This talk has three main parts. I begin by delimiting the class of sentences I focus on, namely “habitual” sentences as a subclass of characterizing generic sentences. Some of the most compelling empirical evidence in support of this type of sentence in the grammar comes from languages that have overt “habitual” markers. As one of their paradigmatic examples, and based on long-standing typological research, Dahl (1995) identifies the suffix –VA- in Czech (West Slavic). Assuming Dahl (1995) is right, this suffix should provide us with valuable insights into “habitual” markers and “habituality” as a notional category.

I will then identify a number of properties of this Czech suffix that are unexpected from the point of view of most current approaches to “habituality” and its overt markers: namely, its properties indicate that it, and by extension “habituality”, cannot be subsumed under imperfectivity (contrary to Comrie 1976, and many others since), nor under tense (contrary to Dahl 1995, and others).

Given this negative result, this “habitual” suffix is best viewed as a true marker of a “habitual” subdomain of characterizing genericity, where it, however, carves out a much larger semantic swath than “habituality” is normally accorded to (see Krifka et al 1995, Carlson 2013). Given that “habitual” markers of this type provide prima facie evidence for the inductive model of characterizing genericity (Filip 2009, 2012), they add another puzzle that must be taken into consideration when trying to answer the most fundamental question ‘Do characterizing generics constitute a single class of sentence types for which a unified semantic analysis is possible?’