This paper sketches a research program that maximally restricts universally available aspectual categories. First, I argue for reducing the number of (viewpoint) aspects. Next, I propose that a limited set of aspectual properties, with a two-component theory of aspect and some auxiliary notions, is sufficient to describe aspectual and coercion patterns. In addition, I suggest a way to restrict crosslinguistic variation.

**Initial puzzle** In several languages without overt aspectual marking, predicates denote either an imperfective or perfective event. In Hungarian (1) and German (2), the telephoning event of the main clause has two interpretations: it either began after the arrival, or it was already in progress by then. In English, a language with overt aspect marking, these readings are disambiguated by imperfective (progressive) with ongoing or perfective (simple) verb forms with inceptive interpretation. In Hungarian and German the sentences can be disambiguated by adverbs that allow only one of the readings, in parentheses. To account for ambiguous data such (1) and (2), Smith 1997 suggests that these events have neither perfective nor imperfective, but neutral aspect, which allows both attested readings.

**Claim** I suggest that it is not necessary to assume the existence of neutral aspect to account for the ambiguity of (1) and (2). Rather, ambiguity is due to availability of either perfective or imperfective aspect, just as in the English cases. With the meaning difference attributed to ambiguous aspect specification, the universal aspectual categories can be restricted. If only perfective and imperfective viewpoints exist, then these are parallel to telic and atelic predicates. Both imperfective and atelic events are cumulative; perfective and telic ones are quantized (3). In spite of this similarity, I assume a strictly two-component theory of aspect, where telicity is independent of viewpoint aspect (for arguments, see Smith 1997, Bertinetto 2000 a.o.). I assume, following Smith 1997, that viewpoint aspect is introduced by a functional head IMP or PERF, and denotes the asserted part of the event (in a sense, it is parasitic on the event). The event itself is (a)telic (cumulative or quantized); and what is asserted can be quantized (the complete event) or cumulative (a proper part of the event).

**Evidence for (im)perfective aspect** While Hungarian bare verbs are identical in (im)perfective predicates, particle verbs show variable behavior. In imperfective sentences, the particle is postverbal (4a); in perfective ones, it is preverbal (4b). This distribution can be described by appealing to (a) a compositional calculus of aspect, (b) cumulativity of imperfective and quantization of perfective events noted above, and (c) the assumption that the verb raises to the IMP or PERF head. Particles denoting an endpoint, such as aspect, le 'down' in (4), make the event (5) or its asserted part quantized. If the particle is in the domain of IMP or PERF, it yields a quantized event; if it is outside of the domain, then the asserted interval (the viewpoint interval) is quantized. Perfective events are quantized, and so tolerate a particle. Imperfective events are cumulative. Since a particle yields a quantized predicate, it can only appear in the domain of IMP, but not outside of it.

**Tools and notions** As noted above, the notions of cumulativity and quantization can be applied within both the (a)telic and viewpoint aspect domain. In addition, the punctual / durative and stative / dynamic distinction also characterizes events. I suggest that these six aspectual properties are sufficient to describe most aspect and coercion patterns crosslinguistically. These properties can be used to define three kinds of constituents that contribute to the overall aspectual properties of an utterance. The three aspectually relevant constituent types are defined in (6). Briefly, aspectual operators apply to their sister constituents, that may have any kind of aspectual properties, and yield an expression with constant aspectual properties. For example, resultatives yield a quantized event, independently of the aspectual properties of their sisters. Aspectually sensitive elements impose restrictions on aspectual properties of their sister: for example, durational for-adverbs require the modified event to be durative and cumulative. Finally, coercion operators can apply to sisters of aspectually sensitive elements. I follow Bonami 2002 (contra de Swart 1998, 2000 a.o.) in that coercion operators are present only to resolve a type clash.

**Crosslinguistic variation** I suggest that the set of non-coercion aspectual operators is constant across languages; only coercion operators and aspectually sensitive elements vary. The coercion operator in (6c), for example, is present in English, but absent in Chinese (7) and the French futur. Difference in aspectual sensitivity is shown by IMP, which requires its sister to be dynamic in English, but allows dynamic and stative sisters in French (8). More generally, crosslinguistic variation can be described as affecting repair strategies of aspectual mismatch and selectional restrictions.
Examples

(1) amikor megérkeztünk, Juli (éppenIMPF / rögtönPERF) telefonált
when arrived-1pl J-nom just.now / straight.away called-3sg
'When we arrived, Julie was talking on the phone' / '… Julie phoned straight away'
(Hungarian)

(2) als wir ankamen, telefonierte Julia (geradeIMPF / sofortPERF)
as we arrived called J just.now / straight.away
(same) (German)

(3a) A predicate P is cumulative iff $\forall x,y[P(x) \land P(y) \rightarrow P(x \oplus y)]$
[A predicate is cumulative iff whenever it applies to x and y, it also applies to the sum of x and y (as in
Julie walked, Julie was building a house)]

b A predicate P is quantized iff $\forall x,y[P(x) \land P(y) \rightarrow \neg y < x]$ (Krifka 1989)
[A predicate P' is quantized iff whenever it applies to x and y, y is not contained in x (as in
Julie walked to the bank)]

(4a) amikor megérkeztünk, Juli jött [leparticle a lépcsőn]
when arrived-1pl J came down the stair-on
'When we arrived, Julie was coming down the stairs' (Hungarian)

b amikor megérkeztünk, Juli leparticle jött [a lépcsőn]
when arrived-1pl J down came the stair-on
'When we arrived, Julie came down the stairs' (Hungarian)

(5) Julie [ran]telic (for two hours) / Julie [ran down]quantized (in two minutes)

(6a) A constituent C is an aspectual operator if the aspectual properties of the sister of C can be
distinct from those of the node dominating C and its sister
[e.g. goals combine with cumulative and quantized sisters, and yield a quantized event
([run]CUM to the store]QUANT, [throw the ball]QUANT into the room)]

b A constituent C is aspectually sensitive if it selects a sister with certain aspectual properties
[e.g. durative adverbs; for-adverbs selects a durative, cumulative sister; in-adverbs selects
durative, quantized sister ([run]DUR,CUM for an hour / #in an hour)]

c An aspectual operator $\Omega$ is a coercion operator if it applies to the sister of an
aspectually sensitive element, and if it applies only if there is a type clash
[e.g. preliminary stage of achievement with IMP: He was winning the race – asserts an
interval prior to winning the race]
[IMP $\Omega$ [win the race]PUNCTUAL DUR]

(7a) Tamen zai da qiu
they ZAI play ball
'They are playing ball' zai: imperfective marker (Smith 1997:272) (Chinese)

b *Ta zai ying sai pao
he ZAI win race run
'He is winning the race' (Smith 1997:272) (Chinese)

(8) le poulailler était calme
the hen-house was calm
'the henhouse was being calm' / '#the henhouse was being calm' (French)

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