Towards an analysis of agent-oriented manner adverbials in German

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Proposal
We focus on analyzing agent-oriented manner adverbs, like sorgfältig (carefully).
- An intentional and controlling agent is involved.
- The agent has the desire to achieve a result with a high quality.
- The method used for the realization is suitable for achieving the desired result.

Sorgfältig demands the participation of an intentional agent:
- Unaccusative verbs as well as with verbs lacking control: indicate that an intentional controlling agent is necessary.
      b. John hat sich sorgfältig verlaufen. John has himself get lost
- Verbs which do not lexicalize intentionality are fixed to an intentional interpretation.
  (2) a. Das Kind hat das Bild absichtlich/absichtlich unabsichtlich beschädigt. The child has the picture intentionally/unintentionally cut.
      b. Das Kind hat das Bild sorgfältig beschädigt. The child has the picture carefully cut.

The agent
- The result of the action is to be achieved.
  (3) a. Wir haben sorgfältig gearbeitet, weil wir gute Ergebnisse erzielen wollten.
      We have carefully worked, because we achieve good results
  b. Wir haben sorgfältig gearbeitet, daher haben wir gute Ergebnisse. We have carefully worked, therefore we have good results.
- If the result does not have the expected quality, the agent tends to be excused.
(5) John hat sein Zimmer sorgfältig geputzt, trotzdem hingen Spinnweben an der Decke.

The method
- The method of realization to achieve the “good” result.
  (6) a. Die Rüben werden sorgfältig gereinigt, indem man sie einige Minuten lang im Wasser läßt, dann wascht und abbüstet. (Google)
      The turnips shall carefully cleaned, by one them several minutes long in water, then wash and abbüstet.
  b. Die Rüben werden sorgfältig gereinigt, indem man sie kurz unter Wasser halten. The turnips shall carefully cleaned, by one them shortly under water hold.
- The suitability of the methods for realization is decided with respect to the goal-setting of the agent with the context of the action.
A frame analysis
The formalization of the analysis is realized in the framework of Düsseldorf Frame Semantics, where Frames are:
- the universal format of representation in human cognition (cf. Barsalou [1], Löbner [5]);
- first-order attribute-value structures with exclusively functional attributes/Petersen [5];
- as description of a token or a type.

Action-plans and Goldman (1970)
Goldman’s [3] theory:
- addresses the conceptual level;
- captures that one doing of an agent can be conceptualized in many different ways;
- states that the different conceptualizations are related by the relation of level-generation;
- treats an action as intentional only if the action is performed as conceived in the agent’s action-plan, which:
  - consist of an action-want (the want to do a certain act) and a set of beliefs (hypothetical acts) about the realization of the action-want;
  - the target of the agent’s action-want is perceived as having a high quality, as well as all my informants for the long discussions, the comments, the data, and all other kinds of help. The work is supported by DFG CRC 391 “The Structure of Representations in Language, Cognition, and Science” project B09.

References

Cascades according to Löbner (ms.)
Cascades:
- a is a general term capturing Goldman’s act-structures;
- are seen as a simultaneous categorization in a hierarchical structure;
- make use of the c-constitution relation (a conceptual relation between types);
- are second-order structures based on first-order frames.

The model
- Our frame model adopts the idea of Dowty’s [2] DO, represented by the double circled node labeled action.
- The frame representation of an intentional action has to involve the attributes PLAN (action-plan) and EXECUTION. The values of these attributes can be cascades.
- That the action-plan and the execution match is modeled via comparators (2-place attributes returning comparison values according to Löbner [4]).

Sorgfältig, as an agent-oriented manner modifier:
- demands the participation of an agent with an action-plan;
- imposes restrictions on that action-plan:
  - the target of the agent’s action-want is perceived as having a high quality,
  - the high quality result has to be realized by a suitable method;
- the action-plan of the agent has to match her execution of the action.

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