Hear-say, inference, surprise: (self-)distancing in Balkan Slavic

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 şeklinde 'distance' to the analysis of Balkan Slavic / Bulgarian perfect-like forms (l-forms)

• semantic basis
• contextual specification
• functional relevance

1. ‘l-forms’ in Balkan Slavic

• form: l-participle (+)auxiliary ‘to be’

(1) sӑm / si / (e) jala
be.Pprs.1/2/3 eat.l-ptcp.fem

• meaning: perfect, conclusive, renarrative, admirative

(2) perfect
A: Čičo Koki, takava pӑržola može i da sӑm jal njakoga, ama ne si spomnjam. […]
B: Na vašata vila si jal takava pӑržola. (Hinrichs et al. 2000: 139)
A: Uncle Koki, it might be that I have eaten such a chop before, but I don’t remember.
B: At your dacha you have eaten such chop.

(3) conclusive
Izgležda, kogato se e počukalo na vratata, toj e sedjal i e pišel.
It appears that when a knock came at the door he’d been sitting there and writing.
(Alexander & Zhobov 2009: 68)

(4) renarrative
Luka Toni ∅ započnal pregovori s Roma (http://topsport.ibox.bg, 27.11.2009)
[It is said that] Luca Toni started negotiations with Roma.

(5) admirable
– Ništo njama be, čovek! Kakvo si se zajal?! (Alek Popov, Misija London)
– Nothing’s wrong, man! What are you arguing about?!

(6) irony
A: […] Nie prosto složixme tam dve stolčeta do palatkata, gledaxme zvezdite ...
B: A-a, te ∅ bili do samata palatka? (Hinrichs et al. 2000: 29)
A: We simply put there two little chairs beside the tent, looked at the stars ...
B: A-a, they were right beside the tent?

Question I
Are these different categories or can there be developed a unified analysis?

1 The research for this paper has been carried out within the project 'Perspectivity in Balkan Slavic: semantic basis and discourse pragmatic relevance', funded by the German Research Foundation (SO 949/2-1).
2. The same but different

2.1 Homonymy

- different paradigms (e.g. Nicolova 2008) with homonymous forms: perfect, conclusive, renarrative, admirative

(7) a. Ti si bil v Germanija? You have [already] been to Germany?
   perfect

b. Ti si bil v Germanija! You – [here] in Germany!
   admirative

   - Kakva novina? – obadixme se vsički.
   - Baj Ganju se vărnal ot Evropa! renarrative
   - Ne može da bâde!
   - Kak „ne može da bâde”, be, gospoda, az go vidjax, govorix s nego. renarrative?
     (Aleko Konstantinov, Baj Ganju)
   - How, "impossible", I saw him, talked to him.

(9) A (Sluša.): Psst, mi se čini krevetot krcna! (Mac)
   B: Krcna?
   A: Se protegnuva!
   B: Se protegnuva?
   A: Se prodzeva!
   B: Se prodzeva?
   A: Se razbudil!
   B: Se razbudil? (Vasil Iljuski, Čorbadži Teodos)
   A (Listens): Psst, the bed seems to creak.
   B: Creak?
   A: He is stretching!
   B: He is stretching?
   A: He is yawning!
   B: He is yawning?
   A: He has woken up!
   B: He has woken up?

(10) – Ox, maj sâm zagubil ključa – izmânka toj. (Alek Popov, Misija London)
   – Oh no, I seem to have lost the key – he mumbled.

⇒ Assumption I

| The obvious context-dependency suggests a unified analysis; polysemy instead of homonymy. |

2.2 Polysemy

- perfect-like complex (Ivančev 1978[1976]); transitional usages (Friedman 1982); meaning continuum (Guentchéva 1990); generalized past (Alexander 2001)
• ‘distance’ as underlying principle
  o Lunt (1952: 91): *l*-forms show “an action viewed as distanced in time or reality”
  o Fielder (1995): distance narrator – narration; foregrounding/backgrounding
  o Topolinjska (2009): semantic category of ‘distance’ (–evidential and +admirative)
  → distance speaker/narrator – predication/narration
  o Lazard (1999): mediated expression of facts with different implications
    “Speakers are somehow split into two persons, the one who speaks and the one who has
    heard or infers or perceives.” (Lazard 1999: 95)
  → distance ‘within’ speakers

⇒ Question II
What is the semantic basis for ‘distance’ and the interpretations ascribed to it?

3. ‘Distance’

3.1 Semantic basis: coding of distance

⇒ contribution of *l*-participle and ±auxiliary

• components
  o state connected to some previous event *e–CS*
  o time of utterance *TU*
  o time of observation *TO*
  o assertion / topic time *TT*

• semantics (cf. Sonnenhauser 2012, 2014; based on Izvorski 1997)
  o assertion of connected state: *TT(CS)* follows some prior event *e*
  o *TO* included within *TT*
  o *TO* included or not included in *TU*

(11) a. *l*-participle +aux
    \[ e \subseteq TT \& CS(e) \subseteq TT \] \& \[ TO \subseteq TT(CS) \& TO \subseteq TU \]
 b. *l*-participle -aux
    \[ e \subseteq TT \& CS(e) \subseteq TT \] \& \[ TO \subseteq TT(CS) \& TO \supseteq TU \]

• crucial relations: *e–CS* and *TO–TU*
  o speaker – predication, speaker – speaker (cf. above)
  o information vs. knowledge (on that distinction cf. Akatsuka 1985)

⇒ Assumption IIa
*l*-forms code two kinds of distance: information-based (*e–CS*) and knowledge-based (*TO–TU*)

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2 Guentchéva (1996: 67) also takes the ‘double nature of the perfect’ as basic its distancing functions. However, she focuses on the mutual conditioning of *e* and *CS* only.
3.2 Contextual specification: interpretation of distance

- components of ‘distance’ (cf. Dancygier & Vandelanotte 2009: 326)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>source</th>
<th>l-forms</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>two locations, A and B</td>
<td>e, CS and TO, TU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>observer, aligned with A or B</td>
<td>narrator, character</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>space between A and B</td>
<td>information, knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>directionality, A→B, B→A</td>
<td>inference, presupposition; assertion, entailment</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1

(12) perfect

a. semantics
   event → connected state
   asserted asserted
   TO ⊆ TU, TO = TU (character = narrator)

b. A: Vilica...
   B: Pak li sân zabravila? (Hinrichs et al. 2000: 42)
   A: Fork ...
   B: Have I forgotten it again?

(13) conclusive

a. semantics
   e ← connected state
   inferred asserted
   TO ⊆ TU, TO = TU (character = narrator)

b. Ivan e zaminal. Kufărăt mu ne e v koridora. (Nicolova 2006: 31)
   Ivan has left. His suitcase is not in the corridor.

(14) renarrative

a. semantics
   e → connected state
   presupposed asserted
   TO ⊆ TU, TO ≠ TU (character ≠ narrator)

b. I toj bil izvesten s tova, če [...] za cjaloto vreme ne izpolzual banjata [...] (Hinrichs et al. 2000: 267)
   He is said to be known for not washing himself the whole time.

(15) admirative

a. semantics
   e – connected state
   entailed asserted
   TO ⊆ TU, TO = TU (narrator ≠ narrator; self-distancing)

b. B: Čakaj de! Dvesta ti dadoch ...
   A: Ej znači, az sân imal mnogo pari ... (Hinrichs et al. 2000: 93)
   B: Hey, wait! I gave you two hundred ...
   A: Hey, this means that I have a lot of money ...
(16) irony

a. semantics

  e  – CS
  asserted  asserted
  \( \subseteq \) TU, \( \not\subseteq \) TU (character \( \neq \) narrator; echoing)

b. A: Buć, ti tuneli li tărșiš v taja torta, ta zalajaš taka!
B: Metro...
C: ä·ä [...] 
D: Eto, kåde biš Sofijskoto metro! ... (Hinrichs et al. 2000: 42)

A: Buć, are you looking for tunnels in that cake, ....
B: Underground ...
C: Ahh ...
D: Ah, there is the Sofia underground! ...

"The speaker dissociates herself from the opinion echoed and indicates that she does not hold it herself."[...] (Sperber & Wilson 1995: 239)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>locations</th>
<th>observer</th>
<th>space</th>
<th>direction</th>
<th>interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>e  – CS</td>
<td>TO ( \subseteq ) TU</td>
<td>character = narrator</td>
<td>information</td>
<td>perfect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  – CS</td>
<td>TO ( \subseteq ) TU</td>
<td>character = narrator</td>
<td>information, knowledge</td>
<td>conclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  – CS</td>
<td>TO ( \subseteq ) TU</td>
<td>character ( \neq ) narrator</td>
<td>information, knowledge</td>
<td>renarrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  – CS</td>
<td>TO ( \subseteq ) TU</td>
<td>narrator ( \neq ) narrator</td>
<td>knowledge</td>
<td>admirative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e  – CS</td>
<td>TO ( \subseteq ) TU</td>
<td>character ( \neq ) narrator</td>
<td>information, knowledge</td>
<td>irony</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2

⇒ Assumption IIb
The contextual specification of the components of distance yields predictable interpretations instead of clear-cut grammatical paradigms.

3.3 Functional relevance: distance and point of view

• \( l \)-forms and discourse

(17) [K]ogato baba Jova razpravi za poslednija mu čas, vsički se uverixa, če toja păt toj ne se šeguva. 

Vărnal se čovekăt ot dărva, raztovaril magarenceto si, vărzal go, [...] (Elin Pelin, Na onja svijat)

When grandmother Jova told about his last hour, everybody was convinced that this time he was not joking. The man had returned from the woods, had unloaded his donkey, had tied it.

(18) – A be, Toško, ti li si bi? – izvika toj – što šteš tuk v blatoto? ...

(Angel Karaličev, Toško Afrikanski)

– Ah, Toško, is it you? – he shouted – what are you doing here in the swamp? ...

⇒ distance and point of view (speaker, narrator, non-narrator, character): text structuring

• ‘narrative’ (17) vs. ‘dialogical’ (18) mode (Paducheva 2011)
  o narrative mode: perfect, conclusive, renarrative
  o dialogical mode: perfect, conclusive, renarrative, admirative, irony

\[ ^{3} \] Nicolova (2006: 43) points out that the admirative is used only in spoken; according to the analysis proposed here this is not so much due to ‘spoken’ language but rather to the dialogical mode.
4. To sum up

- unified account of perfect, conclusive, renarrative, admirable, irony in terms of ‘distance’
- distance coded by ‘l-participle (+)auxiliary’
  - information-based distance
  - knowledge-based distance
- contextual specification of the components of distance
- relevance of distance for point of view, text structuring and narrativity

References
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