



# CHARACTERIZING HABITUALITY: DIRECT OBJECT'S EFFECTS ON THE GENERIC INTERPRETATION

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## Habitual & Characterizing sentences

"express regularities which transcend the singular fact" (Krifka et al. 1995).

### Where does genericity stems from?

#### • Habitual sentences:

- 1) Gianni ripara **le** macchine.  
Gianni fixes **the** cars

Interpreted as:

- a. Gianni usually fixes cars (possibly professionally),
- b. Gianni is fixing some known cars.

#### • Characterizing sentences:

- 2) Gianni ripara macchine.  
Gianni fixes cars

Interpreted as:

- a. Gianni fixes cars professionally,
- a'. **Gianni is a car-fixer**  
(Property reading: **Gianni is a mechanic**).

## Conclusions:

- Aspectual mapping links the direct object to the generic reading.
- It triggers the iterative reading in habitual sentences: iteration transcend the singular episode. DP object referring to a kind.
- It prevents the characterizing sentences from being episodic. Bare noun of the PropP type.
- Characterizing sentences transcend the singular fact in that they denote no episode.

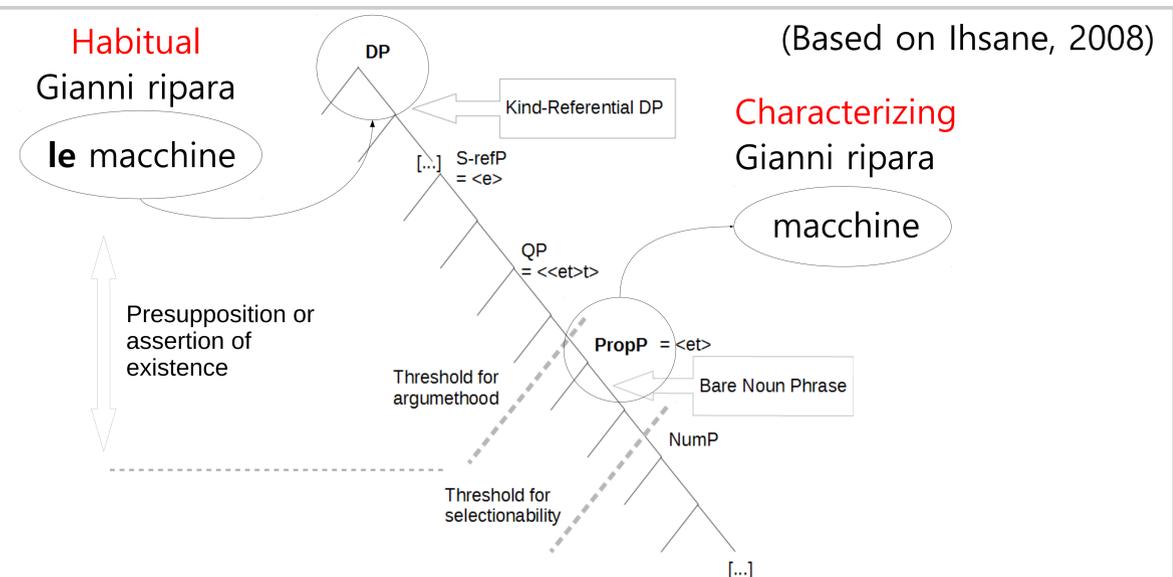
## Background

**Zamparelli (2002):** Definite Plural DPs are kind-referential expressions.

**Chiarchia (1998):** "It seems natural to identify a kind in any given world (or situation) with the totality of its instances. Thus, the dog-kind in our world can be identified with **the totality of dogs**, the scattered **entity** that comprises all dogs".

**Belletti & Bianchi (2014):** Some reduced nominal phrases are merged and "trapped" in Compl,V. Trapped nominals of this sort are property denoting, <e,t>. Property denoting objects are not arguments but modifiers of the predicate.

**Chung & Ladusaw (2004):** Property denoting noun phrases are interpreted at LF via *predicate restriction* rule.



- 3) a. Gianni ha fatto troppi soldi troppo in fretta! Chiaro...  
(Gianni made too much money too fast! Obvious...)  
b. #Gianni ruba mica dirige **le** compagnie!  
Gianni steals [the companies], he does not run the companies.
- 4) a. Gianni ha fatto troppi soldi troppo in fretta! Chiaro...  
(Gianni made too much money too fast! Obvious...)  
b. Gianni ruba, mica dirige compagnie!  
Gianni steals, not runs companies.

**ANALYSIS: Aspectual Interface Hypothesis (Tenny, 1992).** There is correspondence between the argument which has the special role of measuring out the event and the syntactic argument which is merged in Compl,V. A measuring argument is said "affected" in that it undergoes a change over time ("converts an argument into a function of time" ibid. p.4).

### I) Habitual genericity:

One virtual event of car fixing is mapped over every single entity belonging to the Car-kind.

"Gianni" may not possibly repair all cars at the present time (reference=utterance time) therefore the predicate is interpreted as a sequence of iterated events of the same type.

Boneh & Doron (2009): habituality = iteration.

### PROPOSAL:

Affectedness is limited to existential arguments.

Mapping operates over existential expressions.

Only existential expressions mapped into episodes.

### II) Characterizing genericity:

A bare object fails to map a predicate into an episode. They are not "convertible into time functions". Bare nouns are non-mapping because their existence is not presupposed.

In the absence of the episodic reading a characterizing sentence is homogeneous with respect to time (like individual-level predicates).

**Hence: Property-Reading.**