Semantics 53
Homework due Monday February 23 in class

1. We saw that some verbs may describe bounded (telic) or unbounded (atelic) processes, depending on the form of their complements. Thus, while build a bridge is a bounded process, build bridges is an unbounded process. Below is a list of verb phrases. For each one decide whether it is bounded or unbounded, then see if you can change this value by altering the verb’s complement.

dismantle a car, ripen, swim, direct movies, put out fires.

2. We noted in class that adding a durative adverb like all night or for three hours to a punctual verb like cough results in an iterative or repetitive interpretation (i.e. “again and again”). Thus in the patient coughed all night we interpret the activity as a sequence of individual coughs throughout the night. Use this behavior to identify the punctual verbs amongst the following:

drive, ring, tap, sigh, fly, sob, float, read.

3. Below are paired examples containing simple present and present progressive verb forms. *Explain* what semantic differences you detect (if any) between the pairs.

   (a) My mother works in France.
       My mother is working in France.
   (b) We leave tomorrow.
       We are leaving tomorrow.
   (c) You look good.
       You are looking good.
   (d) She lives near the airport.
       She’s living near the airport.
   (e) You eat too much meat.
       You’re eating too much meat.
   (f) You always laugh at me.
       You’re always laughing at me.

   Can you make a generalization and *discuss* it?