

More generous behavior

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Adjectives such as *generous* and *selfish* belong to a class of evaluative adjectives that have long puzzled those working on the distinction between so-called individual-level (IL) and stage-level (SL) predicates. On the one hand, such adjectives seem to have an IL-interpretation in sentences such as *Rebeka is generous/selfish*, but on the other hand, they also appear to be compatible with an SL-interpretation, for example, in sentences such as *Rebeka was generous to donate 300€ to the museum* and *Thomas was selfish to not donate anything to the museum*. For most approaches to the IL/SL distinction, it has been difficult to account for these two uses without invoking some kind of ambiguity. In my talk, I attempt to take a fresh look at this question, setting aside biases of old, and propose that adjectives such as *generous* and *selfish* are essentially second-order predicates applied to types of behavior, which may be viewed as types of events with an agent. This proposal allows me to distinguish the semantic core of *generous* and *selfish* from their SL- and IL-uses, which are derived from the core. I then argue that this approach is more successful than previous ones in accounting for the basic data.