976):

> But they are not worrying him, because he *is knowing* that if ever he is appealing to Mayor Paget in person, all is well.

According to Osselton (1980:454), this strikes native speakers as "quite baffling in its oddity" and well it might since it is uttered by a character in a novel whose mother tongue is obviously not English. Throughout the novel, the author uses such mistakes to depict a non-native speaker.[13] Another problematic case is the following from Buyssens (1968:33):

> That child *is* always *knowing* something she isn't supposed to.

Curious at best, this sentence has given rise to different interpretations, as suggesting either someone who is always trying to find out something or someone always expressing his knowledge about something.[14] Since it was apparently made up for teaching purposes, and does not readily suggest a context or situation it need hardly be included in an analysis of actual usage of the progressive. Finally, a number of examples like the following have been collected:

> "Can you play that tune, Colin?" Mrs. Wolfingham asked.
> "I *wouldn't be knowing* that tune, Mrs. Wolfingham," the young piper answered. (Mackenzie 1949:180)

All such cases come from Scottish or Irish speakers who do not always use the progressive the same way as other speakers. Before any analysis of these examples can be made, a full-fledged examination of the progressive in these dialects should be undertaken to determine how it differs from that in other dialects. In other words, the first task would be to find out what permits such uses.

Outside of these dialectal cases and the one remarkable example depicting an exercising of the faculty of knowing, all the attested examples of *to know* in the progressive evoke not a state but a process leading to the state of knowing. Thus the progressive occurs here as elsewhere when the verb expresses a metaphase event seen as imperfective.

TO HAVE TO

As an expression of obligation, *to have to* usually evokes a situation represented as a state but is found in the progressive when its "meaning is modified so as to imply some activity" according to Poutsma (1921:91). This verb is interesting because, being quite abstract, it provides a clear illustration of the essential difference between a monophase event, where the whole impressive content exists in a single instant, and a metaphase event, where the impressions constituting the lexeme arise successively. In the following typical example:

> The conversation was in French as Varenne did not speak English, and John *was* soon *having to* apologize for the corruption of his French by Italian. (Mackenzie, 1940b:215)

the progressive brings with it a suggestion of the obligation arising again and again. Similarly in:

> The band not knowing the music, so they *were having to* do it all from records. (Visser 1973:1967)

one gets the impression, not of a state of obligation, but of the obligation coming into existence moment by moment, with each new piece of music calling for a reiteration of the infinitive event. The element of repetition is sometimes evoked lexically, as in:

> And the month was May. That was the time when Jemmie *was* so frequently *having to* be away for the night on business. (Mackenzie 1923:267)

where the impression of something temporary, of an incomplete series which might or might not continue, comes out clearly. It comes out even more clearly when the verb is in the Non-past Tense:

> Power stations and gas works in Scotland *are having to* import thousands of tons of coal from England every week. (Ota 1963:92)

The same nuance of successive states of obligation coming into existence is felt in the next example, but here it involves more and more people rather than simply repetition in time:

> "Hallo Ethel, so you've started one of those things?"
> "Yes, we'*re* all *having to* come to them." (Poutsma 1921:91)

Practically all examples collected evoke this repetitive nuance, the only other expressive effect being that illustrated by the following:

> As a matter of fact he'*s having to* sell his house. He's very badly off. (Jespersen 1954:225)

Here, where there is only one person involved and only one actualization of the infinitive event possible, the progressive brings in the suggestion of realizing one by one the various conditions involved in selling the house (fixing the price, finding a buyer, etc.), as though the obligation were arising at each step of the process. The simple form here, of course, would be quite matter-of-fact, evoking merely the state of obligation with none of these overtones.

TO SEEM

To seem, in the sense of "to have a semblance or appearance" (OED), evokes a state and so requires the simple form. This verb is so infrequent in the progressive that no examples are given in Visser and Comrie (1976:38) considers it "impossible". The following example gives a good illustration of this use:

> I could explain nothing and felt that I was creating some entirely false impression. Also I knew that I *was* not only *seeming* but also feeling appallingly guilty. (Bäcklund 1983:335)

Here, *was seeming*, which echoes "was creating some ... impression", clearly suggests 'displaying signs of guilt', 'giving rise to an appearance of guilt'. Similarly in:

> The heavy-set cates *was seeming* to ignore them as he moved about serving his few white customers. (Bäcklund, ibid.)

the sense is 'giving the appearance of ignoring them'. In both these cases, the nuance is one of different manifestations arising one after the other, manifestations which might lead to, but do not yet constitute a settled appearance. This sense comes out clearly in the following, where diverse details of John's behaviour are implied:

> John *had been seeming* a little more sensible lately. (Mackenzie 1937:499)

Because there is no suggestion of a sufficient or complete view, the use of the progressive here, rather than the simple *had seemed*, gives a more tentative note to the evaluation of John's behaviour. A like tentativeness in suggesting how one appears to another person arises with the modal auxiliary in:

> "Forgive me," Mark begged. "I *must be seeming* ungracious and what is more ungrateful?" (Mackenzie 1924:93)

And the usual hyperbolic expressive effect with *always* occurs in the following, where the progressive evokes an endless series of "doings":

> Few friendly remarks are more annoying than the information that we *are* always *seeming* to do what we never mean to do. (Eliot 1966:269)

The effect is particularly subtle in the next example, where the progressive implies minute details which strike the speaker:

> "I've reached an age," he told his reflection, whose crow's-feet *were seeming* more conspicuous than usual in the clear wintry weather, "when a man becomes selfish in small matters." (Mackenzie 1919a:241)

Here it is as though the impression of "more conspicuousness than usual" is just dawning on the speaker. This expressive effect comes out quite clearly in the following example, where Coral is depicted in the process of taking into account the various impressions arising from the scene:

> Just by Chelsea Bridge Coral told Frank to stop, for it *was* suddenly *seeming* to her that the long straight reach of the river ... was the vista of her destiny. (Mackenzie 1965:45)

A somewhat similar expressive effect occurs in:

> Guy looked doubtful. It *was seeming* a pity to waste this afternoon without unpacking a single case. (Kruisinga 1931:351)

where Guy is represented as processing the impressions arising from a complex or confused situation. Finally, in a use such as:

> The end of the ravine brought them to an exposed upland, which they crossed warily, flitting from stunted tree to stunted tree, because the moonlight *was seeming* too bright here for safety. (Mackenzie 1919b:291)

it may be the movements across the upland giving different visual impressions which suggest a more and more vivid feeling, but the example remains marginal for us.[15]

CONCLUSION

All uses of these verbs in the progressive found so far evoke a subtle sense of process, "a notion — however slight — of activity" in Visser's terms, and thus support the claim that the progressive cannot express a state. Of course, there are many other so-called incompatible verbs mentioned in the literature and examples of each must be collected and examined before this claim can be further substantiated. But then the same must also be done before the counter claim can be seriously entertained, a task yet to be undertaken. Indeed, the results presented here and elsewhere (cf. Hirtle and Curat 1986, Hirtle and Begin 1990) shift the burden of proof to those who maintain this counter claim.

The (so far substantiated) view that the progressive cannot express a state throws some light on the very nature of this remarkable verb form. It suggests that, whatever the verb's lexical content, the progressive represents the event's duration as a partly realized stretch whose further realization may well involve (further) change. In fact, it supports the theory presented in Hirtle 1967 that the participle represents a portion of the event as realized and a portion yet to be realized and the auxiliary represents a moment of time within which the current instant of the event takes (its) place. In short, the work presented here provides further evidence for the theory of the progressive as an 'imperfective'.

Finally, defining monophase and metaphase events in terms of how the grammatical comes to grips with the lexical gives a clearer view of the basis for this dichotomy and explains why it

pervades the English verb: the two mutually exclusive temporal relationships involved, simultaneity and successivity, are necessary since any happening taking (its) place in time must embody one or the other of them. By the same token these definitions presuppose an element inherent in any verb but often overlooked by grammarians and linguists alike: a grammatical representation of the time involved in any happening, its duration. The fact that many writers do not even realize that there is a grammatical sub-system within the verb for representing duration — let alone try to determine which sub-system it is and how it operates to produce different expressions of this "event time" — has been largely responsible for the confusion concerning the nature of a stative event and the failure to realize why it cannot be expressed by the progressive form.

NOTES

1. The comments of several colleagues, especially those of Patrick Duffley, have proved most helpful and are gratefully acknowledged. Much of the research involved in this study was carried out with the help of a Quebec Government FCAR Grant.

2. Failure to take this distinction into account makes it impossible to discern the basis of the stative/non-stative dichotomy and indeed leads one writer to conclude that "more than mere binary classification is required to explain the actual behavior of many of the verbs in question" (Sag 1973:85).

3. The term "impression" is preferred to such terms as "feature", "component", "trait", etc. because it suggests more readily something drawn ultimately from our experience. This is important because at the outset of any real act of language the impressions arising from some particular experience (perceived, remembered or imagined) provide the intended message, what the speaker has in mind to represent and express.

4. To avoid problems of terminology, it should be pointed out that the term "event" will not be used as in the citation from Smith but in a more general sense to designate any temporal entity expressed by a verb, so that stative and non-stative (dynamic) are here considered the two types of event found in English.

5. As in *It was exactly midnight* (cf. Hirtle 1988 for a discussion of this and other matters concerning states).

6. Cf. Hirtle and Curat 1986 on the expression of future events and Hirtle 1988 on the various lexical types of event expressed by the simple form.

7. It is, for example, quite bewildering to be told by one author, with no indication of context or situation, that *The cake is looking done* is acceptable whereas *They are believing in ghosts* is not. The fundamental problem here is the failure to recognize that real usage, the proper object of linguistics, is necessarily the result of some speaker/writer representing and expressing something in his or her own experience.

8. For example, the following is the only use of *to own* in the progressive observed to date: *He was a slob, and what right did he have to be owning Cézannes?* (Visser 1973:1966). Without other examples to compare it with, it is very difficult to isolate the particular nuance brought in by the progressive here. On the other hand, the fact that this one example has been found shows, as Visser implies (loc.cit.), that the attempt to describe usage by means of rules is a Sisyphean task. By the same token, to get enough data, examples are taken from both British and American writers with modern usage. However, this broad data base indicates no significant distinctions of usage concerning the progressive except those already known to characterize Irish and Scottish usage.

9. Hornby 1949:176, Poutsma 1921:89, Visser 1973:1978, Scheffer 1975:69.

10. This interpretation was suggested by Patrick Duffley.

11. The fact that Sag (1973:87) considers an example like this unacceptable shows how unreliable judgements based on self-made data can be.

12. Cf. Hornby 1949:172, Vendler 1957:153, Comrie 1976:38.

13. The fact that competent observers did reject this example on the basis of meaning shows that the introspective type of observation involved here does provide a valid basis for data.

14. Buyssens remarks: "Cette phrase a été donnée le 29 mai 1948 lors d'une émission par la BBC du cours English by Radio; le professeur déclarait que cette phrase exprimait "deliberate intention"; elle revenait à peu près à dire "she is inquisitive." Le professeur F. R. Palmer, consulté à ce sujet, estimait que la phrase signifiait "she is always evincing some knowledge."

15. This type of use may be characteristic of this particular writer, who has provided a number of the examples discussed here. If so, this may give some indication of how a new use is introduced into the language.

RÉFÉRENCES BIBLIOGRAPHIQUES

GRAMMARS AND ARTICLES

ADAMCZEWSKI, H. (1978): **Be + ING dans la grammaire de l'anglais contemporain**, Lille, Université de Lille III.

BÄCKLUND, U. (1983): "Appear and Seem ... Lexical Integrity in Danger?", **The Ninth LACUS Forum 1982**, Linguistic Association of Canada and the United States, Lake Bluff, Ill.

BRINTON, L. (1987): "The Aspectual Nature of States and Habits", **Folia Linguistica**, 21.

BUYSSENS, E. (1968): **Les deux aspectifs de la conjugaison anglaise au XXe siècle**, Bruxelles, Presses universitaires de Bruxelles.

COMRIE, B. (1976): **Aspect: An Introduction to the Study of Verbal Aspect and Related Problems**, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

DOWTY, D.R. (1979): **Word Meaning and Montague Grammar**, Dordrecht, Reidel.

GOYVAERTS, D.L. (1968): "Towards a Theory of the Expanded Form in English", **La Linguistique**, 2.

HIRTLE, W.H. (1967): **The Simple and Progressive Forms. An Analytical Approach**, Québec, Presses de l'Université Laval.

---------- (1988): "Events, Time and the Simple Form", **Revue québécoise de linguistique**, 17.

HIRTLE, W.H. and C. Bégin (1990): "TO BE in the progressive: a New Use?", **The Canadian Journal of Linguistics**, 35.

HIRTLE, W.H. and V. Curat (1986): "Simple and Progressive: the 'Future' Use", **Transactions of the Philological Society.**

HORNBY, A.S. (1949): "Non-Conclusive Verbs. Some Notes on the Progressive Tenses", **English Language Teaching**, 3.

---------- (1954): **A Guide to Patterns and Usage in English**, London, Oxford University Press.

JESPERSEN, O. (1954): **A Modern English Grammar, Part IV**, London, Allen and Unwin.

KRUISINGA, E. (1931): **A Handbook of Present-Day English. Part II, English Accidence and Syntax 1**, Groningen, Noordhoff.

KRUISINGA, E. and P.A. ERADES (1953): **An English Grammar**, Groningen, Noordhoff.

LEECH, G.N. (1987): **Meaning and the English Verb**, London, Longman.

MOSSÉ, F. (1938): **Histoire de la forme périphrastique être + participe présent en Germanique**, Paris, Klincksieck.

MOURELATOS, A. (1978): "Events, Processes, and States", **Linguistics and Philosophy 2.**

OSSELTON, N.E. (1979) and (1980): "Points of Modern English Syntax", **English Studies**, 60-61.

OTA, A. (1963): **Tense and Aspect of Present-Day American English**, Tokyo, Kenkyusha.

POUTSMA, H. (1921): **The Character of the English Verb and the Expanded Form**, Groningen, Noordhoff.

---------- (1926): **A Grammar of Late Modern English. Part II The Parts of Speech. Section II The Verb and its Particles**, Groningen Noordhoff.

QUIRK, R., S. GREENBAUM, G. LEECH, J. SVARTVIK (1985): **A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language**, London and New York, Longman.

SAG, I.A. (1973): "On the State of Progress on Progressives and Statives", C-J. N. Bailey and R. W. Shuy (eds.), **New Ways of Analyzing Variation in English**, Washington, Georgetown University Press.

SATCHEL, T. (1939): "Expanded Tenses", **English Studies**, 21.

SCHEFFER, J. (1975): **The Progressive in English**, Amsterdam, North-Holland.

SCHEURWEGHS, G. (1959): **Present-Day English Syntax**, London, Longmans.

SMITH, C. (1983): "A Theory of Aspectual Choice", **Language**, 59.

VENDLER, Z. (1967): **Linguistics in Philosophy**, Ithaca, Cornell University Press.

VISSER, F.Th. (1973): **An Historical Syntax of the English Language. Part III, Second Half**, Leiden, E.J. Brill.

OTHER SOURCES OF EXAMPLES

AUSTEN, J. (1958): **Pride and Prejudice**, London, Longmans.

BALCHIN, N. (1945): **Mine Own Executioner**, London, Collins.

BENNETT, A. (1911): **The Old Wives' Tale**, New York, The Modern Library.

---------- (1926): **Lord Raingo**, New York, Doran.

---------- (1930): **Imperial Palace**, London, Cassell.

DIVER, M. (1927): **But Yesterday**, London, Grosset & Dunlap.

ELIOT, G. (1966): **Deronda**, New York, Harper & Row.

GORDON, E.E. (1952): "Markham's Girl", **Collier's**, March 28.

HINDE, T. (1957): **Happy as Larry**, London, Macgibbon & Kee.

---------- (1966): **The Village**, London, Hodder & Stoughton.

---------- (1970): **Bird**, London, Hodder & Stoughton.

HOGAN, P. (1964): **A Lamp on the Plains**, New York, Popular Library.

HUXLEY, A. (1945): **Time Must Have a Stop,** London, Chatto & Windus.

---------- (1947): **Those Barren Leaves,** London, Albatross.

LESSING, D. (1981): **The Golden Notebook,** New York, Simon & Shuster.

LEWIS, S. (1926): **Mantrap,** New York, Grosset & Dunlap.

MACAULAY, R. (1956): **The Towers of Trebizond,** New York, Farrar, Straus and Cudahy.

MACKENZIE, C. (1919a): **Poor Relations,** London Secker.

---------- (1919b): **Sylvia and Michael,** London, Secker.

---------- (1920): **Rich Relatives,** London, Secker.

---------- (1922): **The Altar Steps,** New York, Doran.

----------(1923): **The Seven Ages of Woman,** Toronto, McClellan & Stewart.

---------- (1924): **The Parson's Progress,** New York, Doran.

---------- (1927): **Vestal Fire,** New York, Doran.

---------- (1937): **The East Wind of Love,** New York, Dodd & Mead.

---------- (1940a): **The West Wind of Love**, London, Chatto & Windus.

---------- (1940b): **West to North**, London, Chatto & Windus.

---------- (1949): **Hunting the Fairies**, London, Chatto & Windus.

---------- (1954): **Ben Nevis Goes East**, London, Chatto & Windus.

---------- (1965): **Coral**, London, Macdonald.

MCKENNA, S. (1917): **The Sixth Sense**, London, Methuen.

---------- (1926): **The Oldest God**, Boston, Little, Brown.

MURDOCH, I. (1954): **Under the Net**, London, Chatto & Windus.

OGILVIE, E. (1945): **Storm Tide**, London, Avon.

SHEED, F.J. (1947): **Theology and Sanity**, New York, Sheed & Ward.

SNOW, C.P. (1950): **Time of Hope**, New York, Macmillan.

SPILLANE, M. (1966): **Vengeance is Mine**, Toronto, Signet Books, New American Library.

WALPOLE, H. (1927): **Wintersmoon**, London, Grosset & Dunlap.