

Adjectival Predicates and the Individual/Stage Level Distinction
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In this talk I discuss the subjects of adjectival predicates such as *intelligent* and *cruel*. These predicates denote properties attributed to the mind, character, or behavior of an individual, and are often considered to be prototypes of Individual Level (IL) predicates. In Stowell (1991) I observed that these predicates in fact exhibit a regular alternation between an IL and Stage-Level (SL) usage. This alternation is accompanied by a syntactic alternation in the argument alignment of these predicates, which allows for either of two arguments to function as the subject of the predicate. This is illustrated in (1):

- (1) a. John is cruel.
 b. John was cruel to Bill last night.
 c. Torturing Bill was cruel (of John).

The nature of these alternations and their implications for the theory of the IL/SL distinction is the focus of this talk. I begin by surveying some of the previous literature on the IL/SL distinction, as well as some recent accounts of the alternations illustrated in (1) offered by I. Landau, L. Kertz, and M. Arche, among others. I suggest that the syntactic and semantic properties of these predicates provides support for Chierchia's (1996) approach to the IL/SL distinction, which treats IL predicates similarly to habitual/generic construals of SL predicates.