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

Barbara Sonnenhauser (LMU München)

Balkan Slavic has forms composed out of the auxiliary *săm* 'be' and '*l*-participle', cf. Bulgarian in (1):

'l-form'

(1) săm / si / e xvărlila be.Prs.1/2/3 throw.l-participle

These *l*-forms are traditionally assumed to form four paradigms: perfect, renarrative, conclusive and admirative. However, the formal differences are only marginal: the renarrative may lack the auxiliary in the third person, the restrictions of the perfect as regards the temporal basis of the participle are getting loose (blurring the difference to the conclusive) and the admirative is dependent on contextual factors and intonation, cf. (2):

(2)		e knigata? e is the book?'		
	a.	Toj ja <i>e xvărlil</i> văv vodata.	perfect, conclusive	
		'He has thrown it / must have thrown it into the water.'		
	b.	Toj ja <i>Øxvărlil</i> văv vodata.	renarrative	
		'He threw it into the water (as I was told).'		
	С.	Toj ja <i>e Ø xvărlil</i> văv vodata! '(Oh look!) He has thrown it into the water!	admirative	

Recent accounts take the difference between these uses as one of interpretation, triggered by coand contextual factors. Concerning the admirative, Friedman (1982: 66) speaks of a "facultative usage transitional between the perfect and the reported", as can be seen in examples as (3), where intonation distinguishes the perfect and the admirative:

(3)	a.	Ti si bil v Germanija?	perfect
		'You have (already) been to Germany?'	
	b.	Ti si bil v Germanija!	admirative
		'You – (here) in Germany!'	

This obvious context-dependence calls for the specification of a semantic basis underlying and enabling the different interpretations. One suggestion is the notion of 'distance' (e.g. Fielder 1996, Topolinjska 2009), manifesting itself to different degrees, e.g. as non-confirmation, hear-say, doubt or irony (Guentchéva 1996). This in turn raises the question how the different degrees of distance can be captured more precisely and which factors contribute to their specification.

Starting from Dancygier & Vandelanotte's (2009: 326) conception of distance as implying at least two spatial locations separated by a space and perceived by an observing entity, this paper focuses on the admirative analyzing it in terms of 'self-distancing'. It will be shown that distance has to include a well-defined conception of viewpoint (narrator and observer) and the direction measuring the space between the two locations. This direction can be captured in terms of assertion vs. presupposition (on their relevance to *l*-forms cf. Nicolova 1993) which is in turn basic to the different temporal implications with the perfect referring to the past (3a), the admirative referring to the present (3b). These differences also account for the different behavior of admirative, renarrative and perfect on the text level.

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