## Kennedy

The research of Kennedy (1997) investigates what the so-called gradable adjectives refer to as well as in what kind of constructions they appear, which is referred to as degree constructions in his paper. In this research, Kennedy combines semantics and syntax to reveal the essence of this largely discussed topic.

As to the semantic interpretation of gradable adjectives, there are two major schools: (a) scalar analyses,in which the set of scales corresponding to a gradable adjective is compatible with the partial ordering relation (Cresswell, 1976; Bierwisch, 1989); (b) vague predicate analyses, in which the extensions of gradable adjectives need to be determined according to the context (McConnell-Ginet, 1973; Kamp, 1975; Klein, 1980). Kennedy’s analysis falls into the general family of scalar analyses.

However, Kennedy also makes some revolution to the classical scalar analysis, particularly as to the semantic type of gradable adjectives, as well as the interpretation of degrees.

Firstly, classical scalar analyses characterize the core meaning of gradable adjectives as an ordering relation between the target and the degree. Most scholars employing scalar approaches also believes the free variable degree to be bound by a quantificational expression (Hellan, 1981; Hoeksema, 1983; von Stechow, 1984a). In contrast, Kennedy assumes that gradable adjectives denote measure function, giving rise to his non-quantificational analysis of degree constructions.

Kennedy identify three semantic constituents in degree constructions (Russell, 1905): (a) a reference value , expressing the projection from the target to the scale associated with the gradable adjective ; (b)a standard value , which is indicated via measure phrasess or the comparative clause landing at the complement position of the preposition “than”; (c) degree relation , a partial ordering relation encoded by degree morphemes, elements of {*er/more*, *less*, *as*, *too*, *enough*, *so*, *how*, ...}, which compares the reference value and the standard value. The formalization of degree constructions is shown as below:

In terms of the syntactic structure of degree constructions, Kennedy projects the degree phrase (DegP) headed by a degree morpheme as a functional phrase (FP) above the adjective phrase (AP) headed by a gradable morpheme, an account which is developed from approaches where adjectives are projected to an extended functional structure (Abney, 1987; Corver, 1990, 1997; Grimshaw, 1991). The syntactic tree structure of degree constructions is shown as below:

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Typically, scholars think that the meaning of gradable adjectives is composed of two major parts: a measure function and an ordering relation (Carston,1988 and Horn, 1992).

In contrast, Kennedy’s analysis excludes the relational component from the meaning of gradable adjectives, rather assigning this semantic part to the degree morphology. This division of labor between the gradable adjective and the degree morphology is also reflected by the AP/DegP extended projection. Therefore, Kennedy’s analysis revises the semantic type of gradable adjectives from the traditional version to the simplified version , making the complexity transmitted to the degree morphology.

Secondly, Kennedy makes refinement to the interpretation of degrees. He argues that degrees should be formalized as extents (Seuren, 1978; von Stechow, 1984b; Bierwisch, 1989; Löbner, 1990) rather than as points on a scale, which is different from classical scalar analyses. Based on this extent-scalar view, Kennedy assumes that gradable adjectives characteristic of adjectival polarity can be divided into positive adjectives, such as *tall*, and negative ones, such as *short*. According to this distinction, the anomaly of comparisons made between antonymous adjectives can be explained by the undefined ordering relation for extents of opposite polarity.

Reference\

Kennedy 1997

Cresswell, 1976; Bierwisch, 1989

McConnell-Ginet, 1973; Kamp, 1975; Klein, 1980

Hellan, 1981; Hoeksema, 1983; von Stechow, 1984a

Russell 1905

Abney, 1987; Corver, 1990, 1997; Grimshaw, 1991

Carston,1988 and Horn, 1992

Seuren 1978; von Stechow 1984b; Bierwisch 1989; Löbner 1990