

Verb class B

These are English verbs like *break*, *clear* and *open*.

- (1) Ray **opened** the door.
 a. \Rightarrow A door changed its state.
 b. \nRightarrow An opening changed its state.

What do each of the following diagnostics tell you about the kind of verbs these are? How would you formalize that?

Diagnostic 1

- (2) a. Ray opened the door.
 b. *Ray opened (all last night). [meaning they opened something]
 c. The door opened.
- (3) a. #Ray was opening all day.
 b. *Ray was clearing all day.
 c. #Ray was cooling all day.

Diagnostic 2

The first thing to note is that this diagnostic is constrained beyond just verb class:

- (4) a. Ray opened their mom a beer. \Rightarrow *change of possession*
 b. *Ray opened their mom the door. \nRightarrow *change of possession*
 c. ?Ray broke their brother a stick.

Example~(4c) improves if Ray's brother is building a little structure out of sticks, and Ray is helping by breaking sticks and giving them to him.

But setting aside the exact nature of the Theme/object, you can take the following as representative:

- (5) a. Ray opened their buddy a beer.
 b. Ray cleared their friend a space at the bar.
 c. Lisa cooled/heated her baby some soup.

Diagnostic 3

- (6) a. Ray cleared the table_i clean_i.
 b. Ray broke the door_i to pieces_i.
- (7) a. #Ray opened_i the door tiny_i.
 b. #Ray broke_i the mirror jagged_i.

(7a) cannot mean that Ray used the door to form an opening that was tiny; (7b) cannot mean that they used the mirror to fashion a "break" that was jagged.

- (8) a. *Ray opened the door tiny.
 b. *The bartender cleared the area open.
 c. *Lisa cooled the bottle pleasant.