

1 On the Gigantic Fallacy that there is no Slavic-like Aspect 2 in the Romance Languages and Aspect resides only in the 3 Past Domain 4

5 *This paper deals with a very old drastic misconception, reiterated*
6 *innumerable times through the decades, including recently, that the*
7 *Romance languages feature no Slavic-like aspect (which is*
8 *grammatically realized in verbs as lexical entries) and that aspect in*
9 *these languages can only consist in grammatical contrasts –*
10 *morphological or periphrastic, such as aorist-imperfect and*
11 *progressive-nonprogressive. Data from five languages are used in the*
12 *analysis: English, also as a metalanguage, French and German,*
13 *discussed in publications under critique, Bulgarian, Russian. In French*
14 *and the other Romance languages, aspect, understood precisely as the*
15 *Slavic perfective-imperfective distinction, is realized in compositional*
16 *terms – which are also grammatical in the long run, and only partly*
17 *through the French passé composé-imparfait contrast and the analogous*
18 *ones in the other Romance languages. Specially emphasized is the*
19 *massive misinterpretation by aspectologists, and often lack of*
20 *knowledge, of compositional aspect, a phenomenon discovered more*
21 *than five decades ago by Henk Verkuyl.*
22

23 **Keywords:** *compositional and verbal aspect, compositional-aspect*
24 *languages, verbal-aspect languages, perfective-imperfective contrast,*
25 *aorist-imperfect contrast; article-aspect interplay*
26
27

28 Aspect in General 29

30 A recent publication on aspectuality in French and the Romance languages
31 (henceforward RLs, sing. RL) maintains that there is a strict distinction “in
32 traditional studies” between aspect and Aktionsart as “semantically different
33 components of the general aspectual domain”¹ and calls this a “bidimensional
34 perspective” – especially widespread in Romance linguistics where grammatical
35 perfectivity is “aspect residing in the past” and “carried by the preterite tense”
36 (Schmid 2022, p. 1). Indeed, this trend is widely represented, as in Hodgson (2003,
37 pp. 111–113), Veiga (2015), Fløgstad (2016), Vogel (2017), Diaubalick and
38 Guijarro-Fuentes (2023), Minor et al. (2023), to quote but a few. Schmid contrasts
39 it to a “less common unidimensional approach” represented in Verkuyl (1972,
40 1993) and proposes a concept named “naïve universalism” to combat the idea that
41 aspect is a phenomenon found across and even in all languages, upheld or
42 subsumed in Verkuyl (1972, 1993, 2022), Leiss (2000), Kabakčiev (2000, 2019;
43 2021b, 2023), Vounchev (2007), Abraham and Leiss (2012, pp. 325–329),

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

1 Bulatović (2013, 2020, 2022), Shabashvili and Kabakčiev (2021), Dimitrova
2 (2021) and elsewhere. The battle against universalism is waged by free reasoning,
3 with no reference to data to illustrate “the naïvete”.

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

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

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

41 Misconceptions of this kind, proclaiming the existence of an alarming
42 inability of RLs to effectuate aspect in general terms (not only Slavic) beyond the
43 domain of the past, provoke reasoning about science. Linguistics is a natural

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.

1 science. It does not study chimeras. It investigates a communication tool,
 2 describable, an element of objective reality, a product of the human brain – not the
 3 individual’s brain but the collective human brain governing the architecture and
 4 development of language. And if some theoretical framework maintains that there
 5 is *no aspectual deficiency* in language, this means that RLs will be capable of
 6 systematically realizing the perfective-imperfective contrast – just like any other
 7 language and in all possible domains: past, future, present, modal, clausal,
 8 infinitival, etc. And given that such a theoretical framework exists, scientific
 9 noblesse oblige requires that it *be acknowledged*. Especially when it was launched
 10 decades ago and despite the fact that it primarily investigates Germanic data.

11 This framework is known as the theory of compositional aspect
 12 (henceforward CA). The discovery of the phenomenon of CA was made by Henk
 13 Verkuyl in his 1971 Utrecht dissertation (published as Verkuyl 1972). In contrast
 14 to English, RLs generally remain outside research on CA, with some exceptions,
 15 e.g., DeSwart and Corblin (2003), González and Verkuyl (2017), Ihsane (2020), a
 16 subchapter “The position of the aorist in a binary system” in Verkuyl (2022, pp.
 17 235–252), etc. But these fail to offer fully adequate descriptions of CA. For
 18 example, despite the participation of the finder of CA in DeSwart and Corblin
 19 (2003), this publication deals with nominal-determination features in French and
 20 fails to make a clean case for employing Verkuyl’s CA model as a phenomenon
 21 involving an interplay between NPs in quantificational terms, the nucleus of CA.
 22 Unfortunately, Verkuyl (2022, p. 239) himself finds the analysis of the French
 23 *passé simple* “incompatible with the compositional approach” – wrongly, failing
 24 to realize that CA-VA differ in essence but despite the difference they are *mirror*
 25 *images of each other* (Kabakčiev 1984; 2000: Ch. 7).

26 Today the conjecture that aspect in RLs is different from Slavic aspect and
 27 severely restricted to the past domain ought to be a long-forgotten chimera of the
 28 past – because it was directly or indirectly annihilated by the CA theory with its
 29 explanation of the article-aspect interplay, nominal-determination patterns and the
 30 realization of (im)perfectivity through situation-participant NPs (see Verkuyl
 31 1971, 1993, 2022; Broekhuis and Verkuyl 2014 on Dutch and English; Bulatović
 32 2013, 2020, 2022 on English vis-à-vis Montenegrin; Kabakčiev 1984, 2000, 2019,
 33 2021b, 2023 on English; Vounchev 2007; Dimitrova and Kabakčiev 2021;
 34 Dimitrova 2021 on English vis-à-vis Bulgarian and Greek; Shabashvili and
 35 Kabakčiev 2021 on English vis-à-vis Georgian). And while there are publications
 36 trying to find fault with Verkuyl’s theoretical model (Borer 2005; Borik 2006) –
 37 imprecisely and wrongly, as shown exhaustively in Kabakčiev (2019: 212–214),
 38 they still recognize “Verkuyl’s generalization”.

39 As amply demonstrated in Verkuyl (1972, 1993, 2022), his three major
 40 works, the sentence-level interaction between quantification-dequantification in
 41 verb arguments,³ constituting what he calls “feature algebra” (Verkuyl 1993, p.
 42 73), valid also for Dutch, his mother tongue, has systematic existence in the other
 43 modern Germanic languages. The “feature algebra” is represented by two
 44 semantico-syntactic aspect schemata: a perfective one which he usually calls

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

1 nondurative, and an imperfective one called durative. The perfective schema
 2 contains so-called plus-values, i.e., +SQA (specified quantity of something) in
 3 NPs and +ADD TO in verbs, the latter broadly meaning “movement to bring about
 4 some change” (Verkuyl 1993, pp. 17–18) or “an expression of dynamic progress
 5 of some sort” (Verkuyl 2022, p. 123). In the terminology here, +SQA in NPs is
 6 called bounded/quantified and +ADD TO in verbs is called telic. Telic is a lexical
 7 feature meaning “aimed at a telos”, not that a telos is achieved. As for Verkuyl’s
 8 imperfective schema, it features the so-called leak/leaks: at least one -SQA value
 9 in a situation-participant NP or a -ADD TO value in the verb, meaning “not aimed
 10 at a telos”. Verkuyl’s semantico-syntactic algebra contains mainly grammatical
 11 features, so ultimately it can also be called a grammatical phenomenon.

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

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

19
 20 *research on aspect par excellence is localised in Slavic linguistics, [and] we must*
 21 *correct the misconception that has arisen from it, which is that, in principle, if the*
 22 *category “aspect” exists in the Romance languages it can only be in the exact same*
 23 *form in which it appears in the Slavic languages. It follows from this that, in this very*
 24 *special form as a language-particular verbal category, aspect is not actually present*
 25 *in the Romance languages, but instead aspectual oppositions are found in*
 26 *grammaticalised form only on the past temporal level (Schmid 2019, p. 1).*
 27

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

43 In other words, interestingly, perfectivity and imperfectivity are effectuated
 44 compositionally not only in CA languages like English and Dutch but even –
 45 albeit only peripherally – in languages with VA: Bulgarian, Russian, Greek. This
 46 was first documented on Bulgarian data four decades ago (Kabakčiev 1984, p.
 47 649). Hence, if CA is found in VA languages including the Slavic ones, French

1 and the other RLs simply *cannot fail* to explicate aspect compositionally.
 2 Illustrative material will be presented below showing that RLs *do* feature aspect:
 3 both Slavic/Slavic-like and in general terms, and not only in the past domain
 4 where the hybrid aspecto-temporal aorist-imperfect contrast is indeed different
 5 from Slavic aspect. All other structural domains in RLs – modal, temporal,
 6 infinitival, clausal, etc., *also effectuate Slavic/Slavic-like aspect* – systematically,
 7 see below.

8 Schmid’s reasoning about the “unidimensional approach” betrays serious
 9 misunderstanding of the history of aspectology and of the essence of CA, whose
 10 significance for linguistic theory was recognized immediately after Verkuyl’s
 11 (1972) initial publication (Friedrich 1974, p. 37; Schopf 1974; Zydaiß 1976, p. 54;
 12 Heinämäki 1978, p. 10; Dowty 1979, pp. 63–64; Markkanen 1979, pp. 54–57;
 13 Carlson 1981; Mourelatos 1981, pp. 56–58; Kabakčiev 1984). In the decades after
 14 the discovery its theoretical value was further specified and conceptualized but,
 15 due to its complexity, it is still being assessed and/or reassessed (Reniers 1999;
 16 Kabakčiev 2000, pp. 55–67, 2019, 2023; Bulatović 2013, 2020, 2022; González
 17 and Verkuyl 2017; Vaníková 2017; Dimitrova 2021). The huge explanatory and
 18 heuristic potential of the CA theory has been demonstrated on data from many
 19 languages, even VA languages, including Slavic: Vouchev (2007, pp. 77–87),
 20 Dimitrova (2021), Dimitrova and Kabakčiev (2021) on Bulgarian and Greek;
 21 Vaníková (2017) on Latin; Shabashvili and Kabakčiev (2021) on Georgian,
 22 although VA languages ought to be expected to have nothing to do with CA. The
 23 compositional effectuation of aspect in VA languages, though peripheral, is due to
 24 the circumstance that, as shown long ago (Kabakčiev 1984, 2000: Ch. 7), CA and
 25 VA, constituting separate phenomena, are actually *mirror images* of each other.
 26 Using constructed material, below it will be shown that CA works *perfectly* on RL
 27 data, and this is only natural: because RLs, just like the Germanic ones, are *not* VA
 28 languages, they are CA languages.

31 **On Slavic Aspect within the CA-Theory Perspective**

32
 33 The literature on Slavic aspect is an oceanful of publications. But most of this
 34 ocean, focused on language-specific Slavic particularities, has always lain on
 35 unstable ground. To give an indicative example concerning the essence of aspect,
 36 according to a contention acclaimed for decades Slavic aspect is a category *per se*
 37 that has nothing to do with situation participants (Jakobson 1957). A wrong thesis.
 38 Precisely the opposite, the perfective-imperfective contrast is realized in CA
 39 languages thanks to the impact of situation-participant NPs at the sentence level,
 40 whereby the values (non-)/boundedness in NP referents are mapped onto the
 41 referent of the verb, see below. And conversely, Slavic aspect, represented by
 42 perfective/imperfective verbs, maps the temporal values of (non-)/boundedness
 43 onto situation-participant NPs.⁴ This regularity, revealed in Kabakčiev (1984), was

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

1 later sophisticated (Kabakčiev 2000) and has stood the test of time; it has never
2 been refuted or seriously challenged.

3 An indirect and lame attempt at a challenge was recently made in a paper
4 arguing that the definition of “aspect language” is not “substantiated by languages
5 such as Bulgarian that combines an intricate aspectual system with a
6 well-developed article system” (Wiesinger 2023: par. 60). Firstly, the attempt is
7 indirect because the taxonomic distribution of VA-CA languages and the place of
8 Bulgarian in it *was not* described by the researchers the author is arguing with.
9 Secondly, Bulgarian *does not have* a “well-developed article system”. Bulgarian
10 has only a definite article, like Greek, and its aspecto-temporal system is roughly
11 identical to the Greek one. Therefore, it makes no sense to “discover Bulgarian” as
12 a special case. Thirdly, the attempt is lame because Wiesinger (2023) shows lack
13 of knowledge of CA. Schmid (2022) before her at least mentions Verkuyl’s (1972;
14 1993) major works. Fourthly, almost the whole of Wiesinger’s (2023) paper is
15 about definiteness-indefiniteness, no mention is made of the role of articles for
16 aspect. And suddenly, the last sentence provides the “revelation” about research
17 necessary for “Abraham et al.’s (2007) claim of a universally complementary
18 distribution of articles and verbal aspect” (Wiesinger 2023: par. 60). The problem
19 is that the author does not know that this claim is unattributable to Abraham et al.
20 (2007). It belongs to somebody else, something “Abraham et al.” have
21 conscientiously pointed out: “the first researcher to note that languages develop
22 either a category of aspect or an article system was the Bulgarian linguist
23 Kabakčiev” (Abraham and Leiss’ 2012, p. 326). Fifthly, the wordage “aspect
24 language” (Wiesinger 2023: par. 60) discloses a faulty theoretical basis with an
25 assumption that there are, or there can be, “aspectless languages”. There are no
26 aspectless languages. There are proponents of flawed concepts unaware that *all*
27 *languages* have systematic devices for effectuating aspect.

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

- 37
38 (1) a. The tourist visited a castle [perfective]
39 b. The tourist visited castles_{LEAK} [imperfective]
40 c. Tourists_{LEAK} visited a castle [imperfective]
41 d. Tourists_{LEAK} visited castles_{LEAK} [imperfective]
42

43 Why sentences such as (1a) are perfective and sentences such as (1b–d)
44 imperfective was fundamentally explained more than half a century ago by
45 Verkuyl (1972), who used different sentences, not pattern-forming ones like those
46 in (1). Verkuyl’s CA model was endorsed by many researchers at that time,

1 including Kabakčiev (1984), and complemented by the conceptualization of
 2 situation-participant NPs as temporal entities in Kabakčiev (2000, pp. 123–151).
 3 The referents of NPs such as *the tourist* and *a castle* in sentences like (1a) are
 4 treated as temporal, kinetic entities, *not* physical/material/spatial (Kabakčiev 2019,
 5 pp. 205–206).⁵ Temporal boundedness is, first, marked on them by the article –
 6 definite or indefinite,⁶ and then mapped/transferred onto the verb referent – which,
 7 initially aspectually ambivalent, is coerced into boundedness. Temporal
 8 nonboundedness in the verb, i.e., imperfectivity, arises in Verkuyl’s imperfective
 9 schema as a result of the dequantification of an NP or more than one NP (*the*
 10 *tourist* > *tourists*, *a castle* > *castles*), i.e., (1b–d) are forced into imperfectivity.
 11 What remains to be explained is the final temporal status of the entity *the tourist* in
 12 (1b) and similar sentences. Its nonboundedness and iterativity are forced onto it
 13 despite the presence of an article or some other determiner/quantifier (Kabakčiev
 14 2019, pp. 210–212). The definition of aspect across languages thus acquires the
 15 following ultimate generalization:

16
 17 *aspect as a universal, cross-language phenomenon constitutes an all-pervading and*
 18 *perpetual process of mapping temporal features between different elements of the*
 19 *sentence, mainly NPs and verbs – and it does not matter whether aspect is verbal or*
 20 *compositional* (Kabakčiev 2023, pp. 267-268).
 21

22 In order to demonstrate how CA, as represented in (1) above, is related to
 23 VA, let me now analyze the translation equivalents of the four English sentences
 24 above in two Slavic languages – Bulgarian, Russian. First consider Bulgarian (2a–
 25 d):
 26

- 27 (2) a. Turistat poseti_{PFVAOR} (edna) krepst
 28 Tourist-the visited (one) castle
 29 ‘The tourist visited a castle’
 30 b. Turistat poseshtavashe_{IMPFVIMPERFECT} krepsti
 31 Tourist-the visited castles
 32 ‘The tourist visited habitually/was visiting castles.’
 33 c. Turisti poseshtavaha_{IMPFVIMPERFECT} (edna) krepst
 34 Tourists visited habitually/were visiting (one) castle
 35 ‘Tourists visited a castle’
 36 d. Turisti poseshtavaha_{IMPFVIMPERFECT} krepsti
 37 Tourists visited habitually/were visiting castles
 38 ‘Tourists visited castles’
 39

40 In contrast to Bulgarian, where perfectivity and imperfectivity in the past are
 41 represented by four grammatical entities (perfective and imperfective verbs
 42 combining separately with aorists and imperfects), in Russian and the other Slavic

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.

⁶It is also marked by determiners, quantifiers, various pronouns, proper names, etc.

1 languages without articles the English sentences (1a–d) are rendered in a simple
 2 way. Perfectivity is represented by the perfective preterit, imperfectivity by the
 3 imperfective preterit. Cf. Russian:

- 4
 5 (3) a. Turist *po*setil_{PFV}PRET zamok
 6 Tourist visited castle
 7 ‘The tourist visited a castle’
 8 b. Turist *po*shchali_{IMPFV}PRET zamki
 9 Tourist visited castles
 10 ‘The tourist visited castles’
 11 c. Turisty *po*shchali_{IMPFV}PRET zamok
 12 Tourists visited castle
 13 ‘Tourists visited a castle’
 14 3. Turisty *po*shchali_{IMPFV}PRET zamki
 15 Tourists visited castles
 16 ‘Tourists visited castles’
 17

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

28 Unfortunately, hosts of aspectologists fail to understand the difference,
 29 bystepping the indispensable component “achieved telos” (general, pragmatic –
 30 not semantic) by wrongly assuming that perfectivity simply expresses boundedness.
 31 To quote publications from the 21st century only, Hodgson (2003, pp. 107–108)
 32 regards the Spanish *pretérito indefinido* “a perfective tense”. Veiga (2015),
 33 offering an overview of aspect in the Spanish Academy Grammar, provides no
 34 definition of perfectivity – what it is and how it relates to *pretérito indefinido*
 35 remains a mystery. Similarly, in Veiga (2023) he almost ignores perfectivity,
 36 treating it as a Slavic intruder. In contrast, the Spanish Academy Grammar (1999,
 37 p. 904) makes some observations directly borrowed from the CA theory, stating
 38 that NPs without determiners denote nonbounded entities incompatible with a
 39 perfective context. For Fløgstad (2016, pp. 29–32), the Spanish preterit is a “past
 40 perfective form” denoting completed, punctual actions. For Vogel (2017, p. 5),
 41 Spanish perfectivity is expressed “grammatically by means of verbal morphology”
 42 and “presents a situation as a single whole”. For Schmid (2022, p. 3), the French
 43 *passé simple* is “(punctually) delimited”. For Diaubalick and Guijarro-Fuentes
 44 (2023, p. 5) it “marks perfective aspect”. Minor et al. (2023, pp. 1–3), comparing
 45 Russian and Spanish, treat perfectivity in both languages as an entire event
 46 “including the endpoint”, in Spanish “manifested in the preterit”. It seems

1 impossible to find a publication on RLs distinguishing between boundedness and
2 perfectivity and conceptualizing the latter as boundedness plus an achieved telos.

3 As for the concept of the temporality of situation-participant NP referents, a
4 key question to answer is: why does the speaker in any language, whether a VA-
5 or a CA-language, “compress” the millions of separate instantiations of things
6 thought of as material entities – people and other physical objects, into generalized
7 concepts of people and other material things: *Mary, John, Churchill, the cat, our*
8 *house*, etc.? The answer is simple. Because if the speaker has to memorize the
9 innumerable separate instantiations of *my wife/husband, our house/the cat,*
10 *Churchill, Boris Johnson, Joe Biden*, etc., his/her memory will burst (Kabakčiev
11 2000: Ch. 5).

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

26 Note that the imperfective English sentence (4a) will contain an *imparfait*
27 form in French, see (4b). In Bulgarian it will have an imperfective imperfect form
28 – (4c), in Russian an imperfective preterit (4d):
29

- 30 (4) a. Churchill delivered speeches_{LEAK} during the war
31 b. Churchill prononçait_{IMPERFECT} des discours pendant la guerre
32 ‘Churchill delivered speeches during the war’
33 c. Churchill iznasyashe_{IMPFVIMPERFECT} rechi po vreme na voynata
34 ‘Churchill delivered speeches during the war’
35 d. Churchill proiznosil_{IMPFVPRET} rechi vo vremya voiny
36 ‘Churchill delivered speeches during the war’
37

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

1 An important question now arises: which is the *decisive element* in sentences
 2 such as (4) to recognize them as imperfective? The answer, surprising or even
 3 shocking for many, is: it is the NPs *speeches* in English and *des discours* in
 4 French. *Speeches* is a Verkuylian -SQA entity: nonbounded, dequantified, a leak
 5 in sentences such as (4a). It is also worth asking: if the NP *speeches* is
 6 dequantified, what are the NPs that it is dequantified against? These are various
 7 “+SQA” NPs containing quantifiers, e.g., *the speech*, *the speeches/these speeches*,
 8 *some speeches*, *ten speeches/many speeches*. If we substitute the zero-article/bare
 9 NP *speeches* in (4a) with *ten speeches*, the sentence becomes perfective, cf. (5a)
 10 below. And if in all the four sentences in (1) the verb form remains the same,
 11 preterit, ambivalent between perfectivity-imperfectivity, in the other languages it
 12 changes into one which either *allows* the effectuation of perfectivity, without
 13 directly encoding it – *passé composé* in French (5b), or one that directly,
 14 grammatically, encodes perfectivity: Bulgarian (5c) with the perfective aorist,
 15 Russian (5d) with the perfective preterit:

- 16
 17 (5) a. Churchill delivered ten speeches during the war
 18 b. Churchill a prononcé_{PASSÉCOMP} dix discours pendant la guerre (French =5a)
 19 c. Churchill iznese_{PFVAOR} deset rechi po vreme na voynata (Bulgarian =5a)
 20 d. Churchill proiznes_{PFVPRET} desyat' rechey vo vremya voiny (Russian =5a)

21
 22 Thus, in English, aspect is effectuated compositionally. Sentence (5a) falls
 23 into Verkuyl's perfective schema, with the +SQA NPs *Churchill* and *ten speeches*
 24 and the +ADD TO (telic) verb (*delivered*).⁷ Note again that *delivered* is
 25 ambivalent between perfectivity-imperfectivity, as can be seen when compared
 26 with (4a). Thanks to the aspectual ambivalence of *delivered*, in (4a) it is coerced
 27 into imperfectivity by the nonboundedness of the situation-participant NP
 28 *speeches*, while in (5a), conversely, it is coerced into perfectivity by the
 29 boundedness of *Churchill* and *ten speeches* – simultaneously mapped onto the
 30 referent of the verb. In French, however, cf. (5b), perfective aspect is effectuated in
 31 a complex manner: first, through the *passé composé* – an aorist grammeme
 32 ensuring the encoding of temporal boundedness; second, through the two +SQA
 33 NPs *Churchill* and *dix discours* ‘ten speeches’, bounding grammatically – through
 34 the proper name and the +SQA *dix discours*, the two situation-participant NPs.
 35 This is something RL researchers have been unable to understand since the
 36 discovery of CA. As for the Slavic sentences (5c)–(5d), respectively, perfectivity
 37 is effectuated grammatically but in different ways: in Bulgarian through the
 38 combination between the aorist value (temporal boundedness only) and the value
 39 “temporal boundedness plus reached telos” in the verb (*iznese_{PFVAOR}* ‘delivered’).
 40 This is aspect effectuation involving four grammemes – verb perfectivity or
 41 imperfectivity combined with aorists and imperfects. In Russian perfectivity
 42 (temporal boundedness plus reached telos) is encoded straightforwardly by the
 43 perfective preterit (*proiznes_{PFVPRET}*).
 44

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

1 **More on CA in cross-language terms, in sentences with three situation-**
 2 **participant NPs**
 3

4 As already established in publications, the perfective-imperfective contrast in
 5 English sentences with future verb forms, aspectually ambivalent like the
 6 corresponding RL future verb forms, can be exemplified in sentences with three
 7 situation-participant NPs (not only two as above), on data from English, Bulgarian
 8 and Greek, the latter genealogically different (from the Hellenic Indo-European
 9 group). In Greek the effectuation of aspect through the temporal values of NPs in
 10 the sentence cannot be realized in the past (Dimitrova and Kabakčiev 2021)
 11 because of the structural restriction similar to the French one. A past tense verb
 12 form in both Greek and French *cannot be aspectually ambivalent* due to the
 13 presence of the aorist-imperfect contrast. In French (*passé composé*) it will have
 14 the value “temporal boundedness” – but not of perfectivity, because perfectivity is
 15 temporal boundedness plus reached telos. In Greek the value is perfective. But this
 16 is not because the aorist is perfective, it is because the aorist is used with perfective
 17 verbs only. As for some special Greek cases described in Dimitrova and
 18 Kabakčiev (2021), they are sidestepped here due lack of space.

19 How aspect is explicated in sentences with three situation-participant NPs and
 20 a preterit verb form can be effectively demonstrated on English and Bulgarian
 21 data. Such patterns of sentences with identical or similar NPs are rarely found in
 22 actual speech and are not easy to construct. In English the explication of aspect is
 23 accomplished easily, thanks to the aspectual ambivalence of all preterit forms,
 24 while in the past tense in Bulgarian this can only be done in specific conditions,
 25 with biaspectual verbs. Such sentence patterns with three situation-participant NPs
 26 were analyzed for the first time recently (Kabakčiev 2020), see English (6) and
 27 their Bulgarian counterparts (7). The English and Bulgarian sentences are identical
 28 structurally, word by word, so, to facilitate perception, glosses and translations are
 29 skipped:
 30

- 31 (6) a. Two mountaineers convoyed the horse to drink from the nearby river
 32 b. Mountaineers_{LEAK} convoyed the horse to drink from the nearby river
 33 c. Two mountaineers convoyed horses_{LEAK} to drink from the nearby river
 34 d. Two mountaineers convoyed the horse to drink from nearby rivers_{LEAK}
 35
 36 (7) a. Dvama planinari konvoiraha_{BIASP} konya da pie ot blizkata reka (=6a)
 37 b. Planinari_{LEAK} konvoiraha_{BIASP} konya da pie ot blizkata reka (=6b)
 38 c. Dvama planinari konvoiraha_{BIASP} kone_{LEAK} da piyat ot blizkata reka (=6c)
 39 d. Dvama planinari konvoiraha_{BIASP} konya da pie ot blizki reki_{LEAK} (=6d)
 40

41 The English sentence (6a) and the Bulgarian one (7a) are perfective,
 42 belonging to Verkuyl’s perfective schema. The following three sentences in
 43 English and Bulgarian, respectively, are imperfective, belonging to Verkuyl’s
 44 imperfective schema – because each of them contains a Verkuylan leak. This
 45 crystal-clear semantico-syntactic pattern demonstrated in (6) and (7) and

1 explaining CA and the article-aspect interplay in sentences with aspectually
2 ambivalent preterit verb forms is also present in German, as can only be expected:

3
4 (8) a. Zwei Bergsteiger begleiteten_{PRET} das Pferd, um aus dem nahegelegenen
5 Fluss zu trinken (=6a)

6 b. Bergsteiger_{LEAK} begleiteten_{PRET} das Pferd, um aus dem nahegelegenen
7 Fluss zu trinken (=6b)

8 c. Zwei Bergsteiger begleiteten_{PRET} Pferde_{LEAK}, um aus dem nahegelegenen
9 Fluss zu trinken (=6c)

10 d. Zwei Bergsteiger begleiteten_{PRET} das Pferd, um aus nahegelegenen
11 Flüssen_{LEAK} zu trinken (=6d)

12
13 Sentence (8a) is perfective, belonging to Verkuyl's perfective schema. The
14 other three are imperfective, each featuring a Verkuylian leak.

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

24 Thus shown above is the systematic mechanism of effectuating perfectivity-
25 imperfectivity in sentences with three situation-participant NPs in four languages
26 (including Greek). Let me now render the four English sentences (6) also into
27 French and Russian – to demonstrate how aspect can be effectuated *in other ways*.
28 As already demonstrated, sentences with three situation-participant NPs and a
29 preterit verb form marked neither for Slavic-like aspect, nor for aorist-imperfect
30 *can* effectuate aspect in English, German and even Bulgarian (in specific
31 conditions in the latter). French is not such a language. It cannot demonstrate
32 compositional explication of aspect in the past, as seen in (9). Consider French (9)
33 – sentences that are perfect equivalents of English (6), Bulgarian (7) and German
34 (8):

35
36 (9) a. Deux alpinistes ont convoyé_{PASSÉCOMP} le cheval pour s'abreuver à la rivière
37 voisine (=6a)

38 b. Des alpinistes convoyaient_{IMPERFECT} le cheval pour s'abreuver à la rivière
39 voisine (=6b)

40 c. Deux alpinistes convoyaient_{IMPERFECT} des chevaux pour pour s'abreuver à
41 la rivière voisine (=6c)

42 d. Deux alpinistes convoyaient_{IMPERFECT} le cheval pour s'abreuver aux
43 rivières voisines (=6d)

44
45 The reason for the impossibility to explicate aspect in French in CA terms in
46 the past is clear. It is that French obligatorily uses verb forms of *either* the aorist *or*

1 the imperfect type and the Verkuylian concept of a leak does not hold. If the
 2 situation is perfective, as in English (6a), the French form is of the aorist type
 3 (*passé composé*). If the situation is imperfective, as in (6b–d), it is of the
 4 imperfective type (*imparfait*). But this does not mean that the *passé composé* is a
 5 perfective verb form. The *passé composé* is an *aorist* verb form, not a perfective
 6 one. It encodes temporal boundedness but it *cannot* encode a reached telos. Recall
 7 that a reached telos is obligatory for the effectuation of perfectivity. As for the
 8 French *imparfait* and the imperfect in languages like Bulgarian, Greek, Albanian,
 9 Georgian, etc., it is an imperfective grammeme which also encodes a tense value,
 10 pastness.

11 Lastly, it is interesting to see what happens in a prototypical Slavic language
 12 – with no aorist-imperfect distinction but only preterits that are perfective or
 13 imperfective lexically. Consider Russian (10), where, for the English sentences in
 14 (6) to be rendered, the Russian sentence must contain either a perfective preterit
 15 (10a) or an imperfective one (10b–d):

- 16
 17 (10) a. Dva al'pinista otveli_{IPFVPRET} lošhad' napyt'sya iz blizlezhashchey reki (=6a)
 18 b. Al'pinisty veli_{IMPFVPRET} lošhad' napyt'sya iz blizlezhashchey reki (=6b)
 19 c. Dva al'pinista veli_{IMPFVPRET} lošhadey napyt'sya iz blizlezhashchey reki
 20 (=6c)
 21 d. Dva al'pinista veli_{IMPFVPRET} lošhad' napyt'sya iz blizlezhashchey rek (=6d)
 22

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

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

- 36 (11) a. The valet will park our car in the nearby parking lot
 37 b. The valet will park cars_{LEAK} in the nearby parking lot
 38 c. The valet will park our car in nearby parking lots_{LEAK}
 39 d. Valets_{LEAK} will park our car in the nearby parking lot
 40

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

- 1
2 (12) a. Valet_o shte parkira_{BIASP} kolata ni v blizkiya parking (=11a)
3 b. Valet_o shte parkira_{BIASP} koli_{LEAK} v blizkiya parking (=11b)
4 c. Valet_o shte parkira_{BIASP} kolata ni v blizki parking_{iLEAK} (=11c)
5 d. Valeta_{LEAK} shte parkirat_{BIASP} kolata ni v blizkiya parking (=11d)
6

7 As can very easily be predicted – thanks to the enormous heuristic power of
8 the CA theory, the same regularities are also valid for German, where the
9 Verkuylian concept of a leak holds for imperfective sentences:
10

- 11 (13) a. Der Kammerdiener wird unser Auto auf dem nahegelegenen Parkplatz
12 parken
13 b. Der Kammerdiener wird Autos_{LEAK} auf dem nahegelegenen Parkplatz
14 parken
15 c. Der Kammerdiener wird unser Auto auf nahegelegenen Parkplätzen_{LEAK}
16 parken
17 d. Kammerdiener_{LEAK} werden unser Auto auf dem nahegelegenen
18 Parkplatz parken
19

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

26 As found in Kabakčiev (2021a), sentences with three situation-participant
27 NPs in Slavic languages with no articles are generally *unanalyzable* in terms of the
28 impact of NP referents, for the obvious reason that it is impossible for the hearer to
29 judge whether a bare NP must be interpreted as if with a definite article, an
30 indefinite article (or a *some*-type of quantifier), or a zero-article NP (in English as
31 a metalanguage). In other words, in *all* Slavic languages with no articles (the huge
32 majority) a sentence with a biaspectual verb and three zero-article situation-
33 participant NPs *cannot be interpreted aspectually* in most cases. To give an
34 example, in such a Slavic language the English sentence (11b) will have the
35 hypothetical (non-grammatical) form **Valet will park cars in nearby parking lot*, a
36 sentence difficult or impossible to understand because: (i) *valet* lacks
37 quantificational information; (ii) *cars* is ambivalent between “the cars”
38 (quantified), “some cars” (quantified), and “cars” (nonquantified); (iii) *nearby*
39 *parking lot* also lacks quantificational information. Therefore, it is impossible to
40 say whether this sentence and similar ones portray a one-off event, a perfective
41 situation, or an indefinitely repeated one, imperfective. As already argued
42 (Kabakčiev 2021b, p. 36), such a language – simultaneously lacking articles in
43 NPs and aspect in verbs, presumably, cannot exist.
44
45

1 **Further observations on CA in French and other RLs**

2
3 As already pointed out, it is widely but wrongly maintained that “true aspect”
4 in RLs is restricted to the domain of the past. Suppose this were true. People
5 would then be unable to communicate to other people in French, Italian, Spanish,
6 Portuguese and Romanian millions of extremely simple situations in everyday life
7 denoted by infinitives: e.g., that a child wants *to eat* a cake (the whole of it), that a
8 man wants *to drink* a beer (from the first drop to the last), that a woman wants *to*
9 *open* the window and leave it open, that someone wants *to visit* Paris on a single
10 occasion, etc. Most publications have it that the aorist-imperfect aspecto-temporal
11 contrast is different from the Slavic perfective-imperfective one *for inherent*
12 *reasons*, not only because of the additional tense value in the aorist-imperfect
13 contrast. Indeed, the aorist-imperfect contrast *resembles* Slavic/Slavic-like aspect –
14 but it does not coincide with it.⁸

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

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

- 32
33 1. *The so-called “perfective” (passé simple and perfetto semplice) and*
34 *“imperfective” (imparfait and imperfetto) verbal inflection markers appear to*
35 *express states of affairs that are (punctually) delimited and (duratively)*
36 *nondelimited, respectively. German does not have such a grammaticalised*
37 *aspectual opposition (Schmid 2022, p. 3).*
38

39 *My judgement.* When aspectologists employ the two aspectological concepts
40 perfective and imperfective, they are obliged to define them precisely. Schmid
41 ascribes to the perfective-imperfective contrast the notions delimitedness and
42 nondelimitedness – not false but insufficient for defining the contrast. The abstract

⁸Actually, the difference is between Slavic perfectivity and the semantics of the Romance aorist 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.

- 1 perfective-imperfective cross-language distinction advanced in the general CA
 2 theory fully covers the Slavic contrast: perfectivity is a temporally bounded
 3 situation with a reached telos (Vendlerian accomplishment or achievement);
 4 imperfectivity is a temporally nonbounded situation (Vendlerian state or activity).
 5 From this point of view it is drastically untrue that the *passé simple* and the
 6 *perfetto semplice* are “perfective markers” expressing “(punctually) delimited”
 7 states of affairs. They *do not express* perfectivity, they only *allow* its expression.
 8 The same is valid for the aorist-type forms in Italian, Spanish, Portuguese,
 9 Romanian, a thesis upheld in Kabakčiev (2022, pp. 167–171) for French, Italian
 10 and Spanish, illustrated with examples. For anyone adept in CA it is not difficult to
 11 conceptualize the essence of the aorist. In French, a sentence such as *Messi a botté*
 12 *le ballon* contains a *passé composé* verb form, as does *Messi a toujours aimé le*
 13 *football*. But while the former is perfective, the latter is not. Why? Because in
 14 French *perfectivity does not correlate with the passé composé* (and the *passé*
 15 *simple*) – and the same is valid for the other allegedly perfective tensed forms in
 16 the other RLs. The *passé composé* only *allows* the effectuation of perfectivity.
 17 Note that the aorist *cannot express perfectivity also in Bulgarian*, a Slavic
 18 language. Perfectivity is boundedness plus a reached telos, and the Bulgarian
 19 aorist *always needs a perfective verb* to effectuate it. If the Bulgarian aorist is used
 20 with an imperfective verb, the result is not perfectivity but a different Vendlerian
 21 situation, an episode (Kabakčiev 2000, pp. 286–307). Finally, extremely
 22 importantly, *the aorist does not express perfectivity in Greek*. Recall that it is
 23 Ancient Greek whence both the concept and the term aorist originate. The Greek
 24 aorist *allows perfectivity* and relies on perfective verbs to encode it. This is proved
 25 by the circumstance that, complemented by certain adverbials, it stops expressing
 26 perfectivity and starts to explicate episodes (Dimitrova and Kabakčiev 2021, pp.
 27 194–199).
 28
- 29 2. *In the German examples (3)/(3') these different temporal structures*
 30 *[(punctually) delimited and (duratively) nondelimited] are expressed through*
 31 *the different semantic information contained in the verb stems (in (3) erfahren*
 32 *'to come to know' and in (3') wissen 'to know'), while the verbs bear the*
 33 *same inflectional markers (past tense: Präteritum), because aspectual*
 34 *contents expressed in one language by a complex inflectional system can be*
 35 *expressed in another language “by lexical means” (Schmid 2022, p. 3). Here*
 36 *are Schmid's German examples – in her paper they are numbered (3)/(3'),*
 37 *here they are (14a) and (14b):*

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- (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. (15b) 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

1 and to explain it to others is a time-wasting and hopeless enterprise” (Kabakčiev
2 2022, p. 172).

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

6
7 *My judgement.* Telic-atelic and perfective-imperfective are indeed “rendered
8 interchangeable”, but in separate publications only. It is unacceptable to ascribe
9 mistakes made by some authors in their writings to the whole of the aspectological
10 community.

11
12 4. *Unidimensional approaches are “based on very simple and limited semantic*
13 *instruments, they are supposedly only able to offer crude classifications that*
14 *disregard or leave the finer gradations of linguistic phenomena unexplained*
15 *(Schmid 2022, p. 5).*

16
17 *My judgement.* This statement is astonishing in its inadequacy. The author
18 quotes Verkuyl’s (1972, 1993) two major works but clearly has no understanding
19 of the theory of CA and of Verkuyl’s aspect schemata, which describe CA in
20 scrupulous detail.¹⁰ Conceptualizing the perfective-imperfective distinction
21 (temporal boundedness plus achieved telos versus temporal nonboundedness), the
22 schemata precisely cover the Slavic aspect contrast, as confirmed in, e.g.,
23 Kabakčiev (1984, 2000, 2019), Vounchev (2007), Bulatović (2013, 2020, 2022),
24 Dimitrova (2021). Indeed, Verkuyl’s model is slightly different from the one
25 employed here, but in essence the two cover the major aspectual phenomena in
26 approximately the same way. Furthermore, unlike, e.g., Ihsane (2020), Schmid’s
27 (2019, 2022) two publications do not have a single word to say about a major
28 structural entity of the French language and of RLs related to aspect, *the article* –
29 both the definite and the indefinite article, plus the zero article and the article-like
30 *des* in French. The same is valid for countless other publications on RLs. Someone
31 might exclaim: “What does the article have to do with aspect?” The answer: *a*
32 *huge lot*. As already demonstrated with pattern examples in several languages
33 featuring articles/an article, including English, French, German, Greek, Bulgarian,
34 the significance of articles for the effectuation of aspect is *enormous*.

35 Let us now check whether French *cannot* effectuate aspect (perfectivity-
36 imperfectivity) in the future systematically, as conjectured directly or indirectly in
37 Schmid (2019, 2022). The check can be done using *le futur simple* (16b) or *le futur*
38 *proche* (16c):
39

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).

- 1 (16) a. Pierre will eat a cake/drink a beer/open the window/visit Paris
 2 b. Pierre mangera un gâteau/boira une bière/ouvrira la fenêtre/visitera
 3 Paris
 4 c. Pierre va manger un gâteau/boire une bière/ouvrir la fenêtre/visiter
 5 Paris
 6

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

- 17 (17) a. Le voiturier garera notre voiture sur le parking à proximité (=11a)
 18 b. Le voiturier garera des voitures_{LEAK} sur le parking à proximité (=11b)
 19 c. Le voiturier garera notre voiture dans des parkings_{LEAK} à proximité
 20 (=11c)
 21 d. Des voituriers_{LEAK} gareront notre voiture sur le parking à proximité
 22 (=11d)
 23

24 The first sentence, (17a), effectuates perfectivity: temporal boundedness plus
 25 a reached telos. The car is to be driven into the relevant parking space – once, and
 26 left there. How is this achieved, given that the verb form *garera/gareront* is
 27 aspectually ambivalent and can explicate perfectivity *or* imperfectivity? This is
 28 achieved through Verkuyl’s perfective schema, in which the situation-participant
 29 NPs and the verb have “plus-values”: +SQA, +ADD TO (Verkuyl 1993, pp. 17–
 30 18). Imperfectivity is effectuated in (17b-d) through Verkylian leaks. The
 31 perfectivity of (17a) is additionally explained in Kabakčiev (2019, 2020, 2023)
 32 through the mapping mechanism in which the three situation-participant NPs
 33 simultaneously transfer their temporal boundedness onto the verb referent. This
 34 temporal model does not refute Verkuyl’s atemporal one. It only adds to it
 35 elements related to cognition, and the sentences above in four languages
 36 demonstrate that CA exists in them beyond any possible doubt.

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

1 interplay. The translation of English (11) into other RLs reveals the same
 2 mechanism of realizing aspect through the article-aspect interplay – but the issue is
 3 skipped here for lack of space.

4 The systematic mechanism of effectuating aspect in sentence patterns with
 5 identical or near-identical situation-participant NPs was described for the first time
 6 recently (Kabakčiev 2020). The construction of such syntactic patterns
 7 corresponds to Verkuyl's CA theory and corroborates it without adding some
 8 essential new element to his schemata, with the exception of the conceptualization
 9 of NP referents as temporal entities.¹¹ The use of syntactic patterns with three
 10 identical or similar situation-participant NPs – viewed against randomly
 11 constructed sentences with various NPs, facilitates the conceptualization of aspect
 12 through the more transparent NP quantification-dequantification interplay.
 13
 14

15 Conclusion

16
 17 Contrary to what is claimed in innumerable publications on aspect in RLs,
 18 these languages systematically effectuate the universal perfective-imperfective
 19 contrast found in the Slavic languages: in CA terms and in the same way as it is
 20 effectuated in English and the other Germanic languages. There is no space here to
 21 analyze other RLs. But the material investigated indicates that if French with its
 22 specific nominal-determination structure and the pseudo-article *des* ambivalent
 23 between quantification-dequantification is capable of effectuating the perfective-
 24 imperfective contrast, the other RLs will effectuate this contrast *even more*
 25 *straightforwardly* with their more orderly nominal-determination patterns and the
 26 presence of a true zero article. There can hardly be any doubt that a future analysis
 27 of the other RLs for an exhaustive description of their specificities – vis-à-vis the
 28 present conceptual framework and similar models of CA, will ultimately bust the
 29 long-standing fallacy that there is no Slavic-like aspect in RLs and that aspect
 30 resides there only in the past domain.

31 Bottom line: as clearly demonstrated above, aspect is not restricted to the past
 32 domain in RLs, it is omnipresent and easily identifiable for researchers having
 33 adequate understanding of the CA theory – the non-employment of which in RL
 34 studies is an extremely severe omission that must be avoided.
 35
 36

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

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