



The semantics of *already* in Paraguayan Guaraní¹

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1 Overview

Already-like expressions have received attention in the semantic literature for their focus-sensitivity and polysemy (e.g., Löbner, 1989; Krifka, 2000; Ippolito, 2007).

- However, less is known about their semantic properties across languages (see, though, Mucha, 2015 on Medumba *yă*; Vander Klok & Matthewson, 2015 on Javanese *wis*).

In this talk, we introduce data on the aspectual suffix/clitic *-ma* in Paraguayan Guaraní (Tupí-Guaraní), which we identify as a counterpart to English *already*.

We establish the existence of **two types of aspectual *already*s** cross-linguistically.

- **Type A:** *Entails* a change of state.
 - Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma*, Bulgarian *veče*
- **Type B:** Only *implicates* a change of state.
 - English *already*, Spanish *ya*

Proposal: Cross-linguistically, *already*s **reference the discourse structure**, following Toosarvandani (2014) on counterexpectational *but*.

- Allows us to synthesize divergent aspects of past accounts of *already* (e.g., Löbner, 1989; Krifka, 2000; Ippolito, 2007).
- A discourse-sensitive approach can capture both the **aspectual** and **marginal** uses of *already*, shared by English, Spanish, Paraguayan Guaraní, and Bulgarian.
 - We will present two distinct lexical entries for aspectual *already*(s) versus marginal *already* in the aforementioned languages.

Data comes from fieldwork with Paraguayan Guaraní speakers, using standard semantic elicitation tasks (e.g., Matthewson, 2004).

- Consulted speakers are Spanish-Paraguayan Guaraní bilinguals.

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- Additionally speak Jopara, a variety of code-switching between Spanish and Guaraní.

Roadmap of talk:

§1 Overview

§2 Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* is a type of *already*

§3 Change-of-state inference is an entailment for *-ma*

§4 Analysis of aspectual *alreadys*

§5 Analysis of marginal *alreadys*

§6 Conclusion

2 Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* is a type of *already*

The semantics of Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* has remained elusive, variably described as:

- A perfect (Tonhauser, 2006; 2011)
- A perfective (Estigarribia, 2017)
- An *already* (Gregores & Suarez, 1967; Estigarribia, 2020; Russell, 2020)
- A grammaticalized form of *already* (i.e., a ‘iamitive’ aspect) (Olsson, 2013; Dahl & Wälchli, 2016)

We argue that Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* is an *already*, via four diagnostics from Löbner (1989) and Vander Klok & Matthewson (2015).

i. *-ma* comes with a counterexpectational ‘earliness’ implication, like English *already* and Spanish *ya*.

- **‘Earliness’ implication:** An eventuality *e* holds at an earlier time than anticipated (1).
- *e* can be either ongoing (1a) or completed (1b), indicating that *-ma* is not perfective.

(1) *Context: The weather forecast says it will rain tonight. It is noon now, ...*

a. *...and it’s pouring.*

O-ký-**ma** (hína).

3.ACT-rain-*ma* (CONT)

‘It is **already** raining.’

b. *...and it had rained at 9am. The rain has stopped.*

O-ký-**ma**.

3.ACT-rain-*ma*

‘It **already** rained.’

ii. *-ma* is in complementary distribution with *gueteri* ‘still’, its inverse (Löbner, 1989; Krifka, 2000; Ippolito, 2007).

- *Already*: Implicates that an eventuality *e* holds at an **earlier** time than expected.
- *Still*: Implicates that an eventuality *e* holds at a **later** time than expected.

- Cross-linguistically, *still* requires *e* to be ongoing/imperfective (e.g., Michaelis, 1993; Aonuki, 2021).
- Yet, even when *e* is ongoing at the reference time, *gueteri* ‘still’ is incompatible with *-ma*.

- (2) Luis o-dipara(**#-ma**) gueteri.
Luis 3.ACT-run(*-ma*) still
‘Luis is still (**#already**) running.’

iii. *-ma* exhibits duality when interacting with negation (e.g., Löbner, 1989), like *already* and *ya*.

- Like how negation results in equivalences between quantifiers (e.g., $\neg\forall x[P(x)] \Leftrightarrow \exists x[\neg P(x)]$), the scope of negation relative to *already* leads to truth conditions that are equivalent to its counterparts *still* / *not anymore*.
- In both (3a) and (3b), *already*($\neg p$) is semantically equivalent to \neg *still*(*p*) (i.e., *not anymore*).

- (3) a. I **already** don’t go to school.
= ‘I don’t go to school anymore.’
- b. Nd-a-ha-vé-i-**ma** eskuéla=pe.
NEG-1.ACT-go-more-NEG-*ma* school=LOC.
‘I don’t go to school anymore.’

iv. *-ma* and *already* both result in a change-of-state inference with statives.

- Consider the infelicity of the predicate *young* with *-ma* / *already* as compared to *old* (4).
- It is impossible to change from a preceding state of *not young* to *young* per its lexical semantics (Löbner, 1989), resulting in the oddness of (4a).
- An analysis of *-ma* as a perfect predicts felicity in (4a), as no incompatibility should arise (4c).

- (4) a. #Jagua i-mitã-**ma**.
dog 3.INACT-young-*ma*
Intended: ‘The dog is **already** young.’
- b. Jagua i-guaiguĩ-**ma**.
dog 3.INACT-old-*ma*
‘The dog is **already** old.’
- c. The dog has been young (before). It wasn’t just *born* old!

From these four pieces of evidence, we conclude that Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* is an *already*-like expression.

3 Change-of-state inference is an entailment for *-ma*

While both English *already* and Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* result in a change-of-state inference with statives, it has been observed that this inference is **not an entailment for English *already*** (Ippolito 2007, Mittwoch 1993, cf. Löbner 1989).

- Indicated by the lack of contradiction in (5), where a change of state from *not speaks Guaraní* to *speaks Guaraní* is not necessary for felicity.

- (5) *Context: A's husband is a speaker of Paraguayan Guaraní, his native language.*
B: Now that you're taking Guaraní classes, is your husband also learning it?
A: He **already** speaks Guaraní. (It's his first language.)

However, Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* instead *results in a contradiction* (6).

- It is infelicitous to use *-ma* when Speaker A's husband has always spoken Guaraní.
 - Thus, the change-of-state inference is an **entailment** of *-ma*.
- (6) *Context: A's husband is a speaker of Paraguayan Guaraní, his native language.*
B: Now that you're taking Guaraní classes, is your husband also learning it?
A: Ha'e o-ñe'ẽ(-#ma) avañe'ẽ. (Péva ha'e i-ñe'ẽ michĩ=guive.)
 3.PRON 3.ACT-speak(-ma) Guaraní that 3.PRON 3.POSS-language little=since
 'He (#**already**) speaks Guaraní. (That's been his language since he was little.)'

We thus propose that there are **two types of aspectual *already* cross-linguistically**:

- **Type A:** Entails a change of state.
 - Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* (6), Bulgarian *veče* (7b)
 - **Type B:** Only implicates a change of state.
 - English *already* (5), Spanish *ya* (7a)
- (7) *Context: A's husband is a speaker of Paraguayan Guaraní, his native language.*
B: Now that you're taking Guaraní classes, is your husband also learning it?
- a. **A:** Ya habla guaraní.
already speak.3SG.PRS Guaraní
 'He **already** speaks Guaraní.' (Spanish)
- b. **A:** Toj (#veče) govori guarani.
 3.MASC already speak.3SG.PRS Guaraní
 'He (#**already**) speaks Guaraní.' (Bulgarian)

An additional contrast between English *already* and Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma*: Despite having the semantic properties of *already*, *-ma* is **an affix** rather than an adverbial.

- We hypothesize that Type A *already*s are especially likely to grammaticalize (Olsson, 2013; Dahl & Wälchli, 2016).

4 Analysis of aspectual *already*s

How is the contrast in meaning between the two types of aspectual *already* best modeled?

- To answer this question, we start by addressing the core meaning of *already* that is shared across both types.

Analysis of aspectual *already* by Ippolito (2007):

$$(8) \quad \llbracket \textit{already} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c,w}} = \lambda t \in D_i. \lambda e \in D_1. \lambda P \in D_{\langle i, \langle i, t \rangle \rangle}: \exists t' > t [P(e)(t') = 1]. P(e)(t) = 1$$

- Under this analysis, the ‘earliness’ implication arises via the **presupposition of (8)**: There exists a time t' after t_c s.t. $P(e)$ holds of t' .

However, because the presupposition makes direct reference to the time of the eventuality, **past perfective sentences with aspectual *already*** pose a challenge:

- (9) a. It already rained.
- b. $\llbracket \text{PST}_2 \textit{ already PRFV rain} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c,w}}$ is defined iff $\exists t'' > t' [\tau(e) \subseteq t'' \ \& \ \forall w' [\tau(e_1) \text{ is a time when it rains in } w']]$.
If defined, $\llbracket \text{PST}_2 \textit{ already PRFV rain} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c,w}} = 1$ iff $\exists t' [t' < t_c \ \& \ t' \subseteq g(2) \ \& \ \tau(e_1) \subseteq t' \ \& \ \forall w' [\tau(e_1) \text{ is a time when it rains in } w']]$.

- (9b) both presupposes that $\tau(e_1)$ is contained in a time t'' **and** asserts that $\tau(e_1)$ is contained in a separate, non-overlapping time t' .

In order to maintain the key insights of Ippolito’s (2007) account while also capturing the compatibility of aspectual *already* with past perfectives, we model the counterexpectation of *already* based on **Toosarvandani (2014) for *but***:

- (10) a. $\llbracket \phi \textit{ but } \psi \rrbracket = \exists p [p \in \text{QUD}(\llbracket \phi \rrbracket \Rightarrow p)] \ \& \ \exists p' [p' \in \text{QUD}(\llbracket \psi \rrbracket \Rightarrow \neg p')]$. $\llbracket \phi \rrbracket \ \& \ \llbracket \psi \rrbracket$
- b. **A:** Is your cup of tea tasty?
B: It’s sweet, but bitter.
- c. (i) It’s sweet. \Rightarrow The cup of tea is tasty.
(ii) It’s bitter. \Rightarrow The cup of tea is not tasty.

- **Counterexpectation** is formalized via the weak implications (i.e., \Rightarrow) in the presupposition of (10a).

Analysis of Type A versus Type B aspectual *alreadys*:

- All modify an AspP of type $\langle i, t \rangle$.
- Differ in their presuppositions, with identical at-issue entailments.
- **Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma***: Presupposes a change of state from $\neg p$ to p , implemented via propositional BECOME operator (Stechow, 1996; Beck et al., 2001) in (12).
- **English *already*, Spanish *ya***: No change-of-state presupposition.

$$(11) \quad \text{a. } \llbracket \textit{already}_Q^{\text{ASP}} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c}} = \lambda p. \lambda t: \exists p' [p' \in Q \ \& \ p' \Rightarrow \neg p(t) \ \& \ \exists t' [t' > t \ \& \ p' \Rightarrow p(t')]]. p(t)$$

$$\text{b. } \llbracket \textit{-ma}_Q^{\text{ASP}} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c}} = \lambda p. \lambda t: \exists p' [p' \in Q \ \& \ p' \Rightarrow \neg p(t) \ \& \ \exists t' [t' > t \ \& \ p' \Rightarrow p(t')]] \ \& \ \text{BECOME}_t(p).$$

$$(12) \quad \text{BECOME}_t(p) := t \text{ is the smallest interval s.t. } \exists t' [\text{RB}(t') = \text{LB}(t) \ \& \ \neg p(t') \ \& \ \exists t'' [\text{RB}(t) = \text{LB}(t'') \ \& \ p(t'')]]$$

(Stechow, 1996; Beck et al., 2001)

Counterexpectational “earliness” implication: Arises via sensitivity to the discourse structure, following Toosarvandani (2014) on counterexpectational *but*.

(11a) and (11b) presuppose that there is an answer p' to a contextually-salient question Q , where p' **implies**:

- (i) The asserted proposition p doesn't hold at the reference time t .
- (ii) p will hold at a future time t' .

Exemplified for a present progressive sentence in (13), adapted into a dialogue from (1a):

(13) **A:** When will it start raining?

B: It is already raining.

- p = It is raining.
- p' = e.g., It will start raining tonight.
- p' implies *both* that it is not raining now (i.e., $\neg p$) and that it will rain later.

Exemplified for a past perfective sentence in (14):

(14) **A:** When will it start raining?

B: It already rained earlier.

- p = It rained earlier.
- p' = e.g., It will start raining tonight.
- p' implies *both* that it did not rain earlier (i.e., $\neg p$) and that it will rain later.

5 Analysis of marginal *alreadys*

In addition to their aspectual uses, *already/ya* and *-ma/veče* also have a **marginal use** (15).

Desiderata for an analysis of marginal *already*:

- Occurs when **the QUD is a multiple-*wh* question**, pairing individuals with degrees.
- Signals that the predicate holds of the individual currently being discussed, but **not of another salient individual** (Michaelis, 1993; Ippolito, 2007).

- (15) a. *Context: You're at a store, telling a friend how expensive each watch is.*
 Reloj peteïha nda-hepyï-ri. Reloj mokõiha hepyï-**ma**. Ha reloj mbohapyha
 watch first NEG-expensive-NEG watch second expensive-*ma* CONJ watch third
 hepy-eterëi-**ma**.
 expensive-very-*ma*
 'The first watch isn't expensive. The second watch is **already** expensive. And, the third watch
 is **already** very expensive.'
- b. *Context: You're showing your friend a map, discussing the geography of South America.*
 Formósa o-ïme Arhentina=pe. Ha uperire ikatu ja-hecha Asunsiõ katu
 Formosa 3.ACT-be.located Argentina=LOC CONJ after can 1PL.ACT-see Asunción just
 oï-**ma** Paraguái=pe.
 there.is-**ma** Paraguay=LOC
 'Formosa is in Argentina. And then we can see Asunción is **already** in Paraguay.'

Analysis of marginal *alreadys*:

- Attach lower than Asp and modify an $\langle e, t \rangle$ predicate.
- **Discourse-sensitive, like their aspectual counterparts**, presupposing an answer p' to a contextually-salient question Q' .
 - The answer p' implies that the predicate does not hold of another individual (i.e., $\neg P(y)$).
- Require Q' to be a subquestion within a strategy of inquiry S for answering the QUD (Roberts, 1996/2012).
 - This correctly results in the limited distribution of marginal *already* to cases where the QUD is a **multiple-wh question**.

$$(16) \quad \llbracket \textit{already}_{Q, S_{\leq \delta}}^{\text{MAR}} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c}} = \llbracket \textit{ma}_{Q, S_{\leq \delta}}^{\text{MAR}} \rrbracket^{\text{g,c}} = \lambda P. \lambda x: \exists y \exists Q \exists Q' [y \neq x \ \& \ Q \in S_{\leq \delta} \ \& \ Q' \in S_{\leq \delta} \ \& \ Q' <_{\delta} Q \ \& \ \exists p' [p' \in Q' \ \& \ p' \Rightarrow \neg P(y)]] . P(x)$$

A **scalar ordering** \leq_{δ} is imposed on S :

- Based on the order of individuals along the dimension δ determined by the predicate.
- Analogous to the ordering of alternatives for scalar *only/ even* (Beaver & Clark 2009).
- In (16), another subquestion Q is higher on $S_{\leq \delta}$ than Q' .

Exemplified for (17), repeated from (15a):

(17) *Context: You're at a store, telling a friend how expensive each watch is.*

Reloj peteĩha nda-hepy'i-ri. Reloj mokõiha hepy'-**ma**. Ha reloj mbohapyha
 watch first NEG-expensive-NEG watch second expensive-*ma* CONJ watch third
 hepy-etereí-**ma**.
 expensive-very-*ma*

'The first watch isn't expensive. The second watch is **already** expensive. And, the third watch is **already** very expensive.'

- QUD = Which watch is how expensive?
- Q' = How expensive is the first watch? • p' = The first watch is not expensive.
- Q = How expensive is the second watch?
- p' implies, naturally, that the first watch is not expensive (i.e., $\neg P(y)$).

6 Conclusion

Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* is not a perfect nor a perfective marker, but instead, **a type of *already***.

However, Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma* is **not an adverbial** like English *already*, but is instead an affix/clitic; an element in the functional spine (similar to Medumba *yǎ*, Javanese *wis*).

In this talk, we have demonstrated that meaning-wise, there are **two types of aspectual *already*s** cross-linguistically:

- Those that presuppose a change-of-state (Paraguayan Guaraní *-ma*, Bulgarian *veče*) versus those that do not (English *already*, Spanish *ya*).

Despite the contrast in meaning between the two aspectual *already*s, both types retain their **marginal uses**.

- This proposal captures both the aspectual and marginal cases via a discourse-sensitive account of the semantics of *already*.

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