Semantic imperfectivity in Bulgarian from a comparative perspective.

Maria Luisa Rivero
Linguistics, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.
mrivero@uottawa.ca
May 2013.

To appear in
Proceedings of the Third International Congress of Bulgarian Studies
(трети международен конгрес по българистика),

1. Introduction

The goal of this paper\(^1\) is to seek an understanding of the semantics of imperfectivity by comparing Bulgarian to other Slavic languages and Romance. Bulgarian displays morphological properties typical of Slavic, tenses with aspectual dimensions often viewed as typical of Romance, and a Renarrated Mood with aspectual distinctions. This richness opens challenging windows for an understanding of semantic imperfectivity.

The core idea in this paper is that cross-linguistically semantic imperfective categories (Impfs from now on) share an invariant meaning component combined with one that may vary, and are not semantically unmarked\(^2\). The semantic core of all Impfs resides in a Viewpoint\(^3\) operator IMPF that quantifies over situations (Kratzer 2011). Readings in Impf are due to restrictions on the domain of quantification of this operator

---

\(^1\) Research carried out with support from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada in collaboration with A. Arregui, A. Salanova, and N. Slavkov. Interested readers are addressed for more details to (Rivero & Arregui 2010, 2012, Arregui, Rivero & Salanova 2012 a, b) available at <http://aix1.uottawa.ca/~romlab>. Our work now in progress includes (Rivero & Slavkov in prep.) and (Arregui, Rivero & Salanova in prep.).

\(^2\) The view that Impfs are semantically unmarked is prominent in Slavic (a. o. the summary in Forsyth (1970), and the recent survey in (Altshuler 2010)). In some Bulgarian and Romance traditions, Impfs are semantically marked, and Aorists semantically unmarked. In some recent proposals on French, however, the content of Impfs derives from null operators, so they could be called unmarked ((de Swart 1988), (Hacquard 2006) for different implementations.

\(^3\) See (Smith 1991) on Viewpoint vs. Situation Aspect.
shared by several languages or specific to some. A comparison with Russian and Polish shows that Bulgarian lacks so-called ‘factual’ (Obshchefakticheskoe znachenie (Maslov 1959)) Impfs, which in these languages allude to past complete events. A comparison with Romance shows that Bulgarian shares with this family prospective Impfs. The Renarrated Mood provides further support for these differences and parallelisms.

Section 2 deals with habitual and ongoing readings, and introduces IMPF. §3 argues that Bulgarian lacks semantic Impfs called Factual in Russian and Polish, whose readings are expressed by Aorists or Perfects. §4 shows that Bulgarian shares with Romance a prospective reading, restricted or absent elsewhere in Slavic. §5 is for the Renarrated Mood. Conclusions are in §6.

2. Habitual and Ongoing Impfs: no semantic variation
Readings shared by Slavic and Romance are the habitual and ongoing types.

2.1. Habituals also known as ‘characterizing’, ‘generic’, report on generalizations, as in Bulgarian (1a), (1b-d) for West, East, and South Slavic, and (1e) for Romance[^4].

(1) a. Predi 20 godini, decata gledaxa po-malko TV. Bg
   Ago 20 years, children the saw. Impf less TV
b. Dwadzieścia lat temu dzieci oglądaly mniej telewizji. Po
   Twenty years ago children saw. Impf less TV
c. Dvadcat’ let nazad deti smotreli televizor men’she. Ru
   Twenty years ago children watched. Impf TV less
d. Pred dvajsetimi leti so otroci manj gledali televizijo. Slv
   Before twenty years are children less watched. Impf TV less
e. Há vinte anos, as crianças viam menos televisão. Por
   ‘Twenty years ago, the children saw. Impf TV less

(1a-e) share readings but differ in morphology. Bulgarian Vs are in the Imperfect[^5] - which results in semantic imperfectivity with unprefixed / primary imperfectives, (1a), or

[^4]: Aspectual distinctions are clearer in pasts, so I use them for illustration. Examples are provided with oversimplified morpheme-by-morpheme glosses and English idiomatic translations. Abbreviations: Bg=Bulgarian, Fr= French, Po=Polish, Por=Portuguese, Ru=Russian, Slv=Slovenian, Uk= Ukrainian.
prefixed / morphological perfectives later. Other Slavic languages signal semantic imperfectivity with primary / secondary imperfective participles. In Slovenian, an auxiliary encodes Past in all persons. In semantics, all patterns in (1) share IMPF, but in Bulgarian and Romance this operator is encoded in Imperfects.

Habituals may advance narrations, which unifies our languages, as in (2-4) (Every Tuesday, Jean had lunch with/at his grandmother. He stopped at the bakery to buy a cake. He arrived at half past eleven to cook (the meal)).

(2) Vseki vtornik Ivan zakusvaše pri baba si. Bg
Each Tuesday Ivan had.breakfast.Impf in grand.mother his
Minavaše prez sladkarnicata i kupuvaše torta.
Went. Impf by bake.shop.the and bought.Impf cake.
Vrāštaše se v11:30 da prigotvi objada.
Returned Refl at 11:30 to prepare lunch

(3) W każdy wtorek Jean jadł obiad ze swoja babcią. Po
In each Tuesday J. ate (Impf) lunch with his grandma.
Zatrzymywał się w piekarni żebym kupić ciasto.
Stopped (Impf) Refl at bakery in.order.to buy cake.
Przychodził do domu o pół do dwunastej aby gotować.
Came (Impf) to house at half before noon in.order.to cook

(4) Chaque mardi, Jean déjeunait chez sa grand-mère… Fr
Each Tuesday, J. lunched (Impf) at his grandmother.
Il passait par la patisserie et acheta un gâteau.
He went (Impf) by the pastry.shop and bought (Impf) a cake
Il arrivait à onze heures et demie pour préparer le repas. (Bonami 2002)
He arrived (Impf) at eleven hours and half to prepare the meal.

2.2. **Ongoing Impfs** are also shared by Slavic and Romance: (5-9).

(5) Kogato majka mi vleze v stajata mi, (az) govorč s gadžeto mi. Bg
When mother my came in room.the my, (I) talked.Impf with boyfriend.the my

---

5 See (Rivero 2009) for other morphological manifestations of IMPF in Bg.
2.3. **Analysis.** Based on (Arregui, Rivero & Salanova 2012), Impfs share IMPF, with different readings due to restrictions on its quantificational domain. IMPF as a Viewpoint category occupies a position under Tense and above VP: (10).

(10) \[[T_P \text{Tense}_i [\text{AspP} \text{IMPF} [\text{VP} \ldots V\ldots]]]\]

Assertions are evaluated in relation to a topic situation represented syntactically, and identified with tense (Tense). The semantic core of Impfs is (11).

(11) Given a context \(c\) and variable assignment \(g\),

\[[\text{IMPF}]^{c,g} = \lambda P_{<.,<s, s'>}. \forall s': \text{MB}_i(s)(s') = 1, \exists e: P(e)(s') = 1, \text{defined only if there is a salient modal base (MB) of type } \alpha.\]

IMPF as universal modal quantifies over situations specified by a modal base (MB). It combines with a predicate of events \(P\) provided by VP, and the resulting claim is that all situations \(s'\) compatible with MB include a \(P\)-event \((\exists e: P(e)(s') = 1 ; s'\) has as part a situation exemplifying \(P\)). Readings arise due to various MBs associated with IMPF, which determine its domains of quantification. Habituals involve quantification over
characteristic sub-situations of the topic situation as in MB (12).

(12) \[ \text{MB}_{\text{generic}} = \lambda s. \lambda s'. s' \text{ is a characteristic part of } s. \]

Applying this analysis to (1) (Twenty years ago, children watched less TV), the topic situation is what was going on 20 years ago, and the claim is that children watched less TV than now in the past. These sentences will be true iff all characteristic sub-situations of the topic situation are such that in them there was an event of children watching less than a certain amount of TV\(^6\). The analysis introduces possible situations, treats Habituals as ‘actual’ and ‘modal’ at the same time, and thus allows for predictions on non-actual situations, which captures a familiar characteristic of generic readings.

Ongoing Impfs share (11), but associate with a domain of quantification that consists of all the (relevant) subparts of the topic situation: (13).

(13) \[ \text{MB}_{\text{ongoing}} = \lambda s. \lambda s'. s' < s. \]

Applying this analysis to (5-9), the topic situation is my mother entering the room, the P-event is my talking to my boyfriend, and the result is a homogeneous distribution of event across topic situation: there is a situation of my mother entering the room such that I was talking to my boyfriend throughout that situation.\(^7\)

In the analysis for IMPF in (11) there is no direct relation between topic situation and event situation, in contrast with proposals for (ongoing) Impfs with Reference / Topic Time included within Event Time: \(R \supset E\) (Klein 1994, Smith 1997, Kratzer 1998, a. o.). The \(R \supset E\) relation is not adopted here because it fails to characterize some Impfs placed under (11), such as Factuals and Intentionals, where R is not included in E.

In sum, Habitual and Ongoing Impfs display semantic regularity across Slavic and Romance, share structure (10) and denotation (11). Habituals care about the distribution of normal situations in relation to a topic situation, and Ongoing Impfs about how actual sub-situations distribute within a topic situation.

\(^6\) Omitting the comparative, truth conditions for (1) are in (i).

(i) \[ [[(1)]]^{c, E} = 1 \text{ iff } \forall s': \text{MB}_{\text{generic}} (s_{\text{relevant 20-years-ago situation}})(s') = 1 \]

\(^7\) Truth conditions for (5-9) are in (i).

(i) \[ [[(5-9)]]^{c, E} = 1 \text{ iff } \forall s': \text{MB}_{\text{ongoing}} (s_{\text{my mother enters the room}})(s') = 1, \exists e: e \text{ is an event of me talking to my boyfriend } s'. \]
3. **Semantic imperfective variation I: Factuals.**

This section compares Bulgarian to Russian and Polish\(^8\), and finds a semantic difference. Namely, past imperfective Vs known as ‘factual’ in these languages (*Obshchefakticheskoe znachenie* (Maslov 1959)), which report on past culminated events, do not have counterparts in Bulgarian Imperfect Vs, be they morphological imperfectives or perfectives. Bulgarian, then, lacks ‘Factual Impfs’; in our terms, it does not display a MB for IMPF that results in completion readings.

The perfective-like use of past morphological imperfectives in Russian and Polish known as Factual is (14a-b, 15).\(^9\)

\[(14)\]
\[\begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{Lena (užе) \textit{príminálа} eto lekarstvo.} & \text{Ru Lena (already) took. Impf this medicine} \\
& \quad \text{‘Lena has (already) taken (Impf) this medicine.’} & \text{Kagan 2007}
\end{align*}\]

\[\begin{align*}
\text{b.} & \quad \text{Petja užе \textit{peresékal} etot kanal za polčasa.} & \text{Borik 2002, 47} \\
& \quad \text{‘Peter already crossed. Impf this canal in half an hour.’}
\end{align*}\]

\[(15)\] (Kiedyś) \textit{czytałem} tę książkę.

\[\text{(Once) read. Impf.1Sg that book} \]

\[\text{‘I have read that book. (I read it on some occasion in the past.)} \quad \text{Bacz 2008}\]

The reading in (14-15) for past telic Vs of the accomplishment and achievement types presents events as completed. Padučeva (1992) tells us that Factuals have a retrospective point of reference, are resultative, and emphasize that something actually happened. A brief comparison shows that Bulgarian lacks semantic Impfs with similar characteristics.

In Russian Factual Impfs, events culminate in the past. My claim is that in Bulgarian (past) semantic imperfectivity is encoded in Imperfects, and those cannot express past culminated events. Such a meaning is reported by Perfects or Aorists, which are not semantically identical but do not contain IMPF. Examples with readings similar to (14b) are Perfect (16a-b) (we shall see that imperfective/perfective morphology on V is not crucial to obtain the relevant ‘factual’ reading).

---

\(^8\) For additional comparisons (Rivero & Slavkov in prep).

(16) a.  Petăr veče e presičal tozi kanal za polovin čas.  Bg
    P. already be.Pres cross.Impf.PRF this canal for half hour.
    ‘Peter has already crossed this canal in half an hour.’

   b.  Petăr veče e izkačval černi vrux za polovin čas.
    ‘Peter has already climbed up Black Peak in half an hour.’

Perf. in (16a-b) contain a PERF operator\(^{10}\), which dominates VP and the imperfective / perfective morphology on V: Tense – PERF – VP. The difference with Russian (14b), then is, that (16a-b) do not signal IMPF but PERF, independently of the morphology on V and the telic/atelic character of VP. By contrast with Perfect (16b) with a PERF Viewpoint, Imperfect (17) with a secondary imperfective izkačvaše (i.e. IMPF) cannot felicitously report a one-time climbing event completed in the past.

(17) #Petăr veče izkačvaše černi vrux za polovin čas.  Bg
    P. already climbed.Impf Black Peak in half hour
    ‘#Peter has already climbed up Black Peak in half an hour.’

A comparison of (18), from Dickey (2002) quoting (Radussova 1968:88), with (19a-b) and (20a-d) also demonstrates that Bulgarian expresses completion readings via PERF.

(18) Odnazdy on užе polučal vygovor za opozdanie.  Ru
    Once he already received.Impf reprimand for lateness
    ‘He (has) already once received a reprimand for being late.’

(19) a.  *Vednuj toj veče polučavaše zabeležka za zakusnenie.  Bg
    Once he already receive.IMPf.Imperfect remark for tardiness

   b.  *Vednuj toj veče polučeše zabeležka za zakusnenie.
    Once he already receive.Perf.Imperfect remark for tardiness
    ‘*He (has) already once received a reprimand for being late.’

In (19a-b) Vs are in the Imperfect, and neither sentence is suitable to express the completion reading of having received a past reprimand in toto, as such meanings rely on PERF in Aorists or Perfects. Paradigm (20) illustrates grammatical but not necessarily identical semantic ways to express a reading roughly equivalent to He (has) already once...

\(^{10}\) Alternatively, Pancheva (2003) argues that unprefixed Aorists signal Neutral Viewpoint.
received a reprimand for being late.

(20)  
a. Vednuž toj veče polučava zabeležka za zakusnenie. Bg
    Once he already receive.Impf.Aorist remark for tardiness
b. Vednuž toj veče poluči zabeležka za zakusnenie.
    receive.Perf.Aorist
c. Vednuž toj veče e polučaval zabeležka za zakusnenie.
    be.Pres receive.Impf
d. Vednuž toj veče e polučil zabeležka za zakusnenie.
    be.Pres receive.Perf

In sum, semantic Impfs with a factual interpretation are not found in Bulgarian, so there is variation internal to Slavic. Let us formulate the difference. For Arregui, Rivero & Salanova (2012), IMPF accesses in Factuals a resultative MB: the topic situation contains consequences of the event, and situations quantified over contain the event: (21).

(21) \[ MB_{\text{Resultative}} = \lambda s.\lambda s'. s \text{ results from } s' \],
    where for any two situations s and s', \( s \text{ results from } s' \) iff s includes the consequences/results of the events in s'.

In Russian (14a), IMPF is thus restricted to quantify over situations that have result-states in the topic situation. Since IMPF does not allow this option in Bulgarian, its Impfs cannot be resultative.

4. Semantic imperfective variation II: Intentionals

This section compares Bulgarian to Romance, finding a similarity. Namely, Intentional Impfs also known as ‘prospective’ report on (past) plans for future events without commitment to their materialization in the actual world. They are common in Romance, and I argue that they also exist in Bulgarian but are very restricted / absent elsewhere in Slavic.\(^{11}\)

Bulgarian has Intentionals in (a) Indicatives with ordinary nominative subjects, (22-23a), (b) the Renarrated Mood , (23b) (see §5), and (c) Involuntary States , (24).

(22) **Context:** It is a pity the cinema had to close because of fire hazards.

Da, naistina. Utre {davaxa / prožektiraxa} Avatar.

Yes, indeed. Tomorrow {gave.Impf/ project.Impf} A.

‘Yes, indeed. Tomorrow they were showing Avatar.

(23) a. Sledvaštata sedmica pătuvaxme do Pariţ,

Next.Def week travelled.Impf.IMP to P.,

no imaše stački i otmenixme pătuvaneto.

but there.were strikes and cancelled.Perf.AOR trip.Def

b. Sledvaštata sedmica pătuvali do Pariţ,

Next.Def week travelled.Impf.Ppl.RM to P.

no imalo stački i otmenili pătuvaneto.

but there.were strikes and cancelled.Perf.Ppl.RM trip.Def

‘Apparently, next week they were travelling to Paris, but there were strikes, and they cancelled the trip.’

(24) Na decata im se raboteše.

P children.the 3Pl.Dat Refl work.Impf.3Sg

‘The children {were in a working mood/ felt like working}.’

Involuntary States as in (24) have a desiderative reading (be in the mood), and Rivero (2009) and Rivero & Arregui (2012) argue that they report on urges of the dative, so on possible worlds, with an (intentional) IMPF as a crucial ingredient in their meaning.

Comparing Bulgarian to other Slavic languages, Intentionals are highly restricted or absent in them. In a context like (22), for instance, answers with past imperfective Vs are ungrammatical, (25a-27a), and those with overt modals are grammatical: (25b-27b) (an option also possible in Bulgarian)


*Yes. Tomorrow they showed (Impf) A.


Yes. Tomorrow they have.Past show.Inf (Impf) A.

‘Yes. Tomorrow they had to show Avatar.’

(26) a. *A jutro grali Avatar !

*And tomorrow they played (Impf) A.
b. A **mieli grać** Avatara jutro!
   And have.Past3Pl. play.Inf A. tomorrow
   ‘Yes. Tomorrow they had to show Avatar.’

(27) a. *Jutri **je igral** Avatar .
   Tomorrow Past.Aux.3Pl play.Impf A.
   ‘Yes. Tomorrow they had to show Avatar.’

   b. Jutri **naj bi igral** Avatar.
   Tomorrow Mod.Part Cond.Aux play.Impf A.
   ‘Tomorrow they would be showing Avatar.’

Involuntary States exist in all Slavic languages, but with different semantics. In South Slavic they have the desiderative semantics of Bulgarian: (28) reports on an urge to dance by John, without telling us that John actually danced.

(28) Janezu se je plesalo.
   J.Dat Refl Aux.3Sg danced.Impf
   ‘John felt like dancing.’

In East / West Slavic, Involuntary States have ‘actual’ readings: (29) reports that John did actually dance.

(29) Jankowi tańczyło się dobrze.
   J.Dat danced.Impf Refl well
   ‘(Somehow), John danced with pleasure.’

Involuntary States are discussed in detail in (Rivero & Arregui 2012), and the proposal is that in South Slavic, they constitute a specialized syntactic context where IMPF may be coupled to an intentional meaning. In East and West Slavic, by contrast, Involuntary States are ‘actual’ because in those groups there is no IMPF with intentional properties, so Impfs must be interpreted as habitual /ongoing, as in §2.

Turning now to Romance, equivalents of (22) are common, as in Spanish (30).

(30) Si, sin duda. Mañana {**daban**/ **proyectaban**} Avatar.
   Yes, without doubt. Tomorrow {gave.Impf/ project.Impf} A.
   ‘Yes, for sure. Tomorrow they were showing (Impf) Avatar.’

As to analysis, Intentionals participate in the semantic core for IMPF, and rely on a MB for events in preparation.
(31) $\text{MB}_{\text{P-inertia}} = \lambda s. \lambda s'. s'$ is a \textbf{Preparatory-inertia} situation for $s$,

Where for any two situations $s$ and $s'$, $s'$ is a \textit{Preparatory-inertia} situation for $s$ iff all the events that are in preparatory stages in $s$ \textit{continue} in $s'$ as they would if there were no interruptions.

This MB allows IMPF to access situations in worlds that are not the evaluation world. Preparations for an event in $s$ \textit{continue} in $s'$ only if $s'$ has as part an event with preparations that have counterparts in $s$, which may be part of possible worlds.

Let us apply this analysis to (23a) partially repeated as (32), with the LF in (33a) and truth-conditions in (33b):

(32) Sledvaštata sedmica pátuvaxme do Pariž…

‘We \textbf{were traveling} to P. next week…’

(33) a. $[\text{Past}_i [\text{IMPF [we travel to P. next week]]}]

b. $[[\text{(32)}]]^{g_c} = 1 \text{ iff }$

$\forall s': \text{MB}_{\text{P-inertia}}(s_i)(s') = 1, \exists e: e \text{ is an event of our traveling to P. next week in } s'.

Where $[[\text{past}_i]]^{g_f} = g(i) = s_i$ (the salient situation in which plans have been made regarding the trip).

In P-inertia situations, Impfs talk about the content of plans, and plans/preparations unfold normally. (32) will be true iff all P-inertia situations for $s_i$ are such that we travel to P. (if past plans unfold normally, we travel to P. next week).

In sum, Bulgarian resembles Romance as to Intentionals. In other South Slavic languages, Intentionals seem restricted to Involuntary States. In East and West Slavic, Intentionals seem altogether absent. IMPF in Bulgarian may access a MB about events in preparation, which is available only in some limited contexts in other South Slavic languages, and possibly unavailable in East and West Slavic.
5. Semantic Imperfectivity and the Renarrated Mood (RM)\textsuperscript{12}

This section briefly examines imperfectivity in the RM (\textit{preizkazno naklonenie} for Andrejčin 1977), proposing that imperfective participles contain IMPF with the usual semantic core, and their various readings are due to the MBs available in Bulgarian. In parallel to Indicatives, there are Intentional Impfs in the RM, thus relating Bulgarian to Romance, and no RM Factual Impfs, thus further distinguishing Bulgarian from Russian and Polish. The difference between Indicative and RM Impfs is morphological: in the cases of interest, Imperfect Tenses encode IMPF in Indicatives, and imperfective V-stems encode it in the RM.

Illustrating semantic parallelism, generic RM (34b) can be compared with Indicative (34a).

\begin{align*}
(34) & \\
 & \text{a. (Vuv filma Jurass Park) dinozavrite živeexa v džunglata.} \\
 & \quad \text{(In movie.the J. P.) dinosaurs.the lived. IND.Impf in jungle.the} \\
 & \quad \text{‘(In the movie Jurass Park) dinosaurs lived in the jungle.’} \\
 & \text{b. Dinozavrite živeeli v džunglata.} \\
 & \quad \text{Dinosaurs.the live. RM.Impf in jungle.the} \\
 & \quad \text{‘Apparently, dinosaurs live/lived in the jungle.’}
\end{align*}

A RM construction with an ongoing reading is depicted in (35), and one with an intentional reading is shown in (36).

\begin{align*}
(35) & \\
 & \text{Kogato mayka i došla v stayata i, Mary govorela s} \\
 & \quad \text{When mother her come.RM.PF in room her M. speak.RM.Impf with} \\
 & \quad \text{priyatelya si.} \\
 & \quad \text{boyfriend.the her} \\
 & \quad \text{‘Apparently, when her mother came into her room, Mary was talking to her} \\
 & \quad \text{boyfriend.’}
\end{align*}

\begin{align*}
(36) & \\
 & \text{Sledvaštata sedmica poseštavali Pariž, no imalo stački i otkazali} \\
 & \quad \text{Next.the week visit. RM.Impf P. but there. was strikes and deny.RM.Perf}
\end{align*}

‘Apparently, next week they were visiting Paris, but there were strikes, and they cancelled the trip.’

In order to show that there are no RM Factual Impfs in Bulgarian, I first recall the Russian Factual in (7a):

(7a) Lena (uže) prinimala eto lekarstvo.  
‘L. has (already) taken (Impf) this medicine.’ (Kagan 2007)

In the Bulgarian RM, completion readings are obtained with perfective participles (Viewpoint PERF): (37). Imperfective participles (Viewpoint IMPF) fail to display those readings: (38).

(37) Elena veče vzela (tozi) lekarstvo(to).  
E. already take.perf.RM (this) medicine (the)  
‘Apparently, Elena already took (this/the) medicine.’

(38) Elena veče vzimala lekarstvoto.  
E. already took.impf.RM medicine.the  
(vseki den / kogato Ivan otvoril vrata)  
(every day / when I. opened.perf.RM door.the)  
‘Apparently, Elena was taking the medicine (every day / when Ivan opened the door).’

Let us sketch an analysis for the RM to account for the above situation. RM forms contain an evidential operator EV as epistemic modal (Izvorski 1997, Smirnova 2011, to appear, Arregui, Rivero & Salanova 2012b, in prep). EV is a universal quantifier over situations compatible with the knowledge/evidence available in the Utterance/ Speech situation (Arregui, Rivero & Salanova in prep). Imperfective RM constructions also contain IMPF under the scope of this evidential operator: (39).

(39) [EV [ IMPF [Mary talk to her boyfriend] ] ]

When IMPF composes with a c-commanding EV, it may access all available MBs in Bulgarian. That is, EV in the RM can scope over IMPF with all the interpretations this last operator may receive in this language. The (relevant) readings in the above RM constructions, then, result from EV combined with a suitable choice of MB for IMPF.
On this view, (35) will be true iff in all situations compatible with what is known at the utterance/speech situation (semantic contribution of EV), there is some situation of Mary’s mother entering the room such that Mary was talking to her boyfriend throughout that situation (semantic contribution of IMPF when coupled to an Ongoing MB). (36) will be true iff in all situations compatible with what is known at the utterance/speech situation (= contribution of EV), there is a situation in which plans have been made for a trip to Paris (= contribution of IMPF coupled to a Preparatory Inertia MB for intentional readings). We do not expect imperfective RM participles to display completion readings, as the MB with a resultative effect is not available to IMPF in Bulgarian.

6. Conclusions

Imperfectives share an invariant modal architecture under IMPF, which may be encoded in different morphologies. IMPF is a quantifier; readings in Impfs and cross-linguistic differences in their interpretation are mainly due to restrictions on its domain of quantification. Restrictions on situations quantified over by IMPF may be general, or linguistically encoded in different ways depending on the language. Those that mention the normal distribution of situations within a topic situation result in (familiar) habitual readings shared by Slavic and Romance. By contrast, the domain of quantification of IMPF may also consist of situations that are prepared in the topic situation, which results in a less general intentional reading shared by Bulgarian and Romance, but severely restricted in most Slavic languages. Quantification by IMPF may also concern the events whose consequences characterize the topic situation. This results in Factual Impfs in Russian, which allude to past complete events, and lack equivalents in Bulgarian Impfs.

Cited References


Bacz, B. 2008. Pragmatic aspects of aspect: evidence from Polish. Lacus Forum 34. 45-54


Borik, O. 2006. Aspect and reference time. N. Y., OUP.


