The Subjective Progressive in Everyday Written English

A Study in Pragmatics

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D EXTENDED ESSAY

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1. Introduction

When grammarians define the English progressive form, i.e. the combination of the verb TO BE and the present participle (ing-form) of a verb they mostly focus on its aspectual functions and describe the form as ‘continous’, ‘expanded’, ‘durative’ or refer to ‘an action in progress’. Large parts of any grammar books give a detailed description of the progressive aspect or aspectual meanings of the form, but not many of these deal with its pragmtical functions in a sentence, i.e. how words and phrases are used with special meanings in particular situations. In everyday written English many ing-forms seem to be found in constructions such as: He is always complaining or He is successfully working, where the progressive form together with an adverbial (always, sucessfully) denotes a subjective or attitudinal meaning rather than an aspectual. Grammarians give a brief description of this phenomenon, stating that progressive usage gives a more general emotional colouring, often with a negative or critical attitude, to the sentence than the non-progressive, e.g.: He is always drinking or He always drinks (Sager and Svartvik 1997:87). Despite the fact that they all agree on the fact that in constructions which can take both simple and progressive form where the latter may express a more prominent subjectivity, a further analysis of co-occurrences with context features such as adverbials seems to be missed out.

Furthermore, the aspectual meaning of the progressive in a sentence such as: He is always complaining, where the form indicates the process of action must not necessarily be excluded, but the primary meaning of the sentence is emotional. According to some scholars as Scheffer (1975), Römer (2005) and Smitterberg (2005) the use of the progressive to express emotion is connected with its durative character. These also state that progressive forms have many different functions, and that the progressive can be interpreted as a genuinely emotive language device, both historically and in present-day-English. Smitterberg (2005:209), for example, states that there are some progressives that have ‘not-soley-aspectual’ functions and among these are functions modified by always and adverbials with similar meanings (e.g. continually, constantly, perpetually), and what all of the functions have in common is that ‘by choosing to use a progressive, the speaker assumes a subjective attitude towards the situation described by the progressive verb phrase’ (2005: 241).

Likewise, grammarians usually distinguish between two categories of verbs that are more likely than others to take the progressive. In doing this they refer to situations that are
considered dynamic or stative, in which the first one involves an action or event (e.g. *jump, hit*) whereas the latter is a state (e.g. *be, hope*) and therefore not recommended in the progressive. Despite this, grammarians list examples of exceptions from the rule, pointing out that a stative verb in the progressive can be interpreted ‘dynamically’, but what these progressives typically express in different lexical and syntactical contexts is not fully dealt with.

1.1 Aim and scope
By having grammar definitions as a basis it is the intention of this study to seek out constructions in everyday written English where the progressive form denotes subjectivity. In doing this I will also look for context features, so called ing-form collocations, to check out how subjectivity is carried out. The following semantic functions or constructions will be focused on:

- Progressives and adverbial collocation
- Stative verbs expressing emotion and attitude
- Ellipsis of the copula *be* as a semantic function to make the verb action more sensational or sentence-stressed

1.2 Method and material
Research will focus primarily on the use of the English progressive as a subjectivity marker in everyday written English, based on samples from selected articles from the latest editions of the English periodicals *The Times* and *The Observer* (2007). Secondarily I will account for context features, so called ing-form collocations denoting subjectivity. I will use semantic grammar definitions as a basis of my study to seek out for constructions beyond the aspectual one that are likely to express subjectivity in everyday written usage.

The reason for my choice of primary sources is that this genre contains a great bulk of everyday written English with both narrative and descriptive text areas and sub-genres, such as editorials, news, reviews etc. It is also a genre with more or less informal speech, sometimes close to spoken English.

For secondary sources I have chosen grammar books, almost exclusively Svartvik & Sager’s, *Engelsk Universitetsgrammatik* (1996), Huddleston and Pullums’ *The Cambridge Grammar*
of The English Language, Biber et al., Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English (1999) and Leech and Svartvik’s A Communicative Grammar of English (1975). Those grammars are quite recent and important because they represent different degrees of ‘theoreticalness’ and ‘empiricalness’. I will focus mainly on findings related to different functions or meanings of progressives.

For empirical reasons I will also use prior research, since the grammar books do not fully deal with additional functions of the progressive, beyond the aspectual one. Prior research of the progressive will be based on Scheffer’s The Progressive in English (1975), Smitterberg’s The progressive in 19th century English: a process of integration (2005), Römer’s Progressives, Patterns, Pedagogy: a corpus-driven approach to English progressive forms, functions, contexts and didactics (2005) and Bland’s The Present Progressive in Discourse: Grammar Versus Usage Revisited (1988). A theoretical background with grammar definitions and previous research of the progressive as a subjectivity marker will be provided as a background to the linguistic material.

2. Theoretical background

This section includes grammar definitions of the progressive aspect, stative vs. dynamic verbs and elliptic forms, as well as a discussion of different theories about the English progressive form as a subjectivity marker.

2.1 Grammar definitions

2.1.1 The progressive aspect

When speaking about the English progressive form it is widely known that it refers to the term ‘aspect’, which among grammarians is the basic function of the form. When it comes to verb aspect in English they primarily distinguish between simple and progressive form, as two ways of looking at the verb context. According to Svartvik & Sager the term ‘aspect’ is not referring to time, but is a way of looking at the verb context, and that the progressive form, in addition to simple form, is used to denote an ‘action in progress’ or ‘state of events’, which also is the basic meaning of the form (1997:19). Furthermore, they list examples of subsidiary meanings of the form, among these are the following:
• Limited duration (often together with adverbials as *for a long time, for several hours, now* etc.) He *had worked* hard all his life (simple form)
  
  He *had been working hard* for several hours when I called him (prog. form)

• Verbs denoting gradual change, e.g. *change, grow*:
  
  The weather *is changing* again

• The action is in progress before and after a certain point of time:
  
  When I arrived, they *were leaving*

• The action is not completed:
  
  I *was reading* a new novel last night

  I *read* a new novel last night (simple form)

• Verbs indicating a movement/change from one state to another:
  
  The boat *was sinking* when we arrived

When it comes to subjectivity the authors claim that the progressive form sometimes has a subjective connotation, often with a critical attitude, while the simple form is more of a general fact. Common context features are adverbials such as *forever, all the time, always, constantly, continually*:

  The boy *is always losing* things.

In some cases both progressive and simple form can be used without significant difference in meaning except that the progressive has an emotional colouring or is an indication of politeness:

  *Are you feeling* any better?

  *Do you feel* any better? (Simple form)

Leech and Svartvik, on the other hand, are looking at features of tense and aspect expressed by the verb phrase and claim that the progressive aspect has ‘limited duration’ as its primary meaning. It refers to ‘activity in progress’, and therefore suggests not only that the activity is temporary, but that it need not be complete (1975:69). They agree on the fact that the progressive aspect indicates a movement towards a change (as in ‘The boat *was sinking* when we arrived’) and that the situation described by the verb is still in progress, i.e. has started but has not yet finished (see uncompleted action above). In contrast to the former authors they
emphasize that tense and aspect together relate ‘the happening described by the verb to time in the past, present or future’ (1975:63). In addition, when it comes to tense the meaning of limited duration is most evident in the past tense or in the present perfect:

He wrote a novel several years ago (he finished it)  
He was writing a novel several years ago (but I don’t know whether he finished it).  
I have mended the car this morning (the job is finished)  
I have been mending the car this morning (but the job may not be finished)

What these grammar definitions seem to lack is the group of progressives denoting subjectivity with adverbial collocations (e.g. He is always losing things). Neither they mention the indication of ‘politeness’ as a subsidiary meaning of progressives. In fact, the only definitions about subjectivity are found when they refer to verbs that are taking and not taking the progressive (see ‘State verbs’, chapter 2.1.2).

From a semantic point of view, Biber at. al (1999:460) mean that both aspect and tense refer primarily to time distinctions in the verb phrase. Whereas tense mainly refers to past and present time orientation, ‘aspect relates to considerations such as the completion or lack of completion of events or states described by a verb’ (1999:460). The definition of progressive aspect is also stressed to its use to describe activities or events that are in progress at a particular time, ‘usually for a limited duration’ (1999:470). The authors distinguish between present progressive aspect and past progressive aspect giving the following examples, as found in conversation and fiction (genres in which progressives are most common):

I was just coming back from Witham. (past prog.)  
What’s she doing? (pres. prog.)  
But she’s coming back tomorrow. (pres.prog with future time reference)  
I’m going with him next year. (pres.prog. with future time reference)

The present progressive aspect is used to describe events that are currently in progress or about to take place in the near future while the past progressive describes events that were in progress about to take place at some earlier time.
Under the heading ‘Lexical associations of progressive aspect’ Biber et. al (1999:472) list and discuss different types of verbs that are likely, more or less, to occur in progressive constructions, based on The Longman Spoken and Written corpus. The book is entirely corpus-based and the author’s account is functional and more discourse-oriented than the above mentioned ones. The authors focus on and distinguish between verbs with ‘different semantic domains’, including dynamic verbs and stative verbs (see chapter 2.1.2).

The fourth and last grammar under discussion is Huddleston and Pullum’s *The Cambridge grammar of the English Language* (2002). The grammatical descriptions are theory-focused and less empirical than Biber et. al. The term ‘aspect’ is here defined as an applied system ‘where the basic meanings have to do with the internal temporal constituency of the situation’ (2002:117). They note that:

> The difference is a matter of how the speaker views the situation. The progressive takes an internal view, looking at it from the inside, as it were, as something ongoing, in progress. The unmarked, non progressive, version takes an external view: there is no explicit reference to any internal phase or to any feature of the temporal flow (such as whether the situation is conceived of as instantaneous or having duration through time).

According to Huddleston and Pullum the progressive has one basic use, namely ‘the expression of progressive aspectuality’ and two specialised uses that are both related to future time reference. Progressive aspectuality involves certain meaning features: the described situation is presented as in progress, as durative, as dynamic, and as having limited duration. It is also viewed ‘imperfectively’, and the reference time is ‘a mid-interval within’ the situation time (2002:163):

> He was reading the letter when the phone rang.
> I am reading ‘Middlemarch’ at the moment.

Furthermore, the authors deal with the progressive aspect and its compatibility of certain verb classes falling between boundaries such as states and occurrences, e.g. ‘verbs of perception and sensation’. The authors also put emphasis on different kinds of situations, e.g. processes vs. achievements or occurrences vs. states, the latter of which do not normally occur with
progressives (see next chapter). An interesting phenomenon is that they express how easily some verbs take the progressive, whether they are possible with it or not.

2.1.2 Stative and dynamic verbs

Normally grammarians distinguish between ‘stative’ and ‘dynamic’ verbs when analysing the functions of the progressive, as two semantic categories of verbs. This is natural since the progressive aspect primarily is referred to ‘activity in progress of limited duration’, which explains why not all types of verbs can take the progressive form. The authors of the four different grammar books in this study all focus on verbs that are more likely than others to take the progressive, but they define the verbs differently. Svartvik and Sager as well as Biber et al. all talk about stative verbs, which typically denote ‘stable states of affairs’, and dynamic verbs, which denote ‘events, acts, or processes with an inherent implication of completion’ (Biber et al. 2002: 458). The former have a separate section for stative verbs that are not likely to take the progressive. The table below exemplifies this category of verbs in different groups:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senses</td>
<td>feel, hear, see, smell, taste</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental perception</td>
<td>believe, expect, find, hate, know, like, love, think, wonder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relations</td>
<td>be, have, own, become, belong to, depend on</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Sager and Svartvik 1997: 89-90)

Since the progressive aspect is used to describe activities or events that are in progress at a particular time, usually for a limited duration, stative verbs like the above mentioned ones are not easily applied to this basic meaning of the form. Despite this, the authors list progressive statives as exceptions to the rule and Biber et al. mean that in some cases, ‘the progressive can also be used with verbs that describe a static situation when the form expresses the meaning of a temporary state that exists for a period of time’ (1999:471):

Chris is living there now.
I was sitting in my office smoking one of James’s cigarettes.
According to Svartvik and Sager the statives can be used in different ways depending on context, i.e. the simple form is used when the verb denote a state, but the progressive form can also be applied to them when denoting the basic meaning, namely an action in progress or state of events. In addition, the different usages of these verbs give them a difference in meaning (1997:91):

a. I can´t hear you very well. ‘hear’, ‘understand’

b. I hope to be hearing from you soon. ‘wish to hear’ futural reference

c. I forget her name. ‘can’t remember’

d. I’m always forgetting names nowadays. ‘forget’¹

e. He is a very cautious player.

f. He is being very cautious today. ‘the behaviour is more or less intentional’(the verb is stressed)

Leech and Svartvik do not even mention the term stative or dynamic verbs. Instead they talk about verbs “That are taking and not taking” the progressive and refer to ‘state’ verbs (put in the same group as the table above) that do not easily take the progressive and ‘activity verbs’ denoting activities, processes or momentary events, as strongly associated with the form e.g.: walk, read, drink, write, change, grow, improve, knock, jump etc (1975:69-71). The exceptions of the so called ‘state verbs’ in the progressive are closely related to the former ones. On the other hand, an interesting notation of these authors is that the verb be followed by an adjective or noun, as contextual elements, refers to a type of behaviour, ‘or to the role a person is adopting’: He’s (just) being awkward (= ‘causing difficulty’); John is being a martyr (= ‘acting like a martyr’). Other exceptional cases they note are progressive with hope, want etc which expresses greater ‘tentativeness’ and ‘tact’, e.g., Were you wanting to see me? We are hoping you will support us.

As mentioned in the previous chapter, Huddleston and Pullum express how easily some verbs take the progressive whether they are possible with it or not, or which verbs tend to favour the

¹ Note that the contextual adverbials always and nowadays give the sentence further meanings. Always involves a personal attitude and nowadays strongly give evidence to its aspectual meaning, as an action in progress with limited duration and time reference.
The authors distinguish between different situations and their first contrast is the one between static and dynamic situations, i.e. between ‘states and occurrences’, with the meaning that ‘states exists or obtain, while occurrences happen, take place’ (2002: 119). A change is usually involved with occurrences, but not with states. In addition, the aspectual meaning of the progressive involves an internal temporal structure, and since the states are the same throughout their duration they have no ‘distinguishable phases’ (2002:119). The distinction they make between the two main types of situations is exemplified as following:

* The flag is being red (state)
He is playing tennis (occurrence)

The progressive aspect does not normally occur with states as in the first sentence (marked with *). It is considered ungrammatical because of the fact that the flag is the same colour throughout the duration. It is an existing phenomena, while *He is playing tennis* is something that takes place, an occurrence.

The major difference between progressive aspectuality and imperfectivity in general is that the former is inconsistent with a purely static situation: it involves some measure of dynamicity. The authors give the following example:

When I left, Jill had her head buried in a book but Ed was watching TV.

The first element *had her head buried in a book* is clearly a state whereas *was watching TV* is an occurrence (an activity). This is why the stative verb *have* has non-progressive, while the dynamic verb *watch* has the progressive. As mentioned about the former grammarian’s definitions about stative verbs in the progressive, Huddleston and Pullum also point out that there are ‘several ways in which the progressive can combine with a basically stative expression to yield a dynamic interpretation’ (2002:167). In doing this, they refer to different terms as ‘agentive activity’, ‘waxing/waning’ and ‘temporary state:

He is being tactful. (agentive activity)
He’s making more and more/fewer and fewer mistakes. (waxing/waning)
She is cycling to work this week. (temporary state)
The first sentence is in the non-progressive static because it denotes a personal quality: ‘He is tactful’. When used in the progressive it involves an agentive activity in the way that it is dynamic and focuses on his behaviour, not his quality.

In addition, the next sentence is in the non-progressive ‘He makes mistakes’ and then expresses a serial state. The author’s interpretation of the dynamicity in progressive comes from the element of change, the subsituations are not constant, but waxing or waning.

Similarly, sentence number three comes from the aspect of ‘temporariness’, similar to Sager and Svartvik’s definitions about stative verbs in the progressive. The interpretation of the non-progressive She cycles to work refers to a habit, or regular mode of travel to work, while the non-progressive is temporary (perhaps she normally goes by car, but this week she is going by bicycle) (2002:167).

The last group under discussion are verbs of cognition, emotion and attitude (sensational verbs). According to Huddleston and Pullum, these are: agree, believe, fear, forget, hope, intend, know, like, love, realise, regret, remember, suppose, think, understand, want, wish, wonder, etc. They point out that ‘none of these verbs completely excludes the progressive, however, though they differ with respect to how easily they take it’ (2002:170). A few examples will be provided:

I’m thinking we ought to accept.
They’re loving every minute of it.
I’m hoping you can help me.

In the first sentence the authors suggest limited duration (I’ve just come around to thinking this). Number two is equivalent to enjoy and yields an activity. The third one adds an element of tentativeness similar with Leech and Svartvik’s interpretation of the same verb. In addition, the last sentence has also an effect of politeness compared to a non-progressive sentence: ‘I hope you can help me’.

2.1.3 Ellipsis
By looking at everyday written English the progressive is often used with ‘ellipsis’, i.e. either the copula be or the subject is left out. The effect of this function is that the speaker or the
narrator makes the verb more sentence-stressed, and thereby he may think he expresses himself clearly enough without those elements. Svartvik and Sager (1997:347) defines ‘ellipsis’ as implying a reduction of one or many words in a clause depending on context. They exemplify some sentences in which this function of ing-form is common (1997:322-323):

*Leaving the house* (‘When she was leaving the house’), she slipped on the icy step.
I found *him studying* English. ‘(when)he was studying English’ (the copula *be* is left out)
I heard *somebody knocking* on the door. ‘that somebody was knocking on the door’ (the copula *be* is left out)
*Being kind* she let us in. ‘Snäll som hon var släppte hon in oss’. (The copula *be* is left out and the subject is predicative)

According to the authors the ellipsis is used to avoid repetition and in those cases where the subject is reduced the clause is non-finite such as ing-forms, perfect particip or infinitive. The subject in a non-finite clause has been changed to an object as in the second sentence ‘I found *him studying English*’ (‘He was studying English’).

2.2 Prior research of the progressive as a subjectivity marker

The previous chapter dealt with definitions of the progressive form based on the four grammar books used in this study. According to the authors of those books the basic meaning of the different progressive forms is aspectual in the sense that it refers to an action that is in progress at a particular point of time or with limited duration. Some of these authors, for example Huddleston and Pullum, give a broader analysis of an aspect that is closely connected to a time involvement. Although all four give some examples of verbs and sentences in the progressive that do have a subjective or emotional overtone, a broader analysis of this function is lacking. These authors, for example, give some examples of sentences like *He is always losing his temper* and claim that situations like this is a feature of duration that tends to be accompanied by an emotive overtone, usually of disapproval. The basic meaning still seems to be an aspectual one in the context that the adjunct *always* refers to ‘on all occasions’, but the subsituation is ‘typically, though not necessarily, a desirable one’ (2002:167).
The progressive form as an emotional language device in everyday written English is a field that has brought attention to some scholars. In fact, there are studies that are based on different functions and meanings of the progressive form, e.g. Scheffer (1975), Smitterberg (2005), Römer (2005), and Bland (1988). This is interesting since they all have ‘not-solely-aspectual’ functions within their research. While the first four mentioned have focused on many different uses of the progressive, the latter has focused entirely on the usage of stative verbs in particular discourse contexts.

2.2.1 The subjective progressive
The progressive form may contain a multiplicity of meanings. Some writers see duration as the dominant element, others frame-time, incompletion, imperfectivity etc. It is difficult to give an all-embracing description of the form. However, when studying different progressive forms and their contextual elements it is clear that it is used to emphasize the action of the verb, whether it has to do with temporal reference, which is often the case, or a speakers attitude towards a certain situation. Scheffer, among others, claim that ‘The use of the progressive to express emotion is connected with its durative character’ (1975:389). He means that when emphasising temporal reference one may provoke a feeling that ‘an activity is going on excessively long and cause irritation’ (1975: 389).

Since the progressive form is mainly contrasted to the so-called simple form, many scholars have in their works looked for additional distinctions between the two forms, beyond the aspectual one. The majority of those have reached the conclusion that the progressive is more subjective or emotional in its speech, but Scheffer, for example, avoids using the term subjective form as a contrast to the objective simple form (1975:31). The latter is often used for factual statements and is therefore more impersonal. The non-progressive phrases I hate you and I love you are purely stative verbs expressing feelings, but not necessarily exceptional in the progressive, which makes it more difficult to account for the progressive as a subjective form and the non-progressive as an objective form. Furthermore, Scheffer points out that the choice of using the subjective or the objective form depends on the individual speaker, to momentary influences and momentary fluctuations (1975:31).

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2 Smitterberg (2005:209) uses this term for functions that are additional to the aspectual one, e.g. progressives modified by always and adverbials with similar meanings, potentially “experiential” progressive verb phrases and “interpretative” progressives (see Smitterberg 2005:chapter 7).
An interesting perspective is that Smitterberg also regard the progressive as having an emotional effect, but often ‘in conjugation with other contextual elements that carry subjective and or/emotional connotation’ (2005:171). By this statement he means that it is not always the progressive itself that expresses emotion or subjectivity, but the contextual elements, e.g. adverbials of the always-type as well as other elements help to build up an emotional expression. In addition, when referring to ‘stative’ situations he mentions that those involving the progressives sometimes have other shades of meaning than temporariness or tentativeness. This is exemplified as following:

/…/I was always wanting to stick pins into her arms, to see how far in the bones are. I am sure I could bury the heads (171).

Please tell Lucy with my love how gratefully I am feeling her sisterly kindness.

When referring to ‘stative’ situations Smitterberg claims that these situations ‘seem to fulfill one of two main functions: either they express a shade of temporariness or tentativeness, which may be related to the aspectual functions of the construction, or they denote not-solely-aspectual subjectivity in the form of emphasis, intensity, or vividness’ (2005:173).

This view of ‘stative’ progressives is also evident in Bland’s journal ‘The Present Progressive in Discourse: Grammar Versus Usage Revisited’ (1988), in which she has divided stative verbs into different groups. She exemplifies the most common type of progressive statives as those ‘verbs of emotion, desire and attitude’ having the function of giving more strength to the predication (1988:60-62). As an example is the sentence I’m loving these moments with you which is more intense, emotional and vivid than its counterpart (1988:60). Moreover, she gives the same interpretation as Smitterberg about the fact that progressive statives, but also other verbs, are often found with various kinds of modifiers to further emphasize the intensity of the situation, as in e.g.: I’m really loving it, which gives evidence to the use of other contextual elements to carry out a subjective connotation (1988:60).
3. AN ANALYSIS OF THE PROGRESSIVE AS A SUBJECTIVITY MARKER

This section provides an analysis of the progressive form as a subjectivity marker in everyday written English, based on the latest editions from the English periodicals *The Times* and *The Observer* (online 2007).

Example sentences under each section will be picked out from the data and analysed pragmatically as well as semantically. Comparisons to relevant semantic grammar definitions will be made in order to seek out for constructions beyond the aspectual one that are likely to carry out subjectivity in everyday written usage. Naturally, since the study is focused on different lexical and syntactical features of progressives the majority of the examples include a large amount of text, in order to account for context features that are related to the progressive verb phrase.

3.1 Progressives and adverbial collocation

The progressive together with adverbials is a common feature in everyday written as well as spoken English. The grammar books used in this study do all, more or less, point out that the progressive form is often accompanied by adverbials, such as *forever, all the time, always, constantly, continually* and that these constructions often have an emotive or subjective overtone, usually of disapproval. Sager and Svartvik (1997:101-102) mention adverbials or adverbial adjuncts that are often used to emphasise the durative character of the verb (*for a long time, for several hours, now* etc), but also adverbials that have a subjective connotation (*always*-type adverbials^3). Similarly, Huddleston and Pullum, have a section in which they discuss and give examples of durative situations such as ‘Serial states’, pointing out that a situation that is emphasised by adjuncts of *always*-type ‘tends to be accompanied by an emotive overtone’ (2002:166). They also mention that this is often connected to disapproval. A general statement when it comes to this feature in progressive constructions is that these adverbial adjuncts are emphasising the durative character of the verb, but also sometimes give the construction of the sentence a subjective connotation.

To begin with, there is a group of adverbials by *always*-type that seem to be frequent together with progressives. Scheffer points out that the ‘emotional progressive can be emphasized by

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^3 Smitterberg (2005:210) is using the term ALWAYS-type adverbials because they often refer to a continual recurrence of a situation which may cause irritation by the speaker.
always and its synonyms’, e.g. constantly, continually, forever, all the time etc. He means that the repetition that is expressed by these adverbs strengthens the emotional colouring of the progressive, and the implication is usually that the continual recurrence of the situation is a source of irritation. In most cases, this meaning of the progressive construction is evident:

(1) Here he was Ray Simms, the leonine but mangy lead singer of Strange Fruit, a dead Seventies band bidding for resurrection. It was, like the group it portrayed, an enormous commercial flop. Unlike the group, which was always courting death by dysfunction, the film deserved better, not least because of Nighy’s performance, a magnificent blend of swagger and bathos. (Nighy, The Times, May 12, 2007)

In (1) the progressive gives a more general emotional colouring to the sentence than the non-progressive. The speaker’s evaluation of the situation is negative in the way that he by using the adverbial always emphasizes the action of ‘courting death by dysfunction’ as repeated too frequently. Sometimes it is difficult to tell whether it is the progressive itself that expresses emotion, but it seems probable that it is the combination of always etc. that produces the element of feeling (Scheffer 1975:92). There might also be a presence of further features, either in the same sentence or in the near context, which indicate a subjective attitude, in this case an enormous commercial flop.

There are other cases in the different articles where synonyms to always are found. Those adverbials clearly denote a subjective attitude, with some difference in meaning:

(2) Your weight fluctuates by a few pounds every day, so constantly monitoring it is potentially demoralising and misleading. Instead, check your weight once a week, at the same time of day, so the measurements are consistent. (Brocklesby, The Sunday Times, April 8, 2007)

(3) One graduate who joined the Financial Times says that the job is hectic and constantly changing. “We need to be prepared to get to grips with all business sectors, from leisure to mining, from what’s happening in the City to the problems facing the Shanghai stock exchange. (Harrison, The Times, March 22, 2007)
(4) Make sure that you exercise at least every 48 hours. This means you are regularly boosting your metabolism and thereby maximising your calorie-burning potential. (Brocklesby, The Sunday Times, April 8, 2007)

By looking at (2) constantly, together with the ing-form of the verb ‘monitor’, appears to give the speaker an opportunity to comment negatively on the consequences of continual unpredictable recurrence of the situation. It also shows that the speaker dislike the content of the situation in which the progressive occurs in the way that the he exaggerates and expresses disapproval. There is also a presence of further features indicating a subjective attitude (potentially demoralising and misleading) which places the progressive and the adverbial constantly in an emotionally loaded context. In (3), on the other hand, the aspectual element is more evident. First of all, the verb changing is a dynamic verb which in itself denotes ‘an action in progress’ (see chapter 2.1.1), but by adding the adverbial constantly the speaker emphasizes the frequency of change and the expression can therefore be considered as having a subjective connotation and may give an indication of ‘a person that is not satisfied with his job situation’. A subjective attitude is also revealed when the speaker already describes the job as hectic, but this connotation must not necessarily be of disapproval.

In (4) the modification of the adverbial regularly and the following ing-participle of the verb ‘boost’ the element of disapproval is lacking. Although the adverbial could be paraphrased as ‘at regular times, e.g. every day’ and is similar in meaning to constantly as ‘all the time’, it is positive in its expression, because it suggests an improvement of the chemical activity in the body. In this case, the adverbial is used to emphasise the action of the verb and is an index of the speaker’s emotional attitude towards the propositional context expressed. On the other hand, it could likely take an aspectual interpretation based on Sager and Svartvik’s definitions of progressives denoting gradual change. (see chapter 2.1.1). Whether the sentence can be interpreted as subjective or aspectual in its meaning, the fact is that the adverbial helps the speaker to emphasise or highlight the verb action are boosting and makes the verb more intense. The speaker stresses something which is felt to be of special importance (Römer 2005:101).

Smitterberg claims that the progressive has an emotional effect in conjunction with other contextual elements that carry subjective and/or emotional connotation, and that these connotations imply ‘an attitudinal focus from the speaker’s perspective’ (2005: 209). In
addition, Scheffer points out that there might be doubt about whether the progressive itself expresses ‘emotional colouring’, but that it seems highly probably that it is the combination with adverbials as *always* etc. that provides the element of feeling (2005:92). This is also supported by the analysed examples above.

Progressive forms and adverbial collocation is a feature that is widely focused on among scholars. Grammar books and other studies show that the most frequent types of adverbials are those with temporal reference, so-called ‘time-adverbials’ or ‘adverbial adjuncts’. Since the progressive is mainly stated to refer to aspect with temporal reference, it is not strange that they co-occur with adverbials denoting time, e.g. *always* and its synonyms as well as *already, just, now, at the moment* etc., in order to emphasise the durative character. By looking at all these common context features one is inclined to leaning towards the fact that they do not always refer to all occasions, but to all occasions we are concerned with contextually. The ‘emotional’ use of the progressive is rather specific and can be regarded as a deviation from the normal use of progressives to refer to contingent situation or to express duration (Scheffer 1975:101). The aspectual meaning of the progressive must not necessarily be excluded, as noted in (3), which is also evident in the following examples:

(5) I have been waiting to meet her for over 20 years, to apologise. **All the time**, she is *raving on*, this apology is welling inside me until eventually it pops out. ‘Katharine, I have to confess: I’m the one who said you were married to a Rastafarian. ‘Now it’s Her turn to look at me as if I’m completely mad. (Barber, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

(6) Contrary to the popular perception of the Priory being some sort of five-star hotel, the sleeping accommodation at least is more akin to a standard provincial B&B. Each of the 20 or so rooms leads out to a corridor, at the end of which, just to remind you one more time that you are **currently residing** in a psychiatric hospital, is a nursing station. (Wilsson, *The Observer*, Sunday April 15, 2007)

As noted in the first chapter, one of the most characteristic features of the progressive itself noted by grammarians is that it expresses restricted duration. Despite this, there are constructions as example (5) which denotes a frequency of occurrence. The adverbial adjunct
All the time refers to a habit, which is not preferable in the progressive⁴, although the expression might be regarded as a reference time with ‘a mid-interval’ within the situation time (see Huddleston and Pullum chapter 2.1.1). In comparison with a sentence as ‘Currently she is raving on’, in which the adverbial refers to limited duration and can be paraphrased ‘at the present moment or time’ or ‘at the time being’, which accounts for the progressive use of is raving. Instead the adverbial clearly expresses an annoyance of her constant behaviour as raving on and the construction has therefore a strong subjective connotation, with a negative evaluation. The position of the adverbial is also of great importance since it gives a stronger emphasis to the sentence than ‘She is raving on all the time’. The annoyance is the basic element of the sentence.

In (6) the constructions are currently residing the subjective element of meaning is weaker than that in (5) although the adverbial gives a stronger inner-stress to the verb action are residing. First of all the negative connotation is not as strong as in the former sentence (the adverbial is not a synonym to always), but it is more ‘ironic’ in its expression since it refers to the fact of ‘a present staying in a psychiatric hospital’. The meaning of the verb ‘reside’ also indicates that it is a ‘temporary’ staying at the hospital. The adverbial currently, as a contextual element together with the progressive form, may also in itself refer to ‘temporariness’. Despite this, the adverbial also seem to have an ironic attitudinal meaning.

Other time adverbials that often collocate with progressive forms are still, now, just, and already. These do not have the same meaning as the always-type, in the way that they do not refer to a continual recurrence of the situation, neither to a source of irritation in the same way as the previous, although an evaluative meaning (mostly negative) is conveyed. As noticed in the example above, with currently, they may be used in order to emphasise the situation in which the progressive is found. This is often the case in the examples with now below:

(7) She’s the supermodel who became an icon – but now she’s selling more than just her image. As she launches her first collection for Topshop, Kate Moss talks exclusively to Sheryl Garratt about fashion, fame and why absolutely everyone wants a piece of her. (Garratt, The Sunday Times, April 1, 2007)

Parenting classes are, of course, quite wasted on parents. And please don’t worry and think, ‘Oh Christ now even he’s writing about his damned kids, is nowhere safe?’ If, for some reason, I wanted to take a vicarious interest in pubescent meanderings which somehow manage to combine the intellectual rigour of a slurry souffle with the trumingly onanistic self-indulgence of a very old man looked in a steamy room with many forgiving mirrors and one last breathless change, then of course I would take my adult coins down the shop and buy my adult paper, would I now? (Ferguson, The Observer, Sunday April 15, 2007)

Römer mentions that many progressives express emphatic or evaluative meaning and that speakers often use the form ‘to put stress on something, to convey their (mostly negative) attitude to something, or to express strong surprise or severe doubt about something’ (2005:99). He also states that emphatic progressives often collocate with now (as well as always and all the time). The other previous works do not fully deal with additional meanings to these adverbials although they do mention them in other contexts. As seen in (7) the adverbial now modifies the progressive she’s selling, by giving a time reference. Therefore it gives strong evidence for the aspectual meaning of the progressive, but by emphasising the fact that ‘she used to be a supermodel, but now she is even selling clothes’ the speaker puts stress on her behaviour or expresses surprise about it in order to make the utterance sensational. In this case the adverbial is not as negatively loaded as in the next example.

In (8) it is obvious that the speaker wants to bring out his attitude by highlighting an expression that is rhetoric in order to catch the reader’s interest. He makes some ironic and negative remarks about himself by adding subjective elements to stress the process of his writing. It is not the progressive itself that produces the emotional loaded context, but now together with other features that have a clear subjective connotation, such as Oh Crist, even.

When studying adverbials as now there is no doubt that they all answer the question ‘when?’ in order to give a time reference. From this perspective it is easy to explain its co-occurrence with progressives as in example (9) below. However, it is worth noticing how the subject puts stress on his attitude towards the situation he finds himself in:

It is a few days later when I am told that this is otherwise known as Searching For Drugs. Thankfully, they don’t find any, because obviously I have consumed every last white speck either on the plane or on the week-long binge that preceded it. Right now, I am
starting to fade, and I just want to sleep for ever. I lie down, stare at the ceiling of room 15 in the Priory Hospital, Roehampton, and I close my eyes… (Wilsson, The Observer, April 15, 2007)

In example (9) above now together with the ing-participle of the verb ‘start’ amplifies the aspectual meaning of the sentence in the way that the action is in progress, has started, by giving a time reference; right now. The progressive itself am starting would be likely to be interpreted from an aspectual perspective since the verb start is a ‘lexical aspectual verb’, indicating a change, which together with the copula be is ‘instantaneous’ in its meaning (Huddleston and Pullum 2005:117). However, by using the combination of the two adverbials Right now, as elements included in the verb phrase, the narrator wants to emphasise her instantaneous feeling ‘of running away from reality’, when taking drugs, as a change from one state to another. As mentioned before, the position of the adverbials, as occurring before the verb phrase, gives further emphasis to this meaning of the expression.

This function of time adverbials that collocate with progressives may be interpreted in different ways. The aspectual meaning of these constructions is clear, since they give evidence to the fact that something is ‘ongoing at a certain point of time’. Beside this function, however, there is no doubt that they in many situations function as an indication of emphasis and evaluation, as noted in the examples above. To sum up this fact, further examples with still, already and just are provided:

(10) SMG also announced today that it was terminating the sale of Primesight, the outdoor advertising group, which has been in the works for six months. However, SMG, is still attempting to sell Pearl & Dean, the prominent cinema advertising group. (Jordan, The Times, April 12, 2007)

(11) And my cholesterol, from an already worrying 5.8 (modern quacks like to see a result below 4) had in seven days skyrocketed to 6.6! On a diet like that, he reckoned, a chap with my heredity would do well to live till he was 42. (Coren, The Times, April 12, 2007)

(12) I have been wide awake for five hours and am already starting to become all-too familiar with my immediate surroundings. In my room, I have my bed, two chairs, a desk, a portable TV, and a bathroom. (Wilsson, The Observer, April 15, 2007)
When adding the adverbial *still* to the progressive as in (10) the speaker puts further strength to a predication which tends to focus on the notion of ‘incompleteness’ (see chapter 2.1.1). The expression appears to be viewed from a personal perspective by intensifying the fact that the process of ‘SMG’s attempt to sell is not completed yet, but maybe should be by now’. In addition, the subjective element *However* gives a further evaluative meaning.

The adverbial *already* in (11) gives even a stronger emphasis to the verb action than *still* in (10). The construction is ‘elliptic’ which makes the utterance sound more intense, but by using the adverbial *already* the speaker stresses his ‘worrying about his cholesterol being higher than expected’. Therefore the actual situation is stressed to convey a strong surprise from the speaker’s perspective. The same meaning is evident in (12), where the adverbial and the progressive of the verb ‘start’ also strengthens the attitudinal and surprising indication of change, from one state to another (as in (9) above).

The collocation of the adverbial *just*, which is also included in the group of time adverbials and the progressive is a common feature in many of the investigated articles. Both Scheffer (1975:51) and Römer (2005:77) account for this collocation when referring to time-adverbials and give some example sentences in which it is found, but the feature is not further discussed, although it is found in some example sentences as referring to present time. However, it is noticeable that this collocation naturally gives the expression an attitudinal meaning, and in these cases the adverbial does not primarily refer to the aspectual meaning of the progressive:

(13) ‘There’s so much risk in bunkering – fire risk, water risk, ambush risk. What I want to do is work for the oil companies as a production supervisor, ‘he said. *I’m just bunkering* until I get a job. There are plenty of people here with degrees in petroleum engineering who can’t get jobs. (Junger, *The observer*, April 15, 2007)

(14) Yet this is not an angry novel. The characters endure the usual distresses – marriage break-up, bereavement – but they trudge on, *just feeling* more middle-aged. (Bedell, *The Observer*, Sunday April 1, 2007)

In these expressions the co-occurrence of *just* places the progressive in a situation taking place in the present time. However, it is doubtful whether it is the adverbial in (13) that gives
the expression its aspectual meaning. Instead it gives the expression another meaning, namely
the effect that the process of the ‘subject’s bunkering’ is softened or less direct, and the
subject therefore seems to be positively intended about getting a job, as a process which is
easily adopted. Römer claims that ‘the progressive form has the function of rendering what is
said more polite or less direct’ and without the progressive form the utterances would
probably be more aggressive or ‘face-threatening to the addressees’ (2005:97). Similarly, it
seems to be the adverbial that gives the expression this pragmatical function, not the
progressive itself (compare ‘I’m bunkering until I get a job’ which in fact sounds more
aggressive). The example in (14) is different in the way that it is the narrator who gives his
comment about the characters in the novel and therefore this meaning seem to be weaker than
in (13) since the feeling is not experienced by the subject itself.

The last groups of adverbials under discussion are adverbials of ‘attitude’ and ‘manner’, e.g.
actually, really, possibly, successfully. These are also common modifiers to progressives and
clearly function as subjectivity markers in everyday written English. Since the articles contain
more or less informal English, also depending on sub-genre, where news articles compared to
reviews and chronicles include a more objective language the distribution of these adverbials
is different. The latter genres are more personal and therefore more likely to convey attitudes.
However, despite their frequency in the articles, prior research does not seem to have a
broader analysis of its functions with progressives, although they are exemplified as modifiers
to the emotional progressive in some sentences.

To begin with, the adverbials of attitude are seen in constructions in which they often have an
initial or medial position. These adverbials primarily denote the speaker’s or the subject’s
attitude or opinion about the verb content. In addition to the majority of time-adverbials these
do not emphasise the durative character of the situation in the same way, and therefore the
aspectual connection is not as strong as in previous examples:

(15) “Honestly, I was crying this morning, I was in so much pain,” she says in a
slightly husky voice that still shows its Croydon origins. “And I’m not a wuss at
all.” She wiggles the foot by my face for inspection: it is horribly swollen, in
ghastly shades of red, purple and yellow. (Garratt, The Sunday Times, April 1, 2007)

(16) ‘I’ve always believed that you can go up in any profession and then go across,
so I’m in the process of doing that, and I think I’ll do it till the day I drop. ‘If
anyone else said this I’d think they were barking. Actually I do think Katharine Hamnet is barking but, on the other hand, her success in getting organic clothing into Tesco suggests that maybe barking is not a bad thing to be. (Barber, *The Observer*, Sunday April 15, 2007)

(17) And likewise, the other way round, when I am in a rehearsal room arguing with the guys about whether the C-major or C-minor chord is actually going to change world history, I know that the next morning I’ll be negotiating a sensible sale and purchase agreement. (Dossantos, *The Sunday Times*, April 8, 2007)

(18) It is on my 15th visit to the toilet at the front of the business-class cabin when the duty officer finally cracks a knowing grin and enquired if sir is suffering from an especially weak bladder. Yes, sir is indeed suffering from precisely that what with the two excellent bottles of Penfolds already horsed down before even leaving Australian airspace, not to mention the three of four massive jugs of port that have just accompanied the onboard selection of cheeses. (Wilsson, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

As noted in the three examples above it is clear that the speaker wants to convey his attitude about the situation in which the progressive occurs. Römer (2005:97-101) refers to functions of progressives expressing ‘emphasis/attitude’ and ‘politeness/softening’, among others, in which adverbials of this type are found. The adverbial honestly in (15) as placed initially denotes the subject’s attitude towards the whole clause I was crying this morning. Without the adverbial, the construction would not be as emotionally loaded and would refer to the fact that the process of ‘her crying’ was taking place at a certain point of time (this morning). Instead the adverbial not only strengthens her feeling of sadness, but making the utterance sounding more polite, as an excuse of the situation. Besides, other context features with subjective connotations, e.g. so much in pain give further modification of an emotional loaded context. Example (16) is different to the former because the adverbial actually is not directly connected to the progressive verb phrase. The subject already reveals her attitude by using the stative verb think which is also emphasised by do as a paraphrase. By adding the adverbial initially the subject is rendering ‘her thoughts’ sound more polite to the addressee. (She’s not convinced but nearly convinced of Katharine’s barking). Example (17), in comparison, amplifies the subject’s doubt about ‘whether the chord will really change the world history’.
Compared to example (15), (16) and (17), (18) has even a stronger subjective connotation where the narrator by adding *indeed* ironically emphasises ‘his convincement about the fact that sir is really having a weak bladder’. The progressive itself gives the effect of a temporary condition, and the weak bladder seems to be a result of his drinking problems.

In some cases it is evident that the progressive expresses greater tentativeness than its counterpart, which is pointed out by Leech and Svartvik as well as Smitterberg (see chapter 2.1.2 and 2.2.1). In the following example the adverbials with the progressive seem to be tentative, but also have a ‘not-soley-aspectual’ function, emphasising the subjective nature of an individual character’s impression of the situation:

(19) “They portray me as all these crazy things, and I’m so not like that. I don’t have encourage. I’m as normal as you can get…” She pauses, *perhaps realising* that flying to the Caribbean for work and being followed everywhere by a herd of paparazzi is nowhere near normal for most of us. “In this kind of lifestyle, I suppose. I try to be. I like to muck in, I don’t like to sit around. And if I can do something myself, I’ll do it.” (Garratt, *The Sunday Times*, April 1 2007)

(20) Not do I have a habit. Or *am I possibly developing* a habit. No the question they asked was: how bad a habit do I have. I lie, as I now lie to everyone about pretty much everything, and we tentatively agree that it might make sense sometime soon to follow up on that conversation re: a temporary posting to Sydney. (Wilsson, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

The two examples above show that the adverbial gives the situation in which the progressive occurs a tentative effect by subjective nature. In the combination of *perhaps realising* in (19) it is the narrator who gives her interpretation of that the ‘subject is maybe/probably realising that her life as a celebrity is something outstanding’. Without the adverbial the progressive would be likely to express ‘a temporary state’, while the adverbial reveals the narrator’s ambivalent and tentative attitude towards the subject’s way of living. In contrast to (19), (20) expresses the subject’s ambivalent feelings about ‘developing a habit’, as a gradual process of his behaviour, which he wants to deny.

When it comes to adverbials of manner they mostly occur in medial position and primarily they seem to define how the situation or verb action is carried out, either it is experienced by the subject itself, or someone else. A few examples of this phenomenon are provided:
(21) I have now gone through the three classic stages of developing an addiction – this is fun, this is getting out of hand, this is fucking killing me and I can’t stop. (Wilsson, The Observer, April 15, 2007)

(22) Even in my drug-addled stupor, I realized that not only was I slowly killing myself with my addiction, I was quickly snorting my way through the guts of my entire salary, the hefty overdraft facility set up in happier times, and the entire family savings. (Wilsson)

(23) It’s just that some of them are doing it so quietly that you may still be under the illusion that they are merrily churning out the same cabin crew-style apparel that made them such a hit in county rotary clubs two decades ago. (Armstrong, The Times, April 11, 2007)

(24) New SMG management is radically overhaunting the troubled group by floating Virgin Radio and focusing on its TV business. (Jordan, The Times, April 12, 2007)

All these sentences above include adverbials of manner that qualifies the progressive and gives the verb action an emotional colouring. In example (21) and (22) it is the subject himself who experiences the situation and since the pronoun ‘I’ is more likely to conceive feelings it has a stronger subjective denotation than (23) and (24). In (21) the emphasis is on the last of the three experienced stages, where the subject points out his fury and panic about the fact that ‘he is stuck with his addiction to drugs’. The expression has an aggressive overtone, since he by adding the adverbial fucking strongly expresses his panic-stricken attitude and surprise about the drugs being ‘on their way to kill him’. A negative evaluation of the situation is also presented in (22) where the subject expresses how he experiences his situation as addicted, and the consequence will be ‘a gradual deterioration of his health’, not only by the fact that it will cause his death, but also ‘rapidly lead to poverty’.

In (23) and (24) it is the author who gives his comment on the subject’s way of acting, with a positive subjective connotation merrily (‘cheerfully’ or ‘lively’) and radically (‘totally’) as important elements in order to emphasise situations that are more or less preferable. By looking at all these expressions the ‘action in progress’ is evident but the adverbials make the constructions more emotional and vivid.
3.2 Stative verbs expressing emotion and attitude

When it comes to verbs which express a static idea it is interesting to notice how these are classified in the grammar books and in the other handbooks. It is proposed that verbs of this type are not necessarily exceptional in the progressive, but still they occur frequently in everyday written English. The stative verbs may denote a mental or psychological state, a physical state, but sometimes they are also regarded as ‘private’ since it is only the speaker who is aware of the state or activity it expresses (Scheffer 1975:61). What is said in grammar books is that the progressive makes stative verbs act as non-states by ‘imposing’ some sort of dynamics, whether it has to do with temporariness, tentativeness, agentive activity, waxing and waning or politeness (see chapter 2.1.2). The previous works have more or less focused on stative verbs in progressive form, but the most relevant for this study is Bland (1988) who inclines that:

What really happens in the case of progressive statives is that speakers endow certain states with features of event verbs choosing the progressive as opposed to the more usual simple form, the speaker can convey slight differences in the meaning and function of stative verbs (1988:60).

As noted in the first chapter, Sager and Svartvik have classified stative verbs into different groups, namely verbs of ‘senses’ (e.g. \textit{feel, hear, see}), ‘mental perception’ (e.g. \textit{believe, think, find, love, wonder}) and ‘relations’ (e.g. \textit{be, have, become, depend on}). They do not have a group of verbs particularly denoting emotion and attitude, but by looking at contexts in which statives are found one is inclined to the fact that constructions with progressive statives give more strength to the predication and are therefore more intense, emotional and vivid than their simple form counterparts, something that also Bland points out (1988:60). Often there seems to be other contextual features that further strengthen the pragmatical meaning of subjectivity. Primarily, an interesting phenomena is the stative verb \textit{be} which is common in the progressive. Usually, it is used with a predicative noun or adjective, but also as a passive progressive in which the perfect participle functions as an adjective:

\begin{enumerate}
\item She is enviably swelte in a black V-neck Smedley Sweater and black straight skirt – one of her two ‘uniforms’, she says, the other \textit{being} jeans – except that she is wearing Ugg boots, which she needs, she says, because she is going on a Greenpeace demonstration
\end{enumerate}
tonight and might have to swim. (Barber, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

(26) Other bonus points are terrific personal-shopping advisers, bra-fitters of excellence, a swanky new cosmetics hall, some of the best vintage jewellery counters in the county, plus the sense that you’re actually being rebellious by shopping. (Armstrong, *The Times*, April 11, 2007)

(27) People say all the time that money doesn’t bother me. I’m okay with not being\(^5\) happy. (Leve, *The Sunday Times*, May 20, 2007)

(28) What seems to wound as much as the physical rejection is the unwillingness to engage with the hurt that’s being inflicted: the turning away of the mind as well as the body. (Mooney, *The Observer*, April 11, 2007)

(29) By the time I get to the hotel, I am convinced I am being followed and that the entire eyes of the night staff are upon me. (Wilsson, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

The first example in (25) is interesting because it would be likely to refer to a temporary quality, i.e. to act in the manner indicated by the noun or adjective. The ‘jeans’ in itself does not refer to a type of behaviour as in a sentence as, e.g: ‘The other being a woman’, where someone is playing the part of a woman or female. Instead, other context features give an indication that it is the narrator who wants to emphasise the fact that the subject is ‘just wearing jeans’, to refer to her casual wearing, which is also followed by the adverbial except in the appended clause

Constructions as (26) and (27) are discussed by Bland (1988:62) who states its frequency in spoken English. However, she accounts for constructions of being-type which are taking adjectival complement, but uses the second and third-person pronouns ‘you’ and ‘he/it’. The progressive in these cases conveys temporary behaviour by focusing on the behaviour as a change from the status quo (1988:62). In (26), it is the narrator who gives her view-point that shopping might result in a ’rebellious behaviour’. Her inclination is further strengthened by adding the attitudinal adverbial actually, as a common subjective feature in progressive usage.

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\(^5\) The clause is shortened, which also put further stress on the verb being (see under ‘ellipsis’)

29
In (27), which is in the first person pronoun and more conducive to expressing feelings, it is the subject herself who gives her emotional value on her ‘temporary state as not being happy, since she is probably not ‘acting happy’, but that she by using the subjective element *I’m okay* at least pretends to control her situation. According to Bland (1988:62) this last criteria of ‘controlling the situation’ is also a requirement for constructions as this, since only certain adjectives are appropriate in this sentence pattern.

In (28) and (29) *being* collocates with a perfect participle, *inflicted* and *followed*, and therefore is regarded as a passive progressive, meaning that the ‘hurt is inflicted by someone’ and ‘she is followed by someone’. Therefore it involves an agent activity. In this case the progressive also refer to a temporary state or situation, with the emphasis on the subject’s convincement of ‘being followed’ in (29) and the negative judgement of someone who is heart-broken in (28). The sentence gives the effect of being emotionally loaded, also by other elements with subjective connotation that are used: *wound, physical rejection, unwillingness*.

Another stative verb, which belongs to the category of relations, is *have*, since it refers to ‘possess’ something. In this context the verb is not possible in the progressive (‘He has a house’). It can be defined as a ‘stable state of affairs’ and is therefore not easily applied to progressive situations. The verb is not brought up in Bland’s study, but Scheffer on the other hand discuss its occurrence in progressive situations, as having the meaning of *suffer, undergo, experience, enjoy, partake* all of which denote an activity rather than a state (1975:67):

(30) The odd thing about a police state is that it generates so many strands of narrative, precisely because so many people *are having* to deny their own personalities or are being forced into the wrong mould. (Boyce, *The Times*, April 10, 2007)

(31) And, *having* made your purchases, where else can you pick up the latest steam iron and moth repellents to look after them. (Armstrong, *The Times*, April 11, 2007)

In (30) the progressive *are having* has the meaning of people ‘who are undergoing or experiencing a situation’ which is not preferable by the author. By using the degree adverbial *so* as intensifier, as well as other contextual elements with negative connotation (the odd
thing, are being forced) the author clearly expresses his negative inclination about the context. The temporary effect is also evident since the construction denotes an activity, rather than a stable situation. Example (31) is elliptical (‘when you are having made’), but has the same meaning of temporariness and yields an activity similar to ‘go shopping’, which is intensified by the author, but the expression is less negative than (30).

Regarding stative verbs it is obvious that some of these do in themselves have an emotional or attitudinal meaning, particularly those denoting senses or mental perception (see below), but when found in the progressive this meaning is stretched out further. They may express a shade of temporariness or tentativeness, which according to Smitterberg may be related to the aspectual functions of the progressive, but also have subjective ‘not-solely-aspectual’ functions with emphasis, intensity or vividness (2005:173). As seen in the analysed examples with be and have, which are more difficult to account for in the progressive, they are slightly different in meaning and function depending on context. Usually, it is the contextual elements that contribute the evaluative or attitudinal meaning of the progressive statives. Adverbials and progressives is a frequent collocation in everyday written English, but sometimes the situation is further subjected by other contextual elements that bring out a subjective connotation.

Next to be and have there are other stative verbs that are found in the progressive, also relating to the group of relations or possession. These are not as frequent in the articles, but they are found in some examples qualified by an adverbial, let us consider the example below:

(32) His reply, also containing a photograph, is buried by the military censor. When Irene inquires about his whereabouts, the army refuses resistance. (Stench, The Observer, April 1, 2007)

Containing in (32) can be regarded as a typical stative verb, since it is homogeneous and refers to a stable situation which lack internal structure (see chapter 2.1.1). Therefore it involves no change. In this sentence it is found in a sub clause, which is ‘appositive’ and gives a further explanation to the noun phrase (Greenbaum and Quirk 1990:305). However, it is elliptical in its construction, leaving out the copula be, and modified by the adverbial also which stresses the fact that ‘the reply is additionally intensified by a photograph’ which seems of importance to point out by the narrator to make the situation sound more sensational.
The last group of progressive statives under discussion is those referring to ‘senses’ or ‘mental perception’. When it comes to verbs as feel, hope and wonder etc, the grammarians suggest that these statives often involve some measure of politeness. Sager and Svartvik, for example, have some example sentences with feel where the progressive and simple form can be used without significant difference in meaning except that the progressive has an emotional colouring or is an indication of politeness (see chapter 2.1.1). However, in the following examples with feel the emotional touch is most evident:

(33) To get a sense of perspective, I asked the doctor if this experiment could actually kill me (I was feeling a bit dramatic). (Coren, The Times, April 12, 2007),

(34) Can you possibly clear his confessional from your head and offer him a guilt-free fresh start without referring back to it whenever you are feeling vulnerable. (Frostrup, The Observer, April 15, 2007)

It is obvious that the expression in (33) is an indication of the subject´s effort to ‘excuse’ or ‘explain’ her way of acting as ‘asking the doctor if she really could get killed by the experiment’. From this perspective the expression may have a polite overtone, but by adding the adjectival complement, a bit dramatic, the main message is the subject´s instantaneous feeling or temporary state she was finding herself in at the time of her ‘acting’.

Similarly, (34) occurs in the sense of ‘undergoing the sensation of being’ (Scheffer 1975: 65), as a non-stative situation. First of all there is an occurrence of the time adverbial whenever referring to temporariness (‘at those times’) or tentativeness (the narrator is uncertain about when the vulnerability will take place), but also the adverbial vulnerable which describes the sense of being.

Verbs of mental perception indicate awareness or mental or psychological state, with slight differences in meaning. The basic meaning in the verbs themselves is ‘tentativeness’, which may have a subjective overtone, but it is also interesting to see how they function as progressives in different contexts:

(35) And I’m guessing that’s what your´re in need of. Everything (and everyone) in
your life is focused on your daughter – even your desire to get back together with your ex. And I’m guessing that everything that isn’t focused on your daughter makes you feel guilty. (Aunt Sally, The Times, May 20, 2007)

(36) I am wondering if you have ever demanded that a home visit by the doctor is arranged at a time when you are present, so that you can talk to him and see if there is an alternative to all the drugs. (Mooney, The Times, April 16, 2007)

(37) I’m hoping this time we’re not going to go down that route, but it’s hard work. Relationships are graft. She challenges me. But we’ve known each other since we were 12. (Wiseman, The Observer, May 13, 2007)

All three of the sentences above refer to an element of ‘tentativeness’, which is next to temporariness, one of the criteria to stative verbs in the progressive, as seen in previous examples. This meaning seem to be typical with verbs like these, since they in themselves produce an effect of someone who is not certain of the propositional context expressed. The progressive of the verb guess may me regarded as a synonym to suppose, think and imagine, which compared to these is regarded more informal. Scheffer (1975:74) says that think (and therefore also its synonyms) ‘tends to avoid the progressive as it can be considered to denote a (mental) state.’ When it comes to progressive usage it may denote ‘the activity of reflecting’, but the verb guess is not further discussed although it is mentioned among several verbs that are regarded as statives. However, by looking at (35) guessing is repeated twice, probably in order to emphasise the fact that the subject is not sure about the addressee’s feelings and therefore avoids to ‘step into someone’s territory or personal sphere’, as a result of that the human in question may be hurt. The subject is bringing out his attitude in a tentative and respectful way, which also supports the ‘politeness-theory’. In this context the tentative effect also involves a subjective meaning.

The same meaning is evident in (36), both when it comes to tentativeness, which is further strengthened by the conditional adverbial if, and politeness. The combination of I was wondering if is similar in meaning to ‘I was just wondering whether…’ where the element of ‘just’ and ‘whether’ both are rendering what is said to sound more subtle or less direct.

The phrase I’m hoping in (37) is attitudinal in the way that it expresses the subject’s wish about not taking the wrong direction once again’. It expresses a mental activity and is
tentative, since the subject is not sure about how the situation will turn out. Thus it is tactful since it refers to thoughtfulness and sensitivity, which supports Leech and Svartvik’s theory about hope in the progressive (see chapter 2.1.1).

3.3 Ellipsis as a semantic function of progressives

In the English language elliptic forms seem to be frequent. These occur all the time, in many different contexts, and its occurrence has a complex involvement in the language. However, when studying the English progressive in everyday written English, the copula be is often left out. This clause function with progressives is not a feature that has been brought to much attention in previous works, despite its frequency. In the grammar books the function of ellipsis is discussed with several example sentences, but a separate section of elliptic progressives is left out. In some cases, the present participle is mentioned in the context of infinite clauses with the ing-form (e.g. being), but then this form is often regarded as a paraphrase of the infinitive ‘to be’. In a sentence such as It’s fun studying English the ing-form is used instead of the infinitive It’s fun to study English, and therefore it is difficult to account for the progressive, since it is more of a general statement. On the other hand, when the ing-form is used it often refers to the meaning of ‘an action in progress’, as a result of infinite ing-clauses with durative character, and it is those progressive constructions that will be focused on. As seen in the previous analysis of adverbials and stative verbs there are often the contextual features that place the progressive in an emotionally loaded context. Similarly, this is often the case in many elliptical constructions, which also semantically and syntactically makes these expressions more sensational and sentence stressed.

According to Scheffer (1975:7) a combination of TO BE and the present participle cannot be considered a progressive unless the two are closely connected, but in some cases it is difficult to draw the line. However, this analysis will mainly account for those progressives in which it is clear that the ing-participle has a clear verbal character in combination with the copula be. Scheffer (1975) has a small section with ‘Elliptic forms’ in which he mainly refers to those situations where the copula or the present participle are left out, but he also mentions that in some cases the subject is left out. What is important when it comes to the use of elliptic forms, he says that these elements are left out when ‘the speaker thinks he expresses him clearly enough without it’ (1975:10). Furthermore, he points out that these constructions are most common in spoken English, in which the language is more informal. Its frequency of
occurrence in the periodicals may therefore be the cause of the language often being close to spoken English and is more informal, sensational and vivid.

As noticed in the previous analysis of adverbials and stative verbs in progressive constructions, some of these are elliptical and will therefore be referred to in this section. To begin with, the occurrence of *being* without the copula is most frequent when it comes to ‘ellipsis’. By giving some examples of these types of constructions it is interesting to see how they give more emphasis and sensation to the sentence, by focusing on the subject:

(38) She is enviably svelte in a black V-neck Smedley sweater, and black straight one of her two ‘uniforms’, she says, *the other being jeans* – except that she is wearing Ugg boots, which she needs, she says, because she is going on a Greenpeace demonstration tonight and might have to swim. (Barber, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

(39) The protagonist in the film *Being John Malkovich* uses his nimble puppeteer fingers to become the speediest filing clerk. Where can you use the skills you already have to the best advantage in other areas? (Brocklesby, *The Sunday Times*, April 8, 2007)

(40) Like most things in Kate’s life, this incident would be reflected in the distorting mirror of the tabloids a day later, with pictures of *her being carried out* to the car by her boyfriend, Pete Doherty/…/ (Garratt, *The Sunday Times*, April 1, 2007)

(41) People say all the time that money doesn’t make you happy, but that doesn’t bother me. I’m okay with *not being happy*. And recently I’ve decided I’d rather be unhappy in business class. (Leve, *The Sunday Times*, May 20, 2007)

As seen in the previous analysis of stative verbs in the progressive, *being* is often found in combination with a predicative noun, adjective or in passive constructions with agentive activity. The sentences above show that these constructions are further emphasised by the elliptical functions. In (38) the narrator is making the utterance more sensational by leaving out the copula *be*, which syntactically and semantically stresses the meaning of her temporary casual wearing. The phrase could be re-written as ‘the other of the two uniforms is in fact
being jeans’, where the attitudinal meaning may be conveyed by the understood element ‘in fact’.

In sentence (39) *being* without the copula (‘is being’) stresses the narrators attitude about the fact that ‘acting as John Malkovich is a great example of someone who is using his skills in a benefit way’. Similarly, in (40) the author brings up the sensation of how Kate’s life is depicted in the tabloids, by stating an example that refers to an incident when she ‘in fact was being carried out by her boyfriend’, where the understood adverbial ‘when’ also gives a time reference. The last sentence (41) intensifies the ‘subject’s temporary state of unhappiness’.

In addition, a verb as *being* with stative features is often used elliptically where it collocates with an attitudinal adverbial. In the examples below the adverbial gives a personal evaluation to the sentence and the ellipsis in turn put emphasis on the subject’s personal quality:

(42) Lagerfeldt, *despite being* nearly twice the age of many of his competitors (he admits to 68), has been able, season after season, to generate excitement and demand for Chanel’s clothes. (Colapinto, *The Observer*, May 27, 2007)

(43) He looked rested, even though he had been up until 4 am, drinking Coke Max and chatting with Gaw, Kroenig and Harlech, and a few others from Chanel, all of whom, *despite being* several decades younger than Lagerfeldt, looked distinctly the worse for wear. (Colapinto, Part 2)

In these examples above *being* indicates a ‘state’, referring to the subject’s age in (42) and (43). By adding the adverbial *despite* ‘his age’, the narrator gives his personal attitude about ‘Lagerfeld’s success to win a great demand for Chanel’s clothes’ in (42) as well as in (43) where he expresses his surprise about the unsuccessfulness of his younger competitors to reach up to the same level as Lagerfeld. Thus the copula *be* is omitted which semantically and syntactically put stronger focus on the ‘subject’s personal quality’, something that according to the grammarians is not preferable in the progressive, unless *being* refers to a specific behaviour (see chapter 2.1.1).
When it comes to constructions as these, *being* is sometimes seen in elliptical constructions where not only the copula *be* is left out, but also an ‘understood’ adverbial. In the following example there seems to be an elliptical ‘since’ indicating subjectivity:

(44) Evidentially, I was hoisted up as if by a crave and, *being* tall anyway, almost crashed my head through the ceiling. (Ellen, *The Observer*, May 27, 2007)

In (44) the subject gives her judgement about the fact that ‘since she was being tall anyway’ she ‘almost crashed his head through the ceiling’. In this case the expression also puts focus on the subject’s personal quality, which is one of the reasons for the actual situation. In this elliptical construction the adverbial *anyway* also places the progressive in an emotionally loaded context.

When it comes to cases in which ‘ellipsis’ is used, Sheffer points out that the majority of these constructions has a meaning which is at once perfectly clear, and that the present participle is ‘semantically the weightier part of the progressive’ (1975:10). In constructions where the progressive collocates with adverbials or those with adjectival complements (as the examples above) it might be difficult to tell which element that is most likely to stress the sentence. The investigated articles contain a large amount of constructions such as these. In the following elliptical construction, which is also discussed in chapter 3.1, the present participle is qualified by an *always*-type adverbial:

(45) Your weight fluctuates by a few pounds every day, so *constantly monitoring* it is demoralising and misleading. (Brocklesby, *The Sunday Times*, April 8, 2007)

The effect of the elliptical construction in this sentence, in which the subject ‘you’ and the copula ‘be’, but also the conditional adverbial ‘if’ is left out (‘so if you are constantly monitoring it’), is that the verb action is stressed by the narrator. Since the adverbial is attributive to the verb *monitoring* the emphasis may be on ‘the action as repeated too frequently’, since the progressive without the adverbial would have a completely different meaning. Therefore it is the combination of these two words that makes the expression more intense and if this clause was not elliptical the expression would be likely to sound less sentence-stressed. Compared to the previous examples with *be* the stress is on the verb action, not the subject itself.
This is also the case in other expressions of this type, but in which the subject is included, and directly connected with the progressive verb phrase:

(46) “I suppose the concept of being able to pop a pill that claims to solve your problem without you actually having to do anything enormously attractive – an easy way of avoiding boring exercise or whatever”, he said. (Knight, *The Sunday Times*, April 8, 2007)

(47) There was something unspoken coming down the phone. I smelled pain. The long signs of someone not really enjoying being a parent. (Ferguson, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

(48) And with top government officials so brazenly violating the social contract, everyone downstream inevitably follows suit. (Junger, *The Observer*, April 15, 2007)

(49) I would instead join the throng and indulge in Modern Death by reading a blog, whereby all of life flashes before your eyes, with the crucial differences that a) it’s someone else’s life and b) none of its quite unforgiveable pifflingness is made retrospectively bearable by anybody – neither the blogger nor, mercifully, yourself – actually dying. (Ferguson)

All these four example sentences leave out the copula *be*, which makes the expressions sounding more sentence-stressed or sensational. In (46) the person who is interviewed put focus on his viewpoint about the fact that ‘you are actually not having to do anything enormously attractive’. It is not only the ellipsis, but also the adverbial actually that makes the expression more intense. Besides, the appended clause includes an afterthought which refers back to the antecedent, which further strengthens the opinion. The same function is evident in (47) and (48) where not only the attitudinal adverbial really and the manner adverbial brazenly, but also the fact that the copula is omitted, places the subject closer to the verb, which makes the subject’s action as enjoying and violating sound more intense. In (48) the degree adverbial so gives a further subjective connotation to the context.
In (49) the combination of actually dying is an appended clause, which is one type of special ellipsis (usually parenthetical or an afterthought) (Greenbaum and Quirk 1990: 261). In this example there are two interrupted expressions (neither the blogger, mercifully, yourself and actually dying) where the latter including the collocation of actually dying constitutes the writers convincement of the whole part of the preceding clause. In addition, this expression is emotionally loaded in itself by the amount of adverbials and adjectives as crucial, unforgiveable, bearable, mercifully, which brings out the importance of the writer’s message.

This type of appended clause is also evident in the parenthesis below, where the writer wants to emphasise and explain her viewpoint further, by intensifying the verb action:

(50) Expect to be less of a good person that you dreamed of being, to release yourself from false ideas and engage with the reality of the normally good (meaning fallible yet striving) person you are. (Mooney, The Times, May 16, 2007)

The appended clause meaning fallible yet striving seems to function as a relative sub-clause with the meaning of ‘which means’. By rewriting this into a progressive verb phrase without the copula be the addresser brings out the importance of her message further.

There are also elliptic constructions without an adverbial collocating with the ing-form, where the copula is left out, but also makes the expression sound more sensational by the writer:

(51) In February the Office for National Statistics told us that the number of couples choosing to marry has dropped to its lowest for 111 years, and divorce rates remain high. (Midgley, The Times, May 16, 2007)

(52) One problem with equality – which I approve of, by the way – is that we have moved away from the man being the man and the women the woman, except in terms of women having the baby and making more of an emotional transfer. (Midgley)

(53) How obscene to fawn over someone “working solidly” being photographed in the Carribean when small children do real work for a pittance in the Third World. Get real. (Garrat, The Sunday Times, April 1, 2007)
The expression *couples choosing to marry* (51) and *women having the baby and making* in (52) the subject and the ing-participle are directly related to each other, which have a stronger focus on the subject’s action or situation. In the first example the subjective element is weaker than the latter because the writer is only intensifying the fact that ‘people are not getting married as frequent today’. (52) on the other hand, is referring back to the subject’s opinion about the problem with equality between men and women, highlighting the exceptions of situations (except in terms of”) in which ‘women are still being the woman’. In addition, by using the phrase *women having the baby*, the emphasis is not only on the stative verb in the progressive, but refer to the fact of the women’s situation when caring the child.

The sentence in (53) has a strong attitudinal meaning in which the addresser highlights the phrase *working solidly*, ‘the fact that someone is working solidly while being photographed’, and put it in contrast to the present situation of children doing hard work in the Third World. The addresser is not only making ironic remarks of the temporary situation, but also points out his strong viewpoint about it with the subjective element *solidly and obscene*.

As Sager and Svartvik point out ‘ellipsis’ is often used to avoid repetition, which is defendable since it makes the expression simplified (see chapter 2.1.3). However, it is strange that they do not mention the effect of emphasis when leaving out the copula. In the examples below it is evident that the subject wants to stress the verb actions, as the participles are also occurring more than once in a sentence, although they are all different verbs:

(54) *Feeling cowed and afraid inside and looking calm and dressed beautifully and wearing* the right nail varnish – which was what I did when I was younger – is not, as I have learnt, the key to happiness, it is the treadmill of failure. (Mooney, *The Times*, May 16, 2007)

(55) You join the list with Simon Jenkins of the best *writers leaving* us with what was once a great newspaper – *leaving us* in the swum, *clinging to* the wreckage, *wondering* where to go. (Mooney)

In (54) the subject starts to intensify her antecedent behaviour by front-shifting the clause in which the progressive occurs. By using *feeling*, *looking* and *wearing* with predicative adjectives she is referring to ‘her childish behaviour’ at the time when she was young in
contrast to her insight about it in present time. Scheffer (1975:8) refers to ‘progressif inversé’, which has a strong descriptive character. In this case the copula is not directly related to the ing-participle, but the subject gives a further description in the appended clause where she clearly intensifies the action of her behaviour. In (55) the sentence is stressed to the actions of Simon Jenkins ‘who were leaving us with what was once a great newspaper. The narrator further conveys his negative inclination of the subject’s behaviour by repeating the ing-participle leaving, but also using the ing-participles of the verbs clinging and wondering in order to show his disappointment about Simon Jenkins’ behaviour. The same function of repetition is noticed in the following example, as an appositive clause, in which the author leaves out the copula in order to bring out the sensation of the subject’s behaviour:

(56) And, if you are as old as me, you remember Katharine Hamnet in 1984, frisking into number 10 to meet Mrs Thatcher, wearing a T-shirt saying ‘58% don’t want Perching’ (missiles), which was one of the great fashion comedy moments of the decade. (Barber, The Observer, April 15, 2007)

In this example the relative pronoun ‘who’ and the copula is left out, which puts direct focus on ‘Katharine Hamnet’s sensational way of acting’. It gives the reader a more vivid picture of her during a certain point of time. The appositive clauses initiated by frisking and wearing repeat the meaning of the author’s attitude about the person referred to.

Elliptical constructions do not necessarily exclude the durative character of the verb content, instead the aspectual meaning is often evident, mostly referring to the notion of ‘temporariness’. However, it seems to be the adverbials as well as other contextual elements with subjective connotations that carry out an attitudinal meaning. As noticed, elliptical constructions semantically or syntactically put further emphasis on the verb action, often with focus on the subject. By doing that the addressee wants to highlight something which is of special importance (Römer 2005:101). Often it is the ing-participle which is the ‘weightier part of the sentence’, as Scheffer claims, and many elliptical constructions refer to the subject’s characteristics.
4. Summary and conclusion

The English progressive form as a combination of the verb TO BE and the present participle (ing-form) of a verb is an interesting phenomenon. It has a complex involvement in the language and may have many different functions depending on context which is also noticed among scholars. Therefore it is difficult to give an all-embracing description of the form. However, when grammarians define the progressive their focus is on the aspectual meanings of the form, in which they primarily refer to its durative character as an ‘action in progress’, often with time reference. Not many of the grammar books used in this study have accounted for its pragmatic functions in a sentence, i.e. how words and phrases are used with special meanings in particular situations. This is unfortunate since the progressive involves many interesting functions and meanings in an expression.

Since progressive verb forms are often found in constructions with subjective meanings, such as those with adverbial collocation, e.g. *He is always complaining*, the intention of this paper was to find other constructions in everyday written English denoting subjectivity. When comparing semantic grammar definitions with the examples picked out from selected articles from *The Times* and *The Observer* (2007), it is evident that many expressions refer to the aspectual meaning of the form with its subsidiary functions of temporariness, dynamicity, incompleteness, change etc. Despite this, the analysis shows that many constructions convey a subjective meaning, sometimes stronger than others, depending on which context they are found in.

When it comes to progressives and adverbial collocation there is a wide amount of adverbials that give the constructions an emotive or subjective meaning. The most frequent types of adverbials are those referring to time, which are brought up among the grammarians as well as other scholars, the latter with a broader analysis of its functions in different contexts. According to the grammarians adverbs of *always*-type are emphasising the durative character of the verb and often have an emotive overtone, which is usually of disapproval. The analysis shows that this type of adverbial collocation on the whole seems to put the progressive in an emotionally loaded context, emphasising the durative character of the verb, but primarily conveying an evaluative meaning towards the propositional context expressed. In most cases this evaluation is of disapproval, although it is not always the case depending on
context (compare *always courting death* and *regularly boosting*). The examples picked out from the periodicals support the existing theories about these types of constructions.

Other time adverbials are *currently, now, still, already* and *just*, which all give a time reference by answering the question ‘When?’ Therefore it is not strange that they co-occur with progressives. The grammarians consider these constructions as amplifiers to the durative character of the verb action, which refers only to its aspectual meaning. This meaning is evident in many examples, but it is also clear that these adverbials also have an emphatic or evaluative meaning, by subjective nature, in order to put stress on something, to convey an attitude, to express surprise or to make an utterance sensational. This supports Römer’s theory about adverbials as these. It is not the progressive itself that produces the emotionally loaded context, but these adverbials together with other features with a clear subjective connotation, something which is completely left out among the grammarians (*Oh Crist, now even he’s writing about his damned kids, is nowhere safe?*).

Adverbials of ‘attitude’ and ‘manner’ are interesting since these primarily denote the speaker’s or the subject’s attitude or opinion about the verb content. Prior research does not seem to have a broader analysis of its functions with progressives. The reason for this is open to doubt, but since these adverbials are not time-indicators connected with the aspectual meaning of the progressive they might not be of the same interest. The results of this essay’s study show that adverbials as *honestly, actually, indeed, perhaps, possibly* as well as *quickly, merrily, radically* etc. primarily denote the speaker’s or the subject’s attitude or opinion about the verb content. The grammar definitions have left out these constructions, but adverbials as these are also likely to refer to Römer’s functions of ‘emphasis/attitude’ and ‘politeness/softening’, or to Smitterberg’s theory of ‘tentativeness’, the latter of which may also be regarded as carrying out subjectivity, although he states that the term mainly refers to the aspectual meaning, probably because it is imposing some sort of dynamics to the verb phrase.

Stative verbs in the progressive are according to the grammarians often transformed into dynamic situations in the form of temporariness, tentativeness or politeness/softening, but can convey slight differences in meaning depending on context. Normally, this is evident in the examples in the study, but when found in the progressive the verb action is also more intense, emotional and vivid, which is usually further emphasised by other elements with subjective
connotations such as adverbials and adjectives (you’re actually being rebellious by shopping), which supports Bland’s and Smitterberg’s theories about ‘not-solely-aspectual’ functions as subjectivity with emphasis, intensity and vividness.

The frequent elliptical constructions with progressives without the copula be is not focused on among the grammarians. Neither have the other scholars brought much attention to this phenomenon. In everyday written usage elliptical constructions seem to have a semantic function of subjectivity that is often carried out by intensifying the verb action or the subject’s characteristics. The most frequent constructions are those involving subjective elements as adverbials and adjectives, either in direct connection with the ing-participle or in the near context, and those with the stative verb be (being), which refer to the subject’s action or quality. An example such as ‘Lagerfeldt, despite being nearly twice the age’ involves an adverbial that gives the construction a personal evaluation and the ellipsis in turn semantically and syntactically put emphasis on the subject’s personal quality, which is not supported among the grammarians. Similarly, many constructions are found in other clauses involving an adverbial (yourself-actually dying), which convey a personal evaluation with stress on the verb action, but also those with understood adverbials (‘since’ being tall anyway), or without adverbial collocation (women having the baby) where the subject directly connected to the verb makes the utterance more sentence-stressed or sensational. However, what all these elliptical constructions have in common is that by omitting the copula be the speaker or the subject put emphasis on a situation that is of special importance, and the underlying aspectual meaning usually refer to temporariness.

To sum up, progressive forms in everyday written English as found in the periodicals reveal contextual subjectivity markers. I agree with the grammarians that the progressive has an aspectual meaning, which must not necessarily be excluded, but there is also an emotional effect, often in conjugation with other contextual elements with subjective or emotional connotation. The subjective meaning may in turn convey different subsidiary meanings depending on context.
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