Nog/al and the nature of the Dutch perfect

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1. Dutch tenses

(1) a. present   (hij)   wandel-t
                    3SG.M walk-3SG

 b. simple past   (hij)   wandel-de-∅
                    3SG.M walk-PAST-SG

 c. perfect   (hij)   heeft/had   ge-wandel-d
                    3SG   AUX:3SG/PAST:SG GE-walk-D

(2) E = event time; R = reference time; P = perspective time (here and now)

(3) a. present: $E/P \subseteq R$

 b. simple past: $(\, E \subseteq R \,) \mathbin{—} P$ (— = preceding)

 c. perfect: $E \mathbin{—} (\, R \subseteq P \,)$ $E \mathbin{—} R \mathbin{—} P$

(4) perfect is anterior tense (relative tense), i.e. not an 'aspect'

(5) tense: specifies the event relevant to a position on the time axis (past, present)
    aspect: specifies the event relative to the flow of time (completive, progressive)

(6) a. [talking about yesterday; R = now]
       Janneke   is   ge-promoveer-d   (*promoveer-de)
       Janneke   AUX:3SG GE-get.degree-D   get.degree-PAST.SG
 b. [in a narrative; R = steady point in the past]
       Janneke   promoveer-de   (*is gepromoveerd)
       Janneke   get.degree-PAST.SG

    both: 'Janneke got her degree'

(7) a. Toen zij   binnen-kwam   **sliep**   ik   (*perfect)
       when 3SG.F in-come:PAST.SG sleep:PAST.SG 1SG
       'I was asleep when she came in.'

 b. Ik   moet   **ge-slap-en**   **heb-ben**   toen   zij   binnen-kwam   (*slapen)
       1SG   must:SG   GE-sleep-D   have-INF   when   3SG.F in-come:PAST.SG

(8)   Alternative: perfect denotes the state resulting from the event to which the perfect refers (Vlach, Musan)

(9)   Not true for infinitive perfect

(10)   Wat   heb   je   (gisteren) ge-daan ?   (*past)
        what   have:2sg   2sg   yesterday   ge-do:D
        'What did you do (yesterday) ?'

(11)   *Simple past and perfect behave differently with* nog/al

        Toen hij dat zei   begreep   ik   het   al/nog
        when he said that   understand:PAST:SG   1SG   3SG.N   al/nog
                                  'I already/still understood it'

                                  had   ik   het   al/*nog   begrep-en
                                  AUX:PAST.SG   1SG   3SG.N   al/nog   GE:understand-D
                                  ~'I had already reached an understanding of it'

(12)   Suggests that completive aspect is a key element of the perfect after all

2. *Nog/al*

(13)   *nog* 'still' and *al* 'already' indicate a polarity transition PT from one state to the next (cf. Löbner 1989, Vandeweghe 1992)

(14)   a. Het   hek   is   rood
            the   fence   is   red

        b. Het   hek   is   **nog**   rood   E before PT (red > non-red)
            the   fence   is   still   red

        c. Het   hek   is   **al**   rood   E after PT (non-red > red)
            the   fence   is   already   red

(15)   a. Het   hek   is   **niet meer** rood   E after PT (red > non-red)
            the   fence   is   no longer   red

        b. Het   hek   is   **nog niet** rood   E before PT (non-red > red)
            the   fence   is   not yet   red

(16)   No inherent direction of PT (depends on predicate)

(17)   a. Hij is { nog / *al }   jong   *inherent POSNEG*   (young > non-young)
            he is   still / already young

        b. Hij is { al / *nog }   oud   *inherent NEGPOS*   (non-old > old)
            he is   already / still old

(18)

NOG   (AL) NIET MEER

    1 | 0

    0 | 1
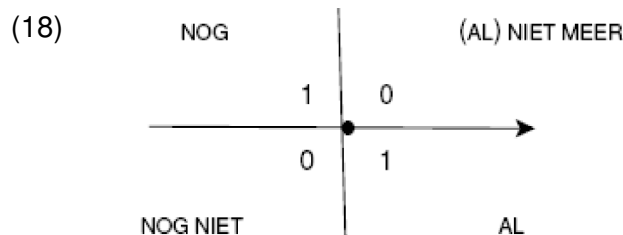
NOG NIET   AL

(19)   a. POSNEG: *jong* 'young'
           b. NEGPOS: *oud* 'old'

(20)   *begrijpen* 'understand' is both POSNEG and NEGPOS

a.   Ik begrijp het { **nog** / **niet meer** }   PT (understanding > not understanding)
          I { still / no longer } understand

b.   Ik begrijp het { **al** / **nog niet** }   PT (not understanding > understanding)
          I understand { already / not yet }

(21)   *begrepen hebben* 'understand:PERF' is NEGPOS only

a. *   Ik heb het { **nog** / **niet meer** } begrepen   no PT (understanding > not understanding)
b.   Ik heb het { **al** / **nog niet** } begrepen   PT (not understanding > understanding)

>>>   imperfect (*begrijpen*): state
          perfect (*begrepen hebben*): result?

3. Not so fast

(22)   *kennen* 'know' is both POSNEG and NEGPOS

a.   Ik ken hem { **nog** / **niet meer** }   PT (knowing > not knowing)
          I { still / no longer } know him

b.   Ik ken hem { **al** / **nog niet** }   PT (not knowing > knowing)
          I know him { already / not yet }

(23)   *gekend hebben* 'know:PERF' is POSNEG only

a.   Ik heb hem { **nog** / **niet meer** } gekend   PT (knowing > not knowing)
          I { still / no longer } got [a chance] to know him

b. *   Ik heb hem { **al** / **nog niet** } gekend   no PT (not knowing > knowing)
          I { already / not yet } got [a chance] to know him

(24)   reason for POSNEG only: finite existence of the object
          a. time slices of the object bounded (properly included in the time scale)
          b. potential period of knowing ends before a certain point X

(25)   ~I knew him before I could no longer know him (= *nog*)

(26) imperfect (*kennen*) and perfect (*gekend hebben*) both refer to a state (no result)

(27) *nog gekend hebben*: state of knowing precedes X
      know:PERF   state of knowing precedes $R \subseteq P$ (here and now)

(28) Why is *begrepen hebben* (understand:PERF) uniquely NEGPOS?

(29) perfect: $E - (R \subseteq P)$

(30) *begrijpen* 'understand' can be dynamic (reach an understanding; NEGPOS) and static (be in the state of understanding; POSNEG/NEGPOS)

(31) Why does the dissociation of E and R (i.e. anteriority) bring out the dynamic reading?

4. Something more on polarity transition predicates

(32) a. *nog*   prePOSNEG   b. *niet meer*   postPOSNEG

      c. *nog niet*   preNEGPOS   d. *al*   postNEGPOS

(33) Are there unique predicates for each category?

(34) Negative Polarity Items occupy the negative corner slots (b/c)

(35) *begrijpen* 'understand'
      ergens een zak van begrijpen   'understand a fuck [nothing at all]'   =NPI

(36) a. * Ik   begrijp   er   nog   een zak   van   (prePOSNEG)
            1SG   understand   there still a scrotum of

      b.   Ik   begrijp   er   g-een zak meer van   (postPOSNEG)
                                        NEG-a   more
                                        not a fuck anymore
            'I no longer understand a fuck of it.'

      c.   Ik   begrijp   er   nog   g-een zak van   (preNEGPOS)
                                        still no fuck
            'I still don't understand a fuck of it.'

      d. * Ik   begrijp   er   al   een zak   van   (postNEGPOS)
                                        already

(37) *perfect of NPI gives you a unique **preNEGPOS** predicate*
      a. * Ik heb er geen zak meer van begrepen   (postPOSNEG)
      b.   Ik heb er nog geen zak van begrepen   (preNEGPOS)

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