

On the Gigantic Fallacy that there is no Slavic-like Aspect in the Romance Languages and Aspect Resides Only in the Past Domain

By Krasimir Kabakčiev*

This paper deals with a very old drastic misconception, reiterated innumerable times through the decades, including recently, that the Romance languages feature no Slavic-like aspect (which is grammatically realized in verbs as lexical entries) and that aspect in these languages can only consist in grammatical contrasts – morphological or periphrastic, such as aorist-imperfect and progressive-nonprogressive. Data from five languages are used in the analysis: English, also as a metalanguage, French and German, discussed in publications under critique, Bulgarian, Russian. In French and the other Romance languages, aspect, understood precisely as the Slavic perfective-imperfective distinction, is realized in compositional terms – which are also grammatical in the long run, and only partly through the French passé composé-imparfait contrast and the analogous ones in the other Romance languages. Specially emphasized is the massive misinterpretation by aspectologists, and often lack of knowledge, of compositional aspect, a phenomenon discovered more than five decades ago by Henk Verkuyl.

Keywords: *compositional and verbal aspect, compositional-aspect languages, verbal-aspect languages, perfective-imperfective contrast, aorist-imperfect contrast, article-aspect interplay*

Aspect in General

A recent publication on aspectuality in French and the Romance languages (henceforward RLs, sing. RL) maintains that there is a strict distinction “in traditional studies” between aspect and Aktionsart as “semantically different components of the general aspectual domain”¹ and calls this a “bidimensional perspective” – especially widespread in Romance linguistics where grammatical perfectivity is “aspect residing in the past” and “carried by the preterite tense” (Schmid 2022, p. 1). Indeed, this trend is widely represented, as in Hodgson (2003, pp. 111–113), Veiga (2015), Fløgstad (2016), Vogel (2017), Diaubalick and Guijarro-Fuentes (2023), Minor et al. (2023), to quote but a few. Schmid contrasts it to a “less common unidimensional approach” represented in Verkuyl (1972, 1993) and proposes a concept named “naïve universalism” to combat the idea that aspect is a phenomenon found across and even in all languages, upheld or subsumed in Verkuyl (1972, 1993, 2022), Leiss (2000), Kabakčiev (2000, 2019; 2021b, 2023), Vounchev (2007), Abraham and Leiss (2012, pp. 325–329), Bulatović (2013, 2020, 2022), Shabashvili and Kabakčiev (2021), Dimitrova (2021)

*Deputy Director of AHUMED, ATINER.

¹If some aspectological studies are traditional, it begs the question which are non-traditional and what is maintained in them. No answer is provided.

and elsewhere. The battle against universalism is waged by free reasoning, with no reference to data to illustrate “the naïvete”.

The assumption that Slavic/Slavic-like aspect is non-existent in RLs counters these maintaining that the effectuation of the perfectivity-imperfectivity contrast is universal and governed by the human brain. Found in a representative manner in the Slavic languages, aspect is *a cognitive mechanism* ingrained in people’s heads and it does not matter what natural language a speaker uses. Aspect is either verbal – as in the Slavic languages, Lithuanian, Greek, Georgian in the European region, and Chinese etc. elsewhere in the world, or compositional – as in modern Germanic, RLs, Finnish, Albanian, etc. in Europe.

If RLs lacked Slavic-like aspect, this would mean that they are not only idiosyncratic but semantically severely incapacitated. Had they no Slavic-like aspect, translations into them from Slavic languages, where every sentence/clause contains either a perfective or an imperfective verb,² featuring precise and specific semantics, would be unable to transfer the perfective-imperfective contrast – in all texts, sentences and clauses. If RLs were incapable of realizing *systematically* this contrast not only in the past but in *all* temporal and other domains – modal, infinitival, clausal, etc., most or even *all* languages around the world, excepting those with Slavic/Slavic-like aspect, would have to be labelled “aspectually disabled”. Indeed, in a previous publication the author ascribes to RLs a “multitude of other possibilities for communicating the aspectual contents” (Schmid 2019, p. 1). But *no parameters* of such a “multitude” are provided. If there are so many possibilities for effectuating Slavic/Slavic-like aspect in RLs, these “possibilities” ought to be describable in semantico-syntactic, lexico-semantic, etc. terms through recognizable patterns, paradigms and similar structures. Does Schmid’s “multitude” contain *random opportunities* for realizing perfectivity-imperfectivity that are unrelated to each other and occur on the spur of every separate moment? Is the “multitude” not subject to any inventory? Does the “multitude” feature mechanisms recognizable in every RL and available for every sentence/clause? Or not? Not the slightest clue to such queries is provided in Schmid (2019, 2022).

Utterly flawed is the conjecture that what is considered aspect in RLs is restricted to the past domain, despite the circumstance admitted by the author, that the aorist-imperfect contrast (*passé composé-perfetto semplice* versus *imparfait-imperfetto*, etc.) is not equal to Slavic aspect. The conjecture about aspect residing solely in the past domain is not only banal, it is long in the tooth, stemming from a tradition of thinking in Romance linguistics maintaining that aspect must be *easily observable*: morphological, periphrastic. This tradition of thinking about RLs is huge, and its inadequacy is also huge.

Misconceptions of this kind, proclaiming the existence of an alarming inability of RLs to effectuate aspect in general terms (not only Slavic) beyond the domain of the past, provoke reasoning about science. Linguistics is a natural science. It does not study chimeras. It investigates a communication tool, describable, an element of objective reality, a product of the human brain – not the individual’s brain but the

²There is an exception: Slavic verbs that are biaspectual, ambivalent vis-à-vis perfectivity-imperfectivity. But these verbs are usually disambiguated in context, and furthermore they represent a small percentage of all the verbs in the lexicon of any Slavic language.

collective human brain governing the architecture and development of language. And if some theoretical framework maintains that there is *no aspectual deficiency* in language, this means that RLs will be capable of systematically realizing the perfective-imperfective contrast – just like any other language and in all possible domains: past, future, present, modal, clausal, infinitival, etc. And given that such a theoretical framework exists, scientific noblesse oblige requires that it *be acknowledged*. Especially when it was launched decades ago and despite the fact that it primarily investigates Germanic data.

This framework is known as the theory of compositional aspect (henceforward CA). The discovery of the phenomenon of CA was made by Henk Verkuyl in his 1971 Utrecht dissertation (published as Verkuyl 1972). In contrast to English, RLs generally remain outside research on CA, with some exceptions, e.g., DeSwart and Corblin (2003), González and Verkuyl (2017), Ihsane (2020), a subchapter “The position of the aorist in a binary system” in Verkuyl (2022, pp. 235–252), etc. But these fail to offer fully adequate descriptions of CA. For example, despite the participation of the finder of CA in DeSwart and Corblin (2003), this publication deals with nominal-determination features in French and fails to make a clean case for employing Verkuyl’s CA model as a phenomenon involving an interplay between NPs in quantificational terms, the nucleus of CA. Unfortunately, Verkuyl (2022, p. 239) himself finds the analysis of the French *passé simple* “incompatible with the compositional approach” – wrongly, failing to realize that CA-VA differ in essence but despite the difference they are *mirror images of each other* (Kabakčiev 1984; 2000: Ch. 7).

Today the conjecture that aspect in RLs is different from Slavic aspect and severely restricted to the past domain ought to be a long-forgotten chimera of the past – because it was directly or indirectly annihilated by the CA theory with its explanation of the article-aspect interplay, nominal-determination patterns and the realization of (im)perfectivity through situation-participant NPs (see Verkuyl 1971, 1993, 2022; Broekhuis and Verkuyl 2014 on Dutch and English; Bulatović 2013, 2020, 2022 on English vis-à-vis Montenegrin; Kabakčiev 1984, 2000, 2019, 2021b, 2023 on English; Vounchev 2007; Dimitrova and Kabakčiev 2021; Dimitrova 2021 on English vis-à-vis Bulgarian and Greek; Shabashvili and Kabakčiev 2021 on English vis-à-vis Georgian). And while there are publications trying to find fault with Verkuyl’s theoretical model (Borer 2005; Borik 2006) – imprecisely and wrongly, as shown exhaustively in Kabakčiev (2019: 212–214), they still recognize “Verkuyl’s generalization”.

As amply demonstrated in Verkuyl (1972, 1993, 2022), his three major works, the sentence-level interaction between quantification-dequantification in verb arguments,³ constituting what he calls “feature algebra” (Verkuyl 1993, p. 73), valid also for Dutch, his mother tongue, has systematic existence in the other modern Germanic languages. The “feature algebra” is represented by two semantico-syntactic aspect schemata: a perfective one which he usually calls nondurative, and an imperfective one called durative. The perfective schema contains so-called plus-values, i.e., +SQA (specified quantity of something) in NPs and +ADD TO in verbs, the latter broadly meaning

³Verb arguments are here (and elsewhere) called situation-participant NP referents.

“movement to bring about some change” (Verkuyl 1993, pp. 17–18) or “an expression of dynamic progress of some sort” (Verkuyl 2022, p. 123). In the terminology here, +SQA in NPs is called bounded/quantified and +ADD TO in verbs is called telic. Telic is a lexical feature meaning “aimed at a telos”, not that a telos is achieved. As for Verkuyl’s imperfective schema, it features the so-called leak/leaks: at least one -SQA value in a situation-participant NP or a -ADD TO value in the verb, meaning “not aimed at a telos”. Verkuyl’s semantico-syntactic algebra contains mainly grammatical features, so ultimately it can also be called a grammatical phenomenon.

It is unfortunate that studies on CA on RLs lag behind research on English, with some exceptions (listed above). Examples following the general theory of CA will be provided here to bust the fallacy that RLs aspect is restricted to the past domain – as well as the belief that the CA theory might turn out not to be valid for these languages, or for any other languages.

Schmid (2022) points to a previous publication (Schmid 2019) in which her ideas about aspectuality ought to be substantiated. The book argues:

research on aspect par excellence is localised in Slavic linguistics, [and] we must correct the misconception that has arisen from it, which is that, in principle, if the category “aspect” exists in the Romance languages it can only be in the exact same form in which it appears in the Slavic languages. It follows from this that, in this very special form as a language-particular verbal category, aspect is not actually present in the Romance languages, but instead aspectual oppositions are found in grammaticalised form only on the past temporal level (Schmid 2019, p. 1).

It is a gross misapprehension that “aspect par excellence” is represented only and solely by Slavic aspect. If perfectivity-imperfectivity as aspect exponents – indeed vividly instantiated in the Slavic languages but also in many other across the world, were not “present in the Romance languages” (Schmid 2019, p. 1), they ought to be absent also in the Germanic languages – because these two language groups share a common Indo-European ancestry and are either identical in most of their grammatical and semantic structures or very similar in others. A conjecture like this would be false for yet another reason. As has been common knowledge since the discovery of CA, the Germanic languages feature perfectivity-imperfectivity *in the same way as the Slavic languages*, plus many other – see publications above. All the languages analyzed in them explicate perfectivity/ imperfectivity, i.e., aspect as a universal phenomenon, either in terms of verbal aspect (henceforward VA), usually grammatically encoded in verbs as lexical entries, or in CA terms – the latter being a complex sentence-level interplay between mainly situation-participant NP referents and the verb referent.

In other words, interestingly, perfectivity and imperfectivity are effectuated compositionally not only in CA languages like English and Dutch but even – albeit only peripherally – in languages with VA: Bulgarian, Russian, Greek. This was first documented on Bulgarian data four decades ago (Kabakčiev 1984, p. 649). Hence, if CA is found in VA languages including the Slavic ones, French and the other RLs simply *cannot fail* to explicate aspect compositionally. Illustrative material will be presented below showing that RLs *do* feature aspect: both Slavic/Slavic-like and in

general terms, and not only in the past domain where the hybrid aspecto-temporal aorist-imperfect contrast is indeed different from Slavic aspect. All other structural domains in RLs – modal, temporal, infinitival, clausal, etc., *also effectuate Slavic/Slavic-like aspect* – systematically, see below.

Schmid's reasoning about the "unidimensional approach" betrays serious misunderstanding of the history of aspectology and of the essence of CA, whose significance for linguistic theory was recognized immediately after Verkuyl's (1972) initial publication (Friedrich 1974, p. 37; Schopf 1974; Zydariß 1976, p. 54; Heinämäki 1978, p. 10; Dowty 1979, pp. 63–64; Markkanen 1979, pp. 54–57; Carlson 1981; Mourelatos 1981, pp. 56–58; Kabakčiev 1984). In the decades after the discovery its theoretical value was further specified and conceptualized but, due to its complexity, it is still being assessed and/or reassessed (Reniers 1999; Kabakčiev 2000, pp. 55–67, 2019, 2023; Bulatović 2013, 2020, 2022; González and Verkuyl 2017; Vaníková 2017; Dimitrova 2021). The huge explanatory and heuristic potential of the CA theory has been demonstrated on data from many languages, even VA languages, including Slavic: Vouchnev (2007, pp. 77–87), Dimitrova (2021), Dimitrova and Kabakčiev (2021) on Bulgarian and Greek; Vaníková (2017) on Latin; Shabashvili and Kabakčiev (2021) on Georgian, although VA languages ought to be expected to have nothing to do with CA. The compositional effectuation of aspect in VA languages, though peripheral, is due to the circumstance that, as shown long ago (Kabakčiev 1984, 2000: Ch. 7), CA and VA, constituting separate phenomena, are actually *mirror images* of each other. Using constructed material, below it will be shown that CA works *perfectly* on RL data, and this is only natural: because RLs, just like the Germanic ones, are *not* VA languages, they are CA languages.

On Slavic Aspect within the CA-Theory Perspective

The literature on Slavic aspect is an oceanful of publications. But most of this ocean, focused on language-specific Slavic particularities, has always lain on unstable ground. To give an indicative example concerning the essence of aspect, according to a contention acclaimed for decades Slavic aspect is a category *per se* that has nothing to do with situation participants (Jakobson 1957). A wrong thesis. Precisely the opposite, the perfective-imperfective contrast is realized in CA languages thanks to the impact of situation-participant NPs at the sentence level, whereby the values (non-)/boundedness in NP referents are mapped onto the referent of the verb, see below. And conversely, Slavic aspect, represented by perfective/imperfective verbs, maps the temporal values of (non-)/boundedness onto situation-participant NPs.⁴ This regularity, revealed in Kabakčiev (1984), was later sophisticated (Kabakčiev 2000) and has stood the test of time; it has never been refuted or seriously challenged.

An indirect and lame attempt at a challenge was recently made in a paper arguing that the definition of "aspect language" is not "substantiated by languages such as Bulgarian that combines an intricate aspectual system with a well-developed article system" (Wiesinger 2023: par. 60). Firstly, the attempt is indirect because the

⁴Boundedness is inherent in perfectivity – without exhausting it, nonboundedness in imperfectivity.

taxonomic distribution of VA-CA languages and the place of Bulgarian in it *was not* described by the researchers the author is arguing with. Secondly, Bulgarian *does not have* a “well-developed article system”. Bulgarian has only a definite article, like Greek, and its aspecto-temporal system is roughly identical to the Greek one. Therefore, it makes no sense to “discover Bulgarian” as a special case. Thirdly, the attempt is lame because Wiesinger (2023) shows lack of knowledge of CA. Schmid (2022) before her at least mentions Verkuyl’s (1972; 1993) major works. Fourthly, almost the whole of Wiesinger’s (2023) paper is about definiteness-indefiniteness, no mention is made of the role of articles for aspect. And suddenly, the last sentence provides the “revelation” about research necessary for “Abraham et al.’s (2007) claim of a universally complementary distribution of articles and verbal aspect” (Wiesinger 2023: par. 60). The problem is that the author does not know that this claim is unattributable to Abraham et al. (2007). It belongs to somebody else, something “Abraham et al.” have conscientiously pointed out: “the first researcher to note that languages develop either a category of aspect or an article system was the Bulgarian linguist Kabakčiev” (Abraham and Leiss’ 2012, p. 326). Fifthly, the wordage “aspect language” (Wiesinger 2023: par. 60) discloses a faulty theoretical basis with an assumption that there are, or there can be, “aspectless languages”. There are no aspectless languages. There are proponents of flawed concepts unaware that *all languages* have systematic devices for effectuating aspect.

If there were aspectless languages, English, French and the other RLs would be major contenders for prime representatives. To grasp why English is not, and cannot be, an “aspectless language”, consider the English sentences (1) below, forming an important pattern, yet appearing simple, each with two situation-participant NPs (1a–d) – specially constructed and analyzed in Kabakčiev (2019, pp. 205–206, 2023, pp. 249–250). All of them invariably and in a crystal-clear manner explicate aspect, despite the aspectual ambivalence of the verb form (*visited*). The first sentence is perfective, the latter three imperfective, containing a Verkuylian leak/leaks each:

- (1) a. The tourist visited a castle [perfective]
- b. The tourist visited castles_{SLEAK} [imperfective]
- c. Tourists_{SLEAK} visited a castle [imperfective]
- d. Tourists_{SLEAK} visited castles_{SLEAK} [imperfective]

Why sentences such as (1a) are perfective and sentences such as (1b–d) imperfective was fundamentally explained more than half a century ago by Verkuyl (1972), who used different sentences, not pattern-forming ones like those in (1). Verkuyl’s CA model was endorsed by many researchers at that time, including Kabakčiev (1984), and complemented by the conceptualization of situation-participant NPs as temporal entities in Kabakčiev (2000, pp. 123–151). The referents of NPs such as *the tourist* and *a castle* in sentences like (1a) are treated as temporal, kinetic entities, *not* physical/material/spatial (Kabakčiev 2019, pp. 205–206).⁵ Temporal

⁵Indeed, these are physical/material/spatial objects in objective reality. But language does not handle objective reality as such; it only reflects it. A woman in a mirror is not a physical entity, it is *an image* of a physical entity.

- b. Tourist poseshchal_{IMPFV}PRET zamki
 Tourist visited castles
 ‘The tourist visited castles’
- c. Turisty poseshchali_{IMPFV}PRET zamok
 Tourists visited castle
 ‘Tourists visited a castle’
- d. Turisty poseshchali_{IMPFV}PRET zamki
 Tourists visited castles
 ‘Tourists visited castles’

The important difference between English, on the one hand, and Bulgarian and Russian, on the other, observed not only in these sentences but in millions of other similar ones, is that in English the mapping is in the direction from NPs onto the verb, while in Bulgarian and Russian, languages with VA, the mapping is in the opposite direction: from the verb onto NPs. As mentioned above, this mechanism was explained four decades ago (Kabakčiev 1984), then sophisticated (Kabakčiev 2000, Ch. 6). The examples here show how Russian and Bulgarian effectuate the simultaneously Slavic and universal contrast between perfectivity and imperfectivity: perfectivity is temporal boundedness plus obligatorily a reached telos; imperfectivity is temporal nonboundedness.

Unfortunately, hosts of aspectologists fail to understand the difference, sidestepping the indispensable component “achieved telos” (general, pragmatic – not semantic) by wrongly assuming that perfectivity simply expresses boundedness. To quote publications from the 21st century only, Hodgson (2003, pp. 107–108) regards the Spanish *pretérito indefinido* “a perfective tense”. Veiga (2015), offering an overview of aspect in the Spanish Academy Grammar, provides no definition of perfectivity – what it is and how it relates to *pretérito indefinido* remains a mystery. Similarly, in Veiga (2023) he almost ignores perfectivity, treating it as a Slavic intruder. In contrast, the Spanish Academy Grammar (1999, p. 904) makes some observations directly borrowed from the CA theory, stating that NPs without determiners denote nonbounded entities incompatible with a perfective context. For Fløgstad (2016, pp. 29–32), the Spanish preterit is a “past perfective form” denoting completed, punctual actions. For Vogel (2017, p. 5), Spanish perfectivity is expressed “grammatically by means of verbal morphology” and “presents a situation as a single whole”. For Schmid (2022, p. 3), the French *passé simple* is “(punctually) delimited”. For Diaubalick and Guijarro-Fuentes (2023, p. 5) it “marks perfective aspect”. Minor et al. (2023, pp. 1–3), comparing Russian and Spanish, treat perfectivity in both languages as an entire event “including the endpoint”, in Spanish “manifested in the preterit”. It seems impossible to find a publication on RLs distinguishing between boundedness and perfectivity and conceptualizing the latter as boundedness plus an achieved telos.

As for the concept of the temporality of situation-participant NP referents, a key question to answer is: why does the speaker in any language, whether a VA- or a CA-language, “compress” the millions of separate instantiations of things thought of as material entities – people and other physical objects, into generalized concepts of people and other material things: *Mary, John, Churchill, the cat, our house, etc.?*

The answer is simple. Because if the speaker has to memorize the innumerable separate instantiations of *my wife/husband, our house/the cat, Churchill, Boris Johnson, Joe Biden*, etc., his/her memory will burst (Kabakčiev 2000: Ch. 5).

But what exactly is a “temporal instantiation of a person” which otherwise is a physical entity? When on May 13, 1940 Churchill uttered the famous phrase *blood, toil, tears and sweat*, this is *not* “the individual” Churchill. This is a four-second-long (approximately) temporal slice, bounded, of the otherwise physical and spatial entity Churchill – just like a woman in a mirror is not a physical entity but an image of a physical entity (on individuals and their “time slices”, see Carlson 1977). Of course, the “whole individual” Churchill – spatial, physical, also exists. However, reference to Churchill’s “complete description” would require not a four-second utterance like *Churchill said “blood, toil, tears and sweat”* but a book or, rather, books, portraying his life. Also, in an imperfective sentence such as (4a) below, this is again *a temporal slice* of the individual Churchill, not the physical entity Churchill. This time it is a *nonbounded* temporal slice of Churchill – because the speaker uttering (4a) does not know or does not want to tell when Churchill’s speeches started and when they ended.

Note that the imperfective English sentence (4a) will contain an *imparfait* form in French, see (4b). In Bulgarian it will have an imperfective imperfect form – (4c), in Russian an imperfective preterit (4d):

- (4) a. Churchill delivered speeches^{SLEAK} during the war
 b. Churchill prononçait^{IMPERFECT} des discours pendant la guerre
 ‘Churchill delivered speeches during the war’
 c. Churchill iznasyashe^{IMPFVIMPERFECT} rechi po vreme na voynata
 ‘Churchill delivered speeches during the war’
 d. Churchill proiznosil^{IMPFVPRET} rechi vo vremya voiny
 ‘Churchill delivered speeches during the war’

It can easily be seen here that if in English the Verkuylian concept of “leak” is decisive, in the two Slavic languages in (4c–d) and in French (4b) it is simply inapplicable. This is because in VA languages and in sentences in RLs with aspectually non-ambivalent verb forms (*passé composé, imparfait* and the like) NPs do not impact the aspectual value of the verb. In these cases it is the verb referent that impacts temporal and similar values of NP referents – initially explained in Kabakčiev (1984) and confirmed for the first time in Vounchev (2007, pp. 86–87).

An important question now arises: which is the *decisive element* in sentences such as (4) to recognize them as imperfective? The answer, surprising or even shocking for many, is: it is the NPs *speeches* in English and *des discours* in French. *Speeches* is a Verkuylian -SQA entity: nonbounded, dequantified, a leak in sentences such as (4a). It is also worth asking: if the NP *speeches* is dequantified, what are the NPs that it is dequantified against? These are various “+SQA” NPs containing quantifiers, e.g., *the speech, the speeches/these speeches, some speeches, ten speeches/many speeches*. If we substitute the zero-article/bare NP *speeches* in (4a) with *ten speeches*, the sentence becomes perfective, cf. (5a) below. And if in all the four sentences in (1) the verb form remains the same, preterit, ambivalent between

perfectivity-imperfectivity, in the other languages it changes into one which either *allows* the effectuation of perfectivity, without directly encoding it – *passé composé* in French (5b), or one that directly, grammatically, encodes perfectivity: Bulgarian (5c) with the perfective aorist, Russian (5d) with the perfective preterit:

- (5) a. Churchill delivered ten speeches during the war
- b. Churchill a prononcé_{PASSÉCOMP} dix discours pendant la guerre (French =5a)
- c. Churchill iznese_{PFVAOR} deset rechi po vreme na voynata (Bulgarian =5a)
- d. Churchill proiznes_{SPFVPRET} desyat' rechey vo vremya voiny (Russian =5a)

Thus, in English, aspect is effectuated compositionally. Sentence (5a) falls into Verkuyl's perfective schema, with the +SQA NPs *Churchill* and *ten speeches* and the +ADD TO (telic) verb (*delivered*).⁷ Note again that *delivered* is ambivalent between perfectivity-imperfectivity, as can be seen when compared with (4a). Thanks to the aspectual ambivalence of *delivered*, in (4a) it is coerced into imperfectivity by the nonboundedness of the situation-participant NP *speeches*, while in (5a), conversely, it is coerced into perfectivity by the boundedness of *Churchill* and *ten speeches* – simultaneously mapped onto the referent of the verb. In French, however, cf. (5b), perfective aspect is effectuated in a complex manner: first, through the *passé composé* – an aorist grammeme ensuring the encoding of temporal boundedness; second, through the two +SQA NPs *Churchill* and *dix discours* 'ten speeches', bounding grammatically – through the proper name and the +SQA *dix discours*, the two situation-participant NPs. This is something RL researchers have been unable to understand since the discovery of CA. As for the Slavic sentences (5c)–(5d), respectively, perfectivity is effectuated grammatically but in different ways: in Bulgarian through the combination between the aorist value (temporal boundedness only) and the value "temporal boundedness plus reached telos" in the verb (*iznese_{PFVAOR}* 'delivered'). This is aspect effectuation involving four grammemes – verb perfectivity or imperfectivity combined with aorists and imperfects. In Russian perfectivity (temporal boundedness plus reached telos) is encoded straightforwardly by the perfective preterit (*proiznes_{SPFVPRET}*).

More on CA in Cross-Language Terms, in Sentences with Three Situation-Participant NPs

As already established in publications, the perfective-imperfective contrast in English sentences with future verb forms, aspectually ambivalent like the corresponding RL future verb forms, can be exemplified in sentences with three situation-participant NPs (not only two as above), on data from English, Bulgarian and Greek, the latter genealogically different (from the Hellenic Indo-European group). In Greek the effectuation of aspect through the temporal values of NPs in the sentence cannot be realized in the past (Dimitrova and Kabakčiev 2021) because of the structural

⁷Conversely, a -ADD TO verb (atelic), would be, e.g., *ponder* – in *Churchill pondered on ten speeches during the war*.

restriction similar to the French one. A past tense verb form in both Greek and French *cannot be aspectually ambivalent* due to the presence of the aorist-imperfect contrast. In French (*passé composé*) it will have the value “temporal boundedness” – but not of perfectivity, because perfectivity is temporal boundedness plus reached telos. In Greek the value is perfective. But this is not because the aorist is perfective, it is because the aorist is used with perfective verbs only. As for some special Greek cases described in Dimitrova and Kabakčiev (2021), they are sidestepped here due to lack of space.

How aspect is explicated in sentences with three situation-participant NPs and a preterit verb form can be effectively demonstrated on English and Bulgarian data. Such patterns of sentences with identical or similar NPs are rarely found in actual speech and are not easy to construct. In English the explication of aspect is accomplished easily, thanks to the aspectual ambivalence of all preterit forms, while in the past tense in Bulgarian this can only be done in specific conditions, with biaspectual verbs. Such sentence patterns with three situation-participant NPs were analyzed for the first time recently (Kabakčiev 2020), see English (6) and their Bulgarian counterparts (7). The English and Bulgarian sentences are identical structurally, word by word, so, to facilitate perception, glosses and translations are skipped:

- (6) a. Two mountaineers convoyed the horse to drink from the nearby river
 b. Mountaineers^{SLEAK} convoyed the horse to drink from the nearby river
 c. Two mountaineers convoyed horses^{SLEAK} to drink from the nearby river
 d. Two mountaineers convoyed the horse to drink from nearby rivers^{SLEAK}
- (7) a. Dvama planinari konvoirah^{BIASP} konya da pie ot blizkata reka (=6a)
 b. Planinari^{LEAK} konvoirah^{BIASP} konya da pie ot blizkata reka (=6b)
 c. Dvama planinari konvoirah^{BIASP} kone^{LEAK} da piyat ot blizkata reka (=6c)
 d. Dvama planinari konvoirah^{BIASP} konya da pie ot blizki rek^{iLEAK} (=6d)

The English sentence (6a) and the Bulgarian one (7a) are perfective, belonging to Verkuyl’s perfective schema. The following three sentences in English and Bulgarian, respectively, are imperfective, belonging to Verkuyl’s imperfective schema – because each of them contains a Verkuyl’s leak. This crystal-clear semantico-syntactic pattern demonstrated in (6) and (7) and explaining CA and the article-aspect interplay in sentences with aspectually ambivalent preterit verb forms is also present in German, as can only be expected:

- (8) a. Zwei Bergsteiger begleiteten^{PRET} das Pferd, um aus dem nahegelegenen Fluss zu trinken (=6a)
 b. Bergsteiger^{LEAK} begleiteten^{PRET} das Pferd, um aus dem nahegelegenen Fluss zu trinken (=6b)
 c. Zwei Bergsteiger begleiteten^{PRET} Pferde^{LEAK}, um aus dem nahegelegenen Fluss zu trinken (=6c)
 d. Zwei Bergsteiger begleiteten^{PRET} das Pferd, um aus nahegelegenen Flüssen^{LEAK} zu trinken (=6d)

Sentence (8a) is perfective, belonging to Verkuyl's perfective schema. The other three are imperfective, each featuring a Verkuylian leak.

The crucial point is that this semantico-syntactic pattern – observed in *four* languages from *three* Indo-European groups, demonstrates that aspect is *not* encoded by a verb form ambivalent between perfectivity-imperfectivity, but is effectuated through an intriguing interplay between quantified-nonquantified NPs – which in this case is an article-aspect interplay. In all the examples above, the first sentence belongs to Verkuyl's perfective schema with no leak and exhibits the so-called plus-principle (Verkuyl 1993, pp. 5–32). Conversely, Verkuyl's imperfective schema contains at least one dequantified NP, which is (what is usually called) a bare NP/zero-article NP.

Thus shown above is the systematic mechanism of effectuating perfectivity-imperfectivity in sentences with three situation-participant NPs in four languages (including Greek). Let me now render the four English sentences (6) also into French and Russian – to demonstrate how aspect can be effectuated *in other ways*. As already demonstrated, sentences with three situation-participant NPs and a preterit verb form marked neither for Slavic-like aspect, nor for aorist-imperfect *can* effectuate aspect in English, German and even Bulgarian (in specific conditions in the latter). French is not such a language. It cannot demonstrate compositional explication of aspect in the past, as seen in (9). Consider French (9) – sentences that are perfect equivalents of English (6), Bulgarian (7) and German (8):

- (9) a. Deux alpinistes ont convoyé_{PASSÉCOMP} le cheval pour s'abreuver à la rivière voisine (=6a)
b. Des alpinistes convoyaient_{IMPERFECT} le cheval pour s'abreuver à la rivière voisine (=6b)
c. Deux alpinistes convoyaient_{IMPERFECT} des chevaux pour pour s'abreuver à la rivière voisine (=6c)
d. Deux alpinistes convoyaient_{IMPERFECT} le cheval pour s'abreuver aux rivières voisines (=6d)

The reason for the impossibility to explicate aspect in French in CA terms in the past is clear. It is that French obligatorily uses verb forms of *either* the aorist *or* the imperfect type and the Verkuylian concept of a leak does not hold. If the situation is perfective, as in English (6a), the French form is of the aorist type (*passé composé*). If the situation is imperfective, as in (6b–d), it is of the imperfective type (*imparfait*). But this does not mean that the *passé composé* is a perfective verb form. The *passé composé* is an *aorist* verb form, not a perfective one. It encodes temporal boundedness but it *cannot* encode a reached telos. Recall that a reached telos is obligatory for the effectuation of perfectivity. As for the French *imparfait* and the imperfect in languages like Bulgarian, Greek, Albanian, Georgian, etc., it is an imperfective grammeme which also encodes a tense value, pastness.

Lastly, it is interesting to see what happens in a prototypical Slavic language – with no aorist-imperfect distinction but only preterits that are perfective or imperfective lexically. Consider Russian (10), where, for the English sentences in

(6) to be rendered, the Russian sentence must contain either a perfective preterit (10a) or an imperfective one (10b–d):

- (10) a. Dva al'pinista otveli_{IPFVPRET} loshad' napyt'sya iz blizlezhshchey reki (=6a)
 b. Al'pinisty veli_{IMPFVPRET} loshad' napyt'sya iz blizlezhshchey reki (=6b)
 c. Dva al'pinista veli_{IMPFVPRET} loshadey napyt'sya iz blizlezhshchey reki (=6c)
 d. Dva al'pinista veli_{IMPFVPRET} loshad' napyt'sya iz blizlezhshchey rek (=6d)

This is because in Slavic languages with no articles it is impossible to judge whether a bare NP is to be interpreted as if with a definite article, an indefinite article (or a *some*-type of quantifier), or a zero-article NP – in English as a metalanguage. The verb directly encodes aspect and the Verkuylian concept of a leak in the imperfective schema again does not hold.

Thus the aorist-imperfect contrast, a hybrid one (aspecto-temporal) in the past domain, is an impediment to understanding the mechanism of CA in RLs, Greek, Bulgarian, Albanian, etc. For this reason, in Dimitrova and Kabakčiev (2021) the following four English sentences (11) were constructed – with future verb forms and three situation-participant NPs in each. The aim was to investigate Slavic aspect (the perfective-imperfective distinction) vis-à-vis the aorist-imperfect contrast in Greek and partly Bulgarian. As previously, the first sentence is perfective, the other three imperfective, each containing a leak:

- (11) a. The valet will park our car in the nearby parking lot
 b. The valet will park cars_{SLEAK} in the nearby parking lot
 c. The valet will park our car in nearby parking lots_{SLEAK}
 d. Valets_{SLEAK} will park our car in the nearby parking lot

The Greek translations of these sentences were analyzed (*ibid.*) and it was established that they are fully identical to those in Bulgarian – but the Bulgarian sentences were not shown and discussed. Let me take the opportunity here to analyze the Bulgarian sentences. They are the following, where the first sentence is perfective, falling into Verkuyl's perfective schema, and the other three imperfective, falling into Verkuyl's imperfective schema (with a leak):

- (12) a. Valetto shte parkira_{BIASP} kolata ni v blizkiya parking (=11a)
 b. Valetto shte parkira_{BIASP} kolileak v blizkiya parking (=11b)
 c. Valetto shte parkira_{BIASP} kolata ni v blizki parkingileak (=11c)
 d. Valeta_{LEAK} shte parkirat_{BIASP} kolata ni v blizkiya parking (=11d)

As can very easily be predicted – thanks to the enormous heuristic power of the CA theory, the same regularities are also valid for German, where the Verkuylian concept of a leak holds for imperfective sentences:

- (13) a. Der Kammerdiener wird unser Auto auf dem nahegelegenen Parkplatz parken
b. Der Kammerdiener wird Autos_{SLEAK} auf dem nahegelegenen Parkplatz parken
c. Der Kammerdiener wird unser Auto auf nahegelegenen Parkplätzen_{LEAK} parken
d. Kammerdiener_{LEAK} werden unser Auto auf dem nahegelegenen Parkplatz parken

Isn't all this remarkable? A single dequantified NP (stripped of an article) is capable of changing the aspect of the initial sentences in several languages, by turning the relevant NP from a singular temporally bounded entity into one effectuating indefinite iterativity: *the valet* > *valets*, *our car* > *cars*, *the nearby parking lot* > *nearby parking lots*. The indefinite iterativity is then mapped onto the verb referent, triggering imperfectivity in it, and then onto the other NPs.

As found in Kabakčiev (2021a), sentences with three situation-participant NPs in Slavic languages with no articles are generally *unanalyzable* in terms of the impact of NP referents, for the obvious reason that it is impossible for the hearer to judge whether a bare NP must be interpreted as if with a definite article, an indefinite article (or a *some*-type of quantifier), or a zero-article NP (in English as a metalanguage). In other words, in *all* Slavic languages with no articles (the huge majority) a sentence with a biaspectual verb and three zero-article situation-participant NPs *cannot be interpreted aspectually* in most cases. To give an example, in such a Slavic language the English sentence (11b) will have the hypothetical (non-grammatical) form **Valet will park cars in nearby parking lot*, a sentence difficult or impossible to understand because: (i) *valet* lacks quantificational information; (ii) *cars* is ambivalent between “the cars” (quantified), “some cars” (quantified), and “cars” (nonquantified); (iii) *nearby parking lot* also lacks quantificational information. Therefore, it is impossible to say whether this sentence and similar ones portray a one-off event, a perfective situation, or an indefinitely repeated one, imperfective. As already argued (Kabakčiev 2021b, p. 36), such a language – simultaneously lacking articles in NPs and aspect in verbs, presumably, cannot exist.

Further Observations on CA in French and Other RLs

As already pointed out, it is widely but wrongly maintained that “true aspect” in RLs is restricted to the domain of the past. Suppose this were true. People would then be unable to communicate to other people in French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese and Romanian millions of extremely simple situations in everyday life denoted by infinitives: e.g., that a child wants *to eat* a cake (the whole of it), that a man wants *to drink* a beer (from the first drop to the last), that a woman wants *to open* the window and leave it open, that someone wants *to visit* Paris on a single occasion, etc. Most publications have it that the aorist-imperfect aspecto-temporal contrast is different from the Slavic perfective-imperfective one *for inherent reasons*, not only because of the additional tense value in the aorist-imperfect contrast. Indeed, the

orist-imperfect contrast *resembles* Slavic/Slavic-like aspect – but it does not coincide with it.⁸

Furthermore, if RLs had no devices for explicating Slavic aspect, their speakers would *not* be able to describe also *situations in the future*: that they *will eat* a cake (once), *will drink* a beer (once), *will open* the window (once), *will visit* Paris (once). Imagine a novel written in a Slavic language where every verb is perfective or imperfective, depicting solely what the protagonist *will do tomorrow*.⁹ This will not be a problem in any Slavic language. If the protagonist is to *eat a cake, drink a beer, open the window, visit Paris*, perfective verbs will be used. If the protagonist will be engaged in activities of cake-eating, beer-drinking, regularly opening a window or occasionally visiting Paris, imperfective verbs will be used. Hence, if RLs were really incapable of distinguishing between perfectivity-imperfectivity in the future, such a novel *would not be translatable* into a Romance language at all. Does this stand to reason?

A serious problem looms large, so let me return to some of the false theses widely prevalent in Romance linguistics, like Schmid's (2022) attack on the (so-called by her) unidimensional approach, calling it incapable of explaining aspect but giving no explanation why. Similar erroneous conjectures are listed below, followed by *My judgement*:

1. *The so-called “perfective” (passé simple and perfetto semplice) and “imperfective” (imparfait and imperfetto) verbal inflection markers appear to express states of affairs that are (punctually) delimited and (duratively) nondelimited, respectively. German does not have such a grammaticalised aspectual opposition (Schmid 2022, p. 3).*

My judgement. When aspectologists employ the two aspectological concepts perfective and imperfective, they are obliged to define them precisely. Schmid ascribes to the perfective-imperfective contrast the notions delimitedness and nondelimitedness – not false but insufficient for defining the contrast. The abstract perfective-imperfective cross-language distinction advanced in the general CA theory fully covers the Slavic contrast: perfectivity is a temporally bounded situation with a reached telos (Vendlerian accomplishment or achievement); imperfectivity is a temporally nonbounded situation (Vendlerian state or activity). From this point of view it is drastically untrue that the *passé simple* and the *perfetto semplice* are “perfective markers” expressing “(punctually) delimited” states of affairs. They *do not express* perfectivity, they only *allow* its expression. The same is valid for the orist-type forms in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, a thesis upheld in Kabakčiev (2022, pp. 167–171) for French, Italian and Spanish, illustrated with examples. For anyone adept in CA it is not difficult to conceptualize the essence of the orist. In French, a sentence such as *Messi a botté le ballon* contains a *passé composé* verb form, as does *Messi a toujours aimé le football*. But while the former

⁸Actually, the difference is between Slavic perfectivity and the semantics of the Romance orist grammeme. As for the Romance imperfect grammeme and the imperfective aspect in Slavic, their meanings coincide.

⁹Such a novel may not exist in reality, but it can certainly be written.

is perfective, the latter is not. Why? Because in French *perfectivity does not correlate with the passé composé* (and the *passé simple*) – and the same is valid for the other allegedly perfective tensed forms in the other RLs. The *passé composé* only allows the effectuation of perfectivity. Note that the aorist *cannot express perfectivity also in Bulgarian*, a Slavic language. Perfectivity is boundedness plus a reached telos, and the Bulgarian aorist *always needs a perfective verb* to effectuate it. If the Bulgarian aorist is used with an imperfective verb, the result is not perfectivity but a different Vendlerian situation, an episode (Kabakčiev 2000, pp. 286–307). Finally, extremely importantly, *the aorist does not express perfectivity in Greek*. Recall that it is Ancient Greek whence both the concept and the term aorist originate. The Greek aorist *allows perfectivity* and relies on perfective verbs to encode it. This is proved by the circumstance that, complemented by certain adverbials, it stops expressing perfectivity and starts to explicate episodes (Dimitrova and Kabakčiev 2021, pp. 194–199).

2. *In the German examples (3)/(3') these different temporal structures [(punctually) delimited and (duratively) nondelimited] are expressed through the different semantic information contained in the verb stems (in (3) erfahren 'to come to know' and in (3') wissen 'to know'), while the verbs bear the same inflectional markers (past tense: Präteritum), because aspectual contents expressed in one language by a complex inflectional system can be expressed in another language "by lexical means" (Schmid 2022, p. 3). Here are Schmid's German examples – in her paper they are numbered (3)/(3'), here they are (14a) and (14b):*

- (14) a. *Er erfuhr* [PAST] *das Resultat der Wahl* (vor dem Ende der Auszählung der Stimmen)
'He came to know the result of the election (before the end of the counting of the votes).'
- b. *Er wusste* [PAST] *das Resultat der Wahl* (vor dem Ende der Auszählung der Stimmen)
'He knew the result of the election (before the end of the counting of the votes).'

My judgement. Schmid's statement 2. above is absolutely wrong. It is true that (14a) and (14b) demonstrate what the author calls delimited and nondelimited states of affairs. But *this is not* because they are "expressed through the different semantic information in the verb stems". If the author had a better understanding of CA – significantly better than the one demonstrated in the paper, she would have guessed that the perfectivity of *Er erfuhr das Resultat der Wahl* does not arise solely as a result of the semantics of the verb stem. As explained long ago in Verkuyl (1972, 1993), Kabakčiev (1984, 2000) and in other CA models (Bulatović 2013, 2020, 2022, Dimitrova 2021, etc.), perfectivity and imperfectivity reside *in the sentence as a whole*, not in the verb component or the VP. Compare Schmid's sentences (14a) and (14b) to the perfective (15a) and the imperfective (15b) with three Verkuylian leaks:

- (15) a. Die Wähler im ganzen Land erfuhren von den Wahlergebnissen
 ‘The voters across the country learned (about) the election results’
 b. Von verschiedenen Fernsehsendern_{LEAK} erfuhren Wähler_{LEAK} im ganzen Land
 von Wahlergebnissen_{LEAK}
 ‘It was from different TV channels that voters across the country learned
 about election results’

Why is (15a) a perfective sentence? Because apart from featuring a telic verb *erfahren* ‘learn’, it contains situation-participant NPs bounded through an article: *die Wähler* ‘the voters’, *den Wahlergebnissen* ‘the election results’. Conversely, (15b) is an imperfective sentence. Why? Because although it contains the same verb, and hence in Schmid’s understanding it ought to effectuate “delimited states of affairs” due to the verb *erfahren*, it is *not a perfective sentence*. It is an imperfective one. It falls into Verkuyl’s imperfective schema due to the presence of nonquantified NPs: *Fernsehsendern* ‘TV channels’, *Wähler* ‘voters’, *Wahlergebnissen* ‘election results’. Nonboundedness is mapped onto the verb *erfahren* and coerces it into imperfectivity, totally rejecting Schmid’s reasoning. Note that in (15b) *Wähler* are not a group of voters standing together in the same physical space but re-occur one after the other on the time axis. Similarly, *Fernsehsendern* are TV channels broadcasting one after the other in time, not together simultaneously, once. All this relates to the very essence of CA – and the analyses here (and elsewhere) trigger the rock-solid conclusion that “without the employment of a compositional theoretical model, attempts to understand aspect and to explain it to others is a time-wasting and hopeless enterprise” (Kabakčiev 2022, p. 172).

3. *Conceptual pairs (in the literature) such as “telic/atelic” and “perfective/imperfective” are rendered interchangeable* (Schmid 2022, p. 5).

My judgement. Telic-atelic and perfective-imperfective are indeed “rendered interchangeable”, but in separate publications only. It is unacceptable to ascribe mistakes made by some authors in their writings to the whole of the aspectological community.

4. *Unidimensional approaches are “based on very simple and limited semantic instruments, they are supposedly only able to offer crude classifications that disregard or leave the finer gradations of linguistic phenomena unexplained* (Schmid 2022, p. 5).

My judgement. This statement is astonishing in its inadequacy. The author quotes Verkuyl’s (1972, 1993) two major works but clearly has no understanding of the theory of CA and of Verkuyl’s aspect schemata, which describe CA in scrupulous detail.¹⁰ Conceptualizing the perfective-imperfective distinction (temporal boundedness

¹⁰After analyzing the author’s statements on aspect in Romance and Germanic languages, I grew skeptical about her understanding of Slavic aspect and decided to check her Slavic examples. It turned out that both her paper and her monograph, entitled *Aspectuality*, do not contain *any* single example in *any* Slavic language (Schmid 2019, 2022).

plus achieved telos versus temporal nonboundedness), the schemata precisely cover the Slavic aspect contrast, as confirmed in, e.g., Kabakčiev (1984, 2000, 2019), Vouchnev (2007), Bulatović (2013, 2020, 2022), Dimitrova (2021). Indeed, Verkuyl's model is slightly different from the one employed here, but in essence the two cover the major aspectual phenomena in approximately the same way. Furthermore, unlike, e.g., Ihsane (2020), Schmid's (2019, 2022) two publications do not have a single word to say about a major structural entity of the French language and of RLs related to aspect, *the article* – both the definite and the indefinite article, plus the zero article and the article-like *des* in French. The same is valid for countless other publications on RLs. Someone might exclaim: "What does the article have to do with aspect?" The answer: *a huge lot*. As already demonstrated with pattern examples in several languages featuring articles/an article, including English, French, German, Greek, Bulgarian, the significance of articles for the effectuation of aspect is *enormous*.

Let us now check whether French *cannot* effectuate aspect (perfectivity-imperfectivity) in the future systematically, as conjectured directly or indirectly in Schmid (2019, 2022). The check can be done using *le futur simple* (16b) or *le futur proche* (16c):

- (16) a. Pierre will eat a cake/drink a beer/open the window/visit Paris
 b. Pierre mangera un gâteau/boira une bière/ouvrira la fenêtre/visitera Paris
 c. Pierre va manger un gâteau/boire une bière/ouvrir la fenêtre/visiter Paris

To explain how aspect is effectuated in French in perfective sentences with future verb forms as in (16b–c), a good prerequisite for a researcher is to know Vendler's (1957) essay on time schemata and Garey's (1957) paper *Verbal Aspect in French*, the latter broadly explaining VP-level aspect in French, including the role of articles; cf. Garey's (1957, p. 108) example *jouer du Mozart* 'play some Mozart', imperfective, and *jouer un concerto de Mozart* 'play a Mozart concerto', perfective. To avoid the problem with the past domain, let us do the analysis on sentences containing a future verb form and three situation-participant NPs. Cf. the French translation equivalents of English (11), Bulgarian (12), German (13):

- (17) a. Le voiturier garera notre voiture sur le parking à proximité (=11a)
 b. Le voiturier garera des voitures_{SLEAK} sur le parking à proximité (=11b)
 c. Le voiturier garera notre voiture dans des parkings_{SLEAK} à proximité (=11c)
 d. Des voituriers_{SLEAK} gareront notre voiture sur le parking à proximité (=11d)

The first sentence, (17a), effectuates perfectivity: temporal boundedness plus a reached telos. The car is to be driven into the relevant parking space – once, and left there. How is this achieved, given that the verb form *garera/gareront* is aspectually ambivalent and can explicate perfectivity *or* imperfectivity? This is achieved through Verkuyl's perfective schema, in which the situation-participant NPs and the verb have "plus-values": +SQA, +ADD TO (Verkuyl 1993, pp. 17–18). Imperfectivity is effectuated in (17b–d) through Verkylian leaks. The perfectivity of (17a) is additionally

explained in Kabakčiev (2019, 2020, 2023) through the mapping mechanism in which the three situation-participant NPs simultaneously transfer their temporal boundedness onto the verb referent. This temporal model does not refute Verkuyl's atemporal one. It only adds to it elements related to cognition, and the sentences above in four languages demonstrate that CA exists in them beyond any possible doubt.

To return to the article-aspect interplay, among the researchers (not many) investigating it, Ihsane (2020) extensively argues on *les vis-à-vis des* in French, i.e., the two-way interpretation of *des* – simultaneously corresponding to the zero article and the English *some* quantifier. This may be a complicated “article issue”, but not as regards articles with singular nominals – where the article is an exponent of boundedness, capable of aspectually impacting the verb with which an NP is associated. Thus the French sentence (17a) is perfective with three bounded NPs, and the other three sentences are imperfective, each with a leak. As regards other RLs, clearly French cannot be the only one capable of realizing perfectivity-imperfectivity through Verkuyl's aspectual schemata and the article-aspect interplay. The translation of English (11) into other RLs reveals the same mechanism of realizing aspect through the article-aspect interplay – but the issue is skipped here for lack of space.

The systematic mechanism of effectuating aspect in sentence patterns with identical or near-identical situation-participant NPs was described for the first time recently (Kabakčiev 2020). The construction of such syntactic patterns corresponds to Verkuyl's CA theory and corroborates it without adding some essential new element to his schemata, with the exception of the conceptualization of NP referents as temporal entities.¹¹ The use of syntactic patterns with three identical or similar situation-participant NPs – viewed against randomly constructed sentences with various NPs, facilitates the conceptualization of aspect through the more transparent NP quantification-dequantification interplay.

Conclusion

Contrary to what is claimed in innumerable publications on aspect in RLs, these languages systematically effectuate the universal perfective-imperfective contrast found in the Slavic languages: in CA terms and in the same way as it is effectuated in English and the other Germanic languages. There is no space here to analyze other RLs. But the material investigated indicates that if French with its specific nominal-determination structure and the pseudo-article *des* ambivalent between quantification-dequantification is capable of effectuating the perfective-imperfective contrast, the other RLs will effectuate this contrast *even more straightforwardly* with their more orderly nominal-determination patterns and the presence of a true zero article. There can hardly be any doubt that a future analysis of the other RLs for an exhaustive description of their specificities – vis-à-vis the present conceptual framework and similar models of CA, will ultimately bust the long-standing fallacy that there is no Slavic-like aspect in RLs and that aspect resides there only in the past domain.

¹¹Verkuyl (2001) does not subscribe to the conceptualization of NP referents as temporal.

Bottom line: as clearly demonstrated above, aspect is not restricted to the past domain in RLs, it is omnipresent and easily identifiable for researchers having adequate understanding of the CA theory – the non-employment of which in RL studies is an extremely severe omission that must be avoided.

References

- Abraham W, Leiss E (2007) Introduction. In E Stark, E Leiss, W Abraham (eds.), *Nominal Determination. Typology, Context Constraints, and Historical Emergence*, 1–20. Amsterdam/Philadelphia: Benjamins.
- Abraham W, Leiss E (2012) The case differential: syntagmatic versus paradigmatic case – its status in synchrony and diachrony. *Transactions of the Philological Society*, 110(3): 316–341.
- Borer H (2005) *The Normal Course of Events*. Oxford: OUP.
- Borik O (2006) *Aspect and Reference Time*. Oxford: OUP.
- Broekhuis H, Verkuyl H (2014) Binary tense and modality. *Nat Lang Linguist Theory* (32): 973–1009.
- Bulatović V (2013) Modern theories of aspect and Serbian EL2 learners. *Belgrade English Language and Literature Studies* 5(1): 65–79.
- Bulatović V (2020) Thinking for speaking in the right aspect – on whether Modern English grammars can do more. *RESLA* 33(2): 384–415.
- Bulatović V (2022) Aspect semantics and ESL article use. *IRAL* 60(2): 491–521.
- Carlson G (1977) *Reference to Kinds in English*. University of Massachusetts.
- Carlson L (1981) Aspect and quantification. In P Tedeschi, A Zaenen (eds.), *Aspect and Quantification. Syntax and Semantics. Vol. 14. Tense and Aspect*, 31–64. New York: Academic Press.
- DeSwart H, Corblin F (Eds.) (2003) *Handbook of French Semantics*. CSLI Publications.
- Diaubalick T, Guijarro-Fuentes P (2023) Consequences of the comparative fallacy for the acquisition of grammatical aspect in Spanish. *IRAL* 61(4): 1301–1336.
- Dimitrova D (2021) Aspect coercion in Greek aorist and perfect verb forms. In *Studies in Greek Linguistics* 41, 45–53. Thessaloniki: Institute of Modern Greek Studies.
- Dimitrova D, Kabakčiev K (2021) Compositional and verbal aspect in Greek: the aorist-imperfect distinction and the article-aspect interplay. *Athens Journal of Philology* 8(3): 181–206.
- Dowty D (1979) *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar: the Semantics of Verbs and Times in Generative Semantics and in Montague's PTQ*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Fløgstad GN (2016) *Preterit Expansion and Perfect Demise in Porteño Spanish and Beyond. A Critical Perspective on Cognitive Grammaticalization Theory*. Leiden/ Boston: Brill.
- Friedrich P (1974) On aspect theory and Homeric aspect. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 40(4): Part 2: 1–44 (Memoirs 28 and 29).
- Garey H (1957) Verbal aspect in French. *Language* 33: 91–100.
- González, P Verkuyl, H (2017) A binary approach to Spanish tense and aspect: on the tense battle about the past. *Borealis: An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics* 6(1): 97–138.
- Heinämäki O (1974/1978). *Semantics of English Temporal Connectives*. Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Hodgson M (2003) The acquisition of Spanish perfective aspect: A study on children's production and comprehension. *ZAS Papers in Linguistics* 29: 105–117.

- Ihsane T (2020) Telicity, specificity, and complements with a “partitive article” in French. *Disentangling Bare Nouns and Nominals Introduced by a Partitive Article. Syntax and Semantics* 43, 227–261. Brill.
- Jakobson R (1957) Shifters, verbal categories and the Russian verb. In *Roman Jakobson. Selected writings, III*. The Hague: Mouton.
- Kabakčiev K (1984) The article and the aorist-imperfect distinction in Bulgarian: an analysis based on cross-language “aspect” parallelisms. *Linguistics* 22(5): 643–672.
- Kabakčiev K (2000) *Aspect in English: a ‘common-sense’ view of the interplay between verbal and nominal referents*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Kabakčiev K (2019) On the history of compositional aspect: vicissitudes, issues, prospects. *Athens Journal of Philology* 6(3): 201–224.
- Kabakčiev K (2020) Two major manifestations of compositional aspect in Bulgarian. *Studia Philologica Universitatis Velikotarnovensis* 39(1): 115–125.
- Kabakčiev K (2021a) Compositional disambiguation of biaspectuality in languages with verbal aspect: on Russian and Bulgarian data. *Atiner’s Conference Paper Series No LNG2021-2723*: 1–23.
- Kabakčiev K (2021b) Mapping temporal features between nominals and verbs in English and the article-aspect interplay diachronically. *Belgrade English Language and Literature Studies XIII*: 29–57.
- Kabakčiev K (2022) Conceptual inconsistencies and sidestepping compositional aspect may wreak havoc on aspectology. *Godishnik na Shumenskiya universitet XXXIII/3*: 166–173.
- Kabakčiev K (2023) After Verkuyl’s discovery aspect is no longer a mystery, but aspectology needs a reform. Review Article: Henk Verkuyl, *The Compositional nature of tense, mood and aspect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. *Athens Journal of Philology* 10(3): 247–274.
- Leiss E (2000) *Artikel und Aspekt. Die grammatischen Muster von Definitheit*. (Article and aspect. The grammatical patterns of definiteness). Berlin: de Gruyter.
- Markkanen R (1979) *Tense and Aspect in English and Finnish. A Contrastive Study*. Yväsylä.
- Minor S, Mitrofanova N, Guajardo G, Myrte Vos, M, Ramchand G (2023) Aspect processing across languages: A visual world eye-tracking study. *Frontiers in Language Sciences* 1: 1052205.
- Mourelatos A (1981) Events, processes and states. In P Tedeschi, A Zaenen (eds.), *Aspect and Quantification. Syntax and Semantics. Vol. 14. Tense and Aspect*, 191–212. New York: Academic Press.
- Reniers F (1999) From Verkuyl to Krifka in one article. Towards a unified theory of aspectual composition. *Linguistics in the Netherlands* 163–176.
- Schmid D (2019) *Aspectuality. An Onomasiological Model Applied to the Romance Languages*. Berlin/Boston: de Gruyter.
- Schmid D (2022) Universal categories, single language realisations: aspectuality in French and other Romance languages. *CogniTextes* 23.
- Schopf A (1974) *Der englische Aspekt*. (The English aspect). Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft.
- Shabashvili G, Kabakčiev K (2021) Verbal aspect vis-à-vis compositional: a typological case study of Georgian, against Russian and English data. *Studies in Greek Linguistics* 42. Thessaloniki: 375–384.
- Spanish Academy Grammar (1999) *Gramática descriptiva de la lengua española. Volumen 1. Sintaxis básica de las clases de palabras*. (Descriptive grammar of the Spanish language. Volume 1. Basic syntax of word classes). Madrid: Espasa Calpe.
- Vaníková M (2017) Kompozicionální aspekt v latině. (Compositional aspect in Latin). *Auriga – ZJKF* 59(1): 7–32.

- Veiga A (2015) *La gramática académica y los problemas del aspecto en la descripción del verbo español*. (Academic grammar and the problems of aspect in the description of the Spanish verb). *Borealis: An International Journal of Hispanic Linguistics* 4(2): 119–150.
- Veiga A (2023) *Tiempo y aspecto from: Sintaxis del español*, *The Routledge Handbook of Spanish Syntax*. Routledge.
- Vendler Z (1957) Verbs and times. *The Philosophical Review* 66: 143–160.
- Verkuyl H (1972) *On the Compositional Nature of the Aspects*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Verkuyl H (1993) *A theory of Aspectuality. The Interaction between Temporal and Atemporal Structure*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Verkuyl H (2001) Aspect in English: a Bulgarian perspective. *Journal of Semantics* 18(4): 367–390.
- Verkuyl H (2022) *The Compositional Nature of Tense, Mood and Aspect*. Cambridge: CUP.
- Vogel E (2017) *Native vs. non-native processing of Spanish: the role of lexical and grammatical aspect*. Florida State University dissertation.
- Vounchev B (2007) *Aspektualnite harakteristiki v novogratskiya ezik – sredstva za izrazyavane i semantika*. (Aspect characteristics in Modern Greek – means of expression and semantics). Sofia: Sofia University Press.
- Wiesinger E (2023) Probing the role of bounding, definiteness and other factors: bare noun and determiner use in Guianese French Creole. *CogniTextes* 23.
- Zydatiř W (1976) *Tempus und Aspekt im Englischunterricht*. (Tenses and Aspects in English Teaching). Kronenberg: Scriptor.