

Activity Hierarchy and Argument Realization in (R)RRG – Transitive vs. intransitive verbs of motion

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The Actor-Undergoer-Hierarchy hits its limits when it comes to describing the macrorole assignment of several verb classes. My talk will deal with four problematic cases: causation, three-place state predicates, two-place object-experiencer verbs, and finally, transitive versus intransitive verbs of motion. Working out ideas in Kailuweit (2013), I propose the Activity Hierarchy as an alternative to the Actor-Undergoer-Hierarchy. Starting from a set of two actor features (c = causation/control, m = mental) and one undergoer feature (r = resultative), the Activity Hierarchy brings into play semantic criteria that have dominated the discussion on generalized semantic roles in the last decades. The Activity Hierarchy allows for a sufficient number of activity degrees to describe the macrorole assignment in the four problematic cases.