

Pseudo-Incorporation in Russian? Aspectual Competition and Bare Singular Interpretation

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1 Introduction

As a language without articles, Russian allows for bare singular argument noun phrases. If a bare singular appears as the internal argument of an imperfective (ipf) verb form in the so-called factual use of the ipf, it will more often than not be “weakly referential”.¹ Drawing attention to this phenomenon, and discussing it in the light of pseudo-incorporation, is the first goal of the paper. The second goal is to explain how the observed properties come about. Hopefully, this can contribute to a better understanding of the phenomenon.

The paper is structured as follows. In the remainder of this introductory section I will briefly explain what is meant by the notions that figure in the title of the paper: aspectual competition, bare singulars and pseudo-incorporation. In section 2, I demonstrate that bare singular objects in factual ipf behave like pseudo-incorporating according to standard tests. Section 3 discusses previous accounts of aspectual competition, in particular the theory of Grønn (2004). In section 4, I outline my own account, which builds on Grønn but departs from him in one important respect. In section 5, I explain how my account copes with the facts established in section 2. Section 6 gives a summary.

Let me point out right from the start that I hesitate to claim that the relevant Russian data represent a case of pseudo-incorporation. What I do in this paper is to show that the respective bare singulars behave like pseudo-incorporated nominals, and to offer a theoretical explanation for these patterns. The reader will note that my analysis does without positing incorporating variants of transitive verbs in the lexicon.² Insofar the respective bare nominals should perhaps not be viewed as pseudo-incorporating in the end.³

¹ The coverage of the term “factual ipf” is a matter of much debate. In this paper I use it limited to what is sometimes called “existential ipf” (Grønn) or “obščefaktičeskoe ekzistencial’noe” (Padučeva), as it is only in these cases that the weakness effects show up.

² This idea is central to Dayal’s (2011) seminal paper about pseudo-incorporation in Hindi. It is taken over by Gehrke (to appear) and Schwarz (2014).

³ This is the reason why I do “not even mention the term pseudo-incorporation in part 4 and

1.1 *Aspectual Competition in Russian*

The term “aspectual competition” points to the fact that reference to single completed events in Russian is not the exclusive territory of perfective (pf) aspect. Sometimes also the ipf form is chosen in such a case. The two examples in (1) can both be read as reporting on a completed event in the past (from Padučeva 2006).⁴

- (1) a. *Anja vymyla pol*
Anja cleaned.PF floor.ACC
'Anja has cleaned the floor.'

- b. *Anja myla pol*
Anja cleaned.IPF floor.ACC
'Anja has cleaned the floor.'

This special use of the ipf is traditionally called “(general-)factual” reading. It is in clear contrast to the canonical reading of the ipf, which expresses that the event is ongoing at reference time, and which is likewise available in (1b).⁵ Under the ongoing reading, the sentence would translate as ‘Anja was cleaning the floor.’

The following is an attested pair (from the internet). (2a) is the title of a video post. It describes the events that are documented on the video. (2b) is a comment on that post that a user left below it.

- (2) a. *Krokodil prosto vzjal i šel čerepaxu*
crocodile simply took.PF and ate.PF turtle.ACC
'The crocodile just took and ate the/ a (specific) turtle.'

in the summary of the paper’, as one anonymous reviewer wondered. The same reviewer suggested to view the discussed data as the Russian manifestation of the experiential meaning in the sense of Dahl (1985:141). I totally share this view, which is actually not in conflict with my proposal. Indeed, one might consider the present paper to give a precise compositional semantics of the “experiential meaning”, if we would want to call it like that. I refrain from using this term though, because it is misleading. See Grønn (2004:157ff.) for discussion on this point.

⁴ I reduce grammatical information in the gloss to a relevant minimum. Abbreviations used are only IPF = imperfective, PF = perfective and for morphological case, ACC = accusative, LOC = locative, INS = instrumental, GEN = genitive (nominative is not indicated).

⁵ The assumption that the ongoing reading represents the canonical use of an ipf form is the received view, cf. Zaliznjak & Šmelev (1997:19).

- b. *Ja kstati el čerepaxu, na kuricu poxoža*
 I by-the-way ate.1PF turtle.ACC to chicken.ACC similar
 'I, by the way, have eaten a turtle. Tastes like chicken.'

1.2 Bare Singular Objects

The topic of the present paper is the interpretation of bare singular nominals when they appear as internal arguments in Russian factual ipf. It is a well-known fact that this syntactic position displays what one might want to call definiteness effects. Note the indefinite translation of *čerepachu* in (2b), in contrast to the definite/specific translation in (2a). An illustrative example is also (3), from Vogeléeer (1993), discussed in Grønn (2004):

- (3) a. *Ty s'el dve konfečy, kotorye ležali na stole?*
 you ate.1PF two candy.GEN that lay.1PF on table.LOC
 'Did you eat the two candies that were lying on the table?'
 b. **Ty el dve konfečy, kotorye ležali na stole?*
 you ate.1PF two candy.GEN that lay.1PF on table.LOC
 'Did you eat the two candies that were lying on the table?'

Note that I will be concerned exclusively with bare *singular* object nominals, although Russian also entertains bare plural nominals, likewise appearing in factual ipf and showing similar effects. The reason for this is simply that I want to keep complexity to a manageable minimum. A fine-grained comparison between the behavior of bare singulars and bare plurals would surely be desirable, but it cannot be carried out here.⁶

1.3 Pseudo-Incorporation?

The internal argument expression of a factual ipf is clearly a syntactically autonomous constituent. Note that the bare singular is always case marked. Note, furthermore, that it is not tied to the position right after the verb:

- (4) *Kandidatskiju dissertaciju pisal, a doktorskiju*
 candidate.ACC dissertation.ACC wrote.1PF but doctoral.ACC
dissertaciju ešče ne pisal
 dissertation.ACC still not wrote.1PF

⁶ It is by far not clear that Pl-effects on bare singulars take over to bare plurals, see Borik & Gehrike (this volume) for some discussion on this point.

- 'I have written a Ph.D. dissertation, but I have not yet written a professorial dissertation.'

As should be clear in the context of the present book, absence of *syntactic* incorporation does not necessarily rule out the possibility of *semantic* incorporation. So could the effect observed in (3) result from pseudo-incorporation?⁷ Interestingly, this hypothesis would comply with Dayal's (2011) conclusion (based on data from Hindi) that pseudo-incorporation is sensitive to aspect choice. Reason enough to undertake a careful study of the phenomenon.

2 Testing for Pseudo-Incorporation

There is a (more or less) standardized test battery for pseudo-incorporation (Van Geenhoven 1998, Dayal 2011). Accordingly, the prototypical pseudo-incorporated nominal displays the following properties: It will show (i) number neutrality. It will have (ii) narrow scope with respect to, e.g., negation. It will be (iii) reduced in discourse transparency. It will provide (iv) bad support for subsequent pronouns. It will give rise to (v) establishedness effects.

In what follows, I will check for these five properties. To do so, I will use the pair of examples given in (5):

- (5) a. *Ja s'el strausinoe jajco*
 I ate.1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'I have eaten a/the ostrich egg.'
 b. *Ja el strausinoe jajco*
 I ate.1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'I have eaten an ostrich egg.'

The critical example is, of course, (5b). This particular example nicely illustrates that factual ipf represents a pragmatic phenomenon. If the sentence is presented out of the blue, speakers often do not easily get the "completed reading" that we are interested in. However, as soon as the sentence gets contextualized in the right manner, it will actualize the factual reading without difficulties.

⁷ In this paper, I assume that semantic incorporation and pseudo-incorporation are the same, although this is debated (see Dayal, this volume).

2.1 *Number Neutrality*

Now let us start running through the test battery for pseudo-incorporation. To begin with, we ask whether bare singular objects of factual ipf are number neutral. Consider (6). The example is construed such that the second sentence elaborates on the denotation of the object noun phrase of the first sentence (which is the factual ipf). Specifically, it is explicated in the second sentence that reference is actually made to two entities. The point is that, if the internal argument NP of the factual ipf was *not* number neutral, if it was semantically restricted to singular reference, such a continuation would create a contradiction. But it does not:

- (6) *Ja el strausinoe jajco. Odno v detstve, odno sorsem*
I ate:1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC one in childhood.LOC one very
nedavno
recently

'I have eaten an ostrich egg. One in my childhood, one quite recently.'

(6) is perhaps slightly degraded, but it is not as bad as its pf counterpart. Consider the text in (7). It feels to be contradictory or, at least, clearly inconsistent:

- (7) *?Ja s'el strausinoe jajco. Odno v detstve, odno sorsem*
I ate:1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC one in childhood.LOC one very
nedavno
recently

'I have eaten an ostrich egg. One in my childhood, one quite recently.'

I provide two more examples of factual ipf to demonstrate that there can be no semantic singularity requirement involved. Both (8) and (9) are completely fine without reservation:

- (8) *Ja uže el čilburger. Odin v ponedel'nik, odin vo*
I already ate:1PF chili_burger.ACC one in Monday.ACC one in
vtornik, odin v sredu...
Tuesday.ACC one in Wednesday.ACC
I have already eaten a chili burger. One on Monday, one on Tuesday, one on Wednesday ...'

The context of (9) is that two cannibals are talking to each other:

- (9) a. *Ty kogda-nibud' el missionera?*
you once ate:1PF missionary.GEN
'Have you ever eaten a missionary?'

- b. *Da, odnogo francuza i odnogo nemca. Oni*
yes one.GEN Frenchman.GEN and one.GEN German.GEN they
oba byli vkusnye
both were tasty
'Yes, a Frenchman and a German. They both were delicious.'

Thus, the bare singular object of a pf verb is referentially limited to singular denotation, while the bare singular object of a factual ipf verb is not.

2.2 *Narrow Scope*

Let us now see whether the bare singular can scope out of a negated verb. To do so, I put the critical sentence into a context that suggests a narrow scope interpretation. The following is supposed to be a little dialogue. The speaker of (10b) reacts to what the speaker in (10a) just said.

- (10) a. *Somnevajus' čto ty xot' raz v žizni el strausinoe*
I_doubt that you at_least once in life.LOC ate:1PF ostrich.ACC
jajco
egg.ACC
'I doubt that you have ever eaten an ostrich egg.'

- b. *Ty prava. Ja ne el strausinoe jajco*
you right I not ate:1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
'You are right. I've never eaten an ostrich egg.'

The context created by utterance (10a) includes no specific given egg. A reaction that makes use of a factual ipf, as exemplified in (10b), is well acceptable in such a context (although some native speakers say that a bare plural would sound a little bit better). The dialogue feels coherent. This is in sharp contrast to the use of a pf verb, which would make the dialogue inconsistent (11b):

- (11) a. *Somnevajus' čto ty xot' raz v žizni el strausinoe*
I_doubt that you at_least once in life ate:1PF ostrich.ACC
jajco
egg.ACC
'I doubt that you have ever eaten an ostrich egg.'

- b. [?] *Ty pravda. Ja ne s'el strausinoe jajco*
 you right I not ate.PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'You are right. I've never eaten an ostrich egg.'

Speakers of Russian have the clear intuition that the use of pf requires the context to make available a specific egg which could serve as the target of reference. As (na) does not deliver such a context, the dialogue is odd.

Now how about a context inviting a wide scope interpretation? For instance the following one:

- (12) *Nedelju nazad Ivan dal mne strausinoe jajco. On skazal,*
 week.ACC before Ivan gave.PF me ostrich.ACC egg.ACC. he said
čtoby ja ego s'el do segodnjašnego dnja. No ja...
 that I it ate.PF until today.GEN day.GEN but I
 'A week ago Ivan gave me an ostrich egg. He said I should eat it until today.
 But I ...'

If we continue with a factual ipf, the result will be an inconsistent text:⁸

- (13) *?'Nedelju nazad Ivan dal mne strausinoe jajco. On skazal,*
 week.ACC before Ivan gave.PF me ostrich.ACC egg.ACC he said
čtoby ja ego s'el do segodnjašnego dnja. No ja ne el
 that I it ate.PF until today.GEN day.GEN but I not ate.IPF
strausinoe jajco
 ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'A week ago Ivan gave me an ostrich egg. He said I should eat it until today.
 But I have not eaten an ostrich egg.'

If we continue with a pf, by contrast, the text will be fine. Native speakers only mention, as a minor qualification, that the repetition of *strausinoe jajco* does not sound that elegant:

⁸ There is a way to rescue the use of the ipf in the continuation. What needs to be done is replacing the noun by a pronoun, and adding an explanation for why the commanded eating is not even tried: ... *No ja ne el ego. Bo jus' probovat'.* ('... But I did not eat it. I fear tasting it.) This, however, is no longer the factual ipf that I test.

- (14) *Nedelju nazad Ivan dal mne strausinoe jajco. On skazal,*
 week.ACC before Ivan gave.PF me ostrich.ACC egg.ACC he said
čtoby ja ego s'el do segodnjašnego dnja. No ja ne s'el
 that I it ate.PF until today.GEN day.GEN but I not ate.PF
strausinoe jajco
 ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'A week ago Ivan gave me an ostrich egg. He said I should eat it until today.
 But I have not eaten the ostrich egg.'

To sum up: In the case of factual ipf, if the verb is put under negation, the interpretation of a bare singular object must remain within the scope of negation. If morphological aspect is pf, by contrast, the bare singular object will scope out of negation.

2.3 Reduced Discourse Transparency

The next question is: Is the bare singular capable of accessing a referent introduced in the preceding discourse? Our test ground will be (15):

- (15) *Ja našel odno strausinoe jajco i dva kokosoryx orexa. ...*
 I found.PF one ostrich.ACC egg.ACC and two coco.GEN nut.GEN
 'I found one ostrich egg and two coconuts. ...'

The observation is that, if we continue this with an ipf verb, we do not get the completed reading. The only interpretation that is possible is ongoing ipf:

- (16) *Ja našel odno strausinoe jajco i dva kokosoryx orexa*
 I found.PF one ostrich.ACC egg.ACC and two coco.GEN nut.GEN
Ja el strausinoe jajco
 I ate.IPF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'I found one ostrich egg and two coconuts. I was eating the ostrich egg.'

This text feels like not yet being finished. One of my informants proposed the following as a continuation to round it up:

- (17) ... *kogda na menja napal krokodil*
 when on me attacked.PF crocodile.ACC
 '... when I was suddenly attacked by a crocodile.'

How can this intuition be explained? Recall that the typical discourse function of (ongoing) ipf is the backgrounding of the reported event, while pf serves

a foregrounding function (cf. Comrie 1997). Given this, (16) would leave us without any foreground event for which the eating of the ostrich egg would constitute the background. (17) adds that missing piece (notice that aspect is pf).

- (18) *Ja našel odno strausinoe jajco i dva kokosovyx orexa*
 I found.PF one ostrich.ACC egg.ACC and two coco.GEN nut.GEN
Ja s'el strausinoe jajco
 I ate.pf ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'I found one ostrich egg and two coconuts. I ate the ostrich egg.'

If the continuation has a pf verb, it will express a completed reading. The text is sound and the bare singular of the second sentence is understood to corefer to the ostrich egg introduced in the first sentence.

2.4 *Bad Support for Pronominal Anaphora*

We just saw that the bare singular object of a factual ipf cannot anaphorically be linked to a referent introduced beforehand. Now how about its own capacities to serve as an antecedent? Can the bare nominal be accessed by a pronoun in a subsequent clause?

If aspect is ipf, the observation is that it can, but preferably under the ongoing interpretation. Informants tell me that (19) is okay, but that it must mean that the speaker was engaged in eating the egg.

- (19) *Ja el strausinoe jajco. Ono bylo podarkom Ivana*
 I ate.PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC it was present.INS Ivan.GEN
 'I was eating a/the ostrich egg. It was a present from Ivan.'

In contrast to that, the pf version (20) clearly reports on a single completed event looked at from a retrospective viewpoint:

- (20) *Ja s'el strausinoe jajco. Ono bylo podarkom Ivana*
 I ate.PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC it was present.INS Ivan.GEN
 'I have eaten an ostrich egg. It was a present from Ivan.'

The contrast between (19) and (20) is significant. Nevertheless, as one reviewer pointed out correctly, there are cases where the object of a factual ipf can support a pronoun of the subsequent sentence:

- (21) *V detstve ja čital roman Kristy Volf. On byl*
 in childhood.LOC I read.PF novel.ACC Christa.GEN Wolf it was
podarkom mamy
 present.INS mama.GEN
 'In childhood I read a novel by Christa Wolf. It was a present from my mother.'

However, note that, unlike (19), (21) contains a temporal adverbial which indicates a "big and floating past assertion time" (Grønn 2004:223). The presence of such an adverbial rules out the possibility of an ongoing interpretation of the ipf. I conclude that, as a rule, the bare singular object of an ipf verb prefers to serve as an antecedent for a pronoun under the ongoing reading. It therefore seems legitimate to attest that the bare singular object of a factual ipf provides *bad* support in comparison to the object of an ongoing ipf, or to the object of a pf. In case the ongoing ipf reading is excluded for structural reasons, as in (21), there will be no better alternative, and the object has to serve as an antecedent for a pronoun even under the factual reading.

2.5 *Establishedness Effects*

(Pseudo-)incorporated constituents are known to undergo successful composition with the verb only under the condition that the resulting verb phrase signifies a stereotypical or institutionalized activity (cf. Dayal 2011, this volume). Following suggestions of Gehrke (to appear: 31), I assume that this property should be associated with the well-establishedness of event kinds. Accordingly, an activity is institutionalized if it corresponds to a category which is "well-established in the background knowledge of speaker and hearer".

The latter wording is from Krifka et al. (1995:69), who use it to describe the criterion that separates the nominal *Coke bottle*, which is possible as the head of a definite singular generic in English, from the nominal *green bottle*, which does not lend itself to forming a definite singular generic:

- (22) The {Coke bottle/'green bottle} has a long neck.

Dayal (2004:425) shows the kind of context that is necessary to explicitly "establish" the category. Given such a context, also *green bottle* can be used as the head of a definite singular generic:

- (23) The factory produces two kinds of bottles, a green one for medicinal purposes and a clear one for cosmetics. The green bottle has a long neck.

So can we attest that factual ipf show establishedness effects? Yes, we can. Compare (24):

- (24) a. *Ja el strausinoe jajco, i ne raz*
 I ate:1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC and not once
 'I have eaten an ostrich egg, not only once.'
 b. *?Ja el strausinoe pero, i ne raz*
 I ate:1PF ostrich.ACC feather.ACC and not once
 'I have eaten an ostrich feather, not only once.'

There is a reservation in acceptance of (24b), which is absent in (24a). One might want to say that this is because the described situation in (24b) is quite bizarre. However, compare (25):

- (25) a. *Ja s'el strausinoe jajco*
 I ate:PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'I have eaten the ostrich egg.'
 b. *Ja s'el strausinoe pero*
 I ate:PF ostrich.ACC feather.ACC
 'I have eaten the ostrich feather.'

The point is that, in contrast to (24b), there is no reservation in acceptance in the pf (25b), even though it is about the same bizarre situation. I propose that the oddness of (24b) is rooted in that the verb-noun combination gives no well-established activity.

This proposal is supported by the following observation. On analogy to (23), one can come up with an example that contextually "establishes" the category of eating an ostrich feather before uttering the critical sentence. This makes the reservation in (24b) disappear:

- (26) *Est' takee suverie, čto esli s'eš' strausinoe pero, to*
 be such superstition that if eat:PF ostrich.ACC feather.ACC then
ispolnišja zagadannoe želanie. Ja dumaju, čto eto erunda
 fulfill:1PF secret.ACC wish.ACC I think that this nonsense
Kotja ja el strausinoe pero, i ne raz, u menja
 although I ate:1PF ostrich.ACC feather.ACC and not once at me
nikakix želanj ne ispolniš'
 no.GEN wishes.GEN not fulfilled:1PF

'There is a superstition saying that, if you eat an ostrich feather, one of your secret desires will come true. I think this is nonsense. Although I have eaten an ostrich feather, and not only once, no desire of mine has been fulfilled.'

Just like the speaker of (23) is telling the hearer a story motivating the individual category underlying the interpretation of the definite singular generic, the speaker of (26) is telling a story motivating the event category underlying the factual ipf. The effect is that the factual use of the ipf is now pragmatically well-formed.

It should be noted that 'have-you-ever'-questions have a similar effect, the difference being simply that the "story" is not explicated, but remains indefinite. The cooperative hearer will always infer that there is a story motivating the (event category underlying the factual ipf of the) question, even if she does not know its content. This is the reason for why (27a) is completely fine, and why (24b) would be fine as an answer to (27a).

- (27) a. *Ty kogda-nibud' el strausinoe pero?*
 you at_some_time ate:1PF ostrich.ACC feather.ACC
 'Have you ever eaten an ostrich feather?'
 b. *Net, konečno. K čemu takoj vopros?*
 no of_course to what such question
 'No, of course not. Why are you asking that?'

2.6 *Summing Up*

The discussion in this section revealed that bare singular nominals as internal arguments of ipf verbs in the factual use show all of the properties that a prototypical pseudo-incorporated nominal would be expected to have.

- (28) a. number neutral: ✓
 b. narrow scope only: ✓
 c. reduced discourse transparency: ✓
 d. bad support for pronominal anaphora: ✓
 e. establishedness effects: ✓

So far the descriptive part. Now let us ask: how can the observed properties be explained?

3 Former Approaches

The phenomenon described in the previous section has to my knowledge never been put in the context of pseudo-incorporation. But of course, it did not go unnoticed in Russian aspectology. The more or less established mode of talking about it is relating it to a diagnosed “temporal indefiniteness” of the event (e.g. Leinonen 1982, Dickey 2000). This is surely correct, and many fine-grained observations have been made. Things remain on a rather descriptive level, however. From a theoretical point of view that takes compositionality for granted one would like to know: What is the reason for the event being “temporally indefinite” in factual ipf? What is it exactly in the meaning of pf morphology that restricts a pf verb form to a “temporally definite” interpretation? Why can ipf verb forms get “temporally definite” interpretations on other (i.e. non-factual) occasions? There is actually only one account I know of that derives the characteristics of objects in factual ipf in a systematic and principled way. This is the work of Grønning (2004).

3.1 Grønning's (2004) Account

Grønning (2004) presented a theory that aims at tackling the phenomenon of aspectual competition in Russian. The account is complex and I do not have the space to present all of its features here. Central to Grønning's theory, and crucial for us, is the notion of “target state relevance”. Grønning proposes a particular semantics for pf aspect that includes, among other things, a truth condition according to which the assertion time has to partly overlap the temporal interval of the event's target state. This unavoidably brings about the pragmatic effect of target state relevance for any utterance which involves a pf verb form. As a consequence, if the speaker does not want to express target state relevance, she has to use an ipf verb form. There are two principled reasons why the target state could be irrelevant. Either interpretation abstracts away from the particular conditions of the target state, or these conditions are materially undone:

Pf explicitly requires the target state to be valid at the end point of the assertion time. Aspectual competition gives rise to a pragmatic implicature saying that factual Ipfs is used by the speaker either in order to convey the message that the target state has been cancelled, or in case the validity of the target state is irrelevant in the discourse situation.

GRØNNING 2004:274

(29) shows a prominent example of factual ipf from Padučeva (1996), which is discussed by Grønning (2004:240 ff.):

- (29) *Ty kogda-nibud' razbival' cennuju vazu?*
 you at_some_time broke.IPF valuable.ACC vase.ACC
 'Have you ever shattered a valuable vase?'

Note that the direct object in (29) is not strongly referential, it does not point to a specific vase. Grønning explains this along the following lines: The verb lexically describes a target state which is, moreover, irreversible. Consequently, if the object nominal was interpreted as referring to a specific vase, then the target state would unavoidably be claimed to hold forever after. This, however, would make the target state relevant at evaluation time, which would call for pf aspect. As a matter of fact, however, the verb is ipf. Therefore, the object cannot gain a specific interpretation. It must be non-specific.

The same reasoning would apply to our example above, a version of which is repeated here:

- (30) *Ty kogda-nibud' el' strausinoe jajco?*
 you at_some_time ate.IPF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'Have you ever eaten an ostrich egg?'

Here, too, the verb lexically describes an irreversible target state. Therefore the object nominal cannot be interpreted as referring to a specific ostrich egg, because that would make the target state hold forever after, calling for pf aspect. Since the verb is ipf, a specific reading of the object nominal is impossible.

To sum up so far, Grønning explains the weakly referential behavior of object nominals in factual ipf in terms of specificity. In particular, he has developed a theory that predicts when these nominals are prevented from taking on a specific interpretation.

3.2 A Problem for Grønning

It is evident that an explanation in terms of (non-)specificity could account for why a bare singular in internal argument position of a factual ipf has narrow scope only, shows reduced discourse transparency and is a bad support for pronominal anaphora. It is less evident, however, that it can cope with the establishedness effect. The question is: why should giving *strausinoe pero* in (24b) a non-specific interpretation cause any pragmatic turbulences? Compare the following. As is well-known, the English construction in (31a) allows for both a specific and a non-specific interpretation of the indefinite nominal. Adopting it to our case, as in (31b), we see that the specific reading is still available, without any trouble.

- (31) a. *John wants to marry a French woman.*
 b. *John wants to eat an ostrich feather.*

Therefore, given that an explanation in terms of specificity is correct, we lack an explanation for the establishedness effects.

Granted, one could object that the establishedness data are shaky anyway, and that little can be built on them. However, there is other, more solid counterevidence to Grønns's approach. Consider (32):

- (32) *Xotja Maksim eščë sovsem molodoj, u nego uže bylo*
 although Maxim still quite young at him already was.1PF
mnoogo ser'eznyx zabolevanij. Emu delali operaciju na
 many serious.GEN diseases.GEN him made.1PF operation.ACC on
serdce, ego lečili ot tuberkuleza, emu udaljali
 heart.LOC him healed.1PF from tuberculosis.GEN him removed.1PF
appendicit - i éto daleko ne vse
 appendix.ACC and that by_far not all

Although Maxim is still really young, he has had many serious diseases. He has had a heart operation, he has been cured from tuberculosis, they have removed his appendix—and that is by far not all!

The critical sentence is *emu udaljali appendicit*, as this one escapes Grønns's account. Let us see why: There can be no doubt that in this example, the verbal predicate lexically involves the description of a target state. The appendix being in (the body) would constitute the source state, the target state would correspond to the appendix being out. Moreover, the described target state is clearly irreversible. Now, since verbal morphology is ipf, Grønn would predict that the object nominal must take on a non-specific interpretation. However, it does not! Note that the sentence provides an explicit referential anchor (*emu*) for the interpretation of the indefinite nominal *appendicit*. Therefore, according to standard theories of specificity (cf. von Stechow 2002), the object nominal is specific.

In other words: The object nominal *appendicit* has a specific interpretation, and so the sentence reports on a target state that will necessarily hold forever after. Thus, the conditions of using the pf are met. This raises the question, left unexplained within Grønns's theory, why the verb nevertheless can, as a matter of fact, be ipf.

4 Proposal

In this section, I am going to outline an analysis that is capable of explaining the occurrence of weak bare singulars observed in connection with factual ipf in Russian. The analysis will use the theoretical framework developed in Grønn (2004). In one important respect, however, I will depart from Grønn. In particular, I will presuppose an ontology that entertains not only event tokens (aka Davidsonian events), but also event kinds.⁹ Accordingly, the kind-/token-distinction crosscuts not only the nominal domain, as is standardly assumed (e.g. Carlson 1980, Krifka et al. 1995, Mueller-Reichau 2011), but also the verbal domain.

In a nutshell, my analysis will be as follows. With Grønn I assume that aspect in Russian is sensitive to information structure: the linguistic information of the VP appears in a structured meaning format which separates background and focus material.¹⁰ Factual ipf is characterized by a particular background/focus partition <B,F> at VP, to be explained below. As an effect of that, arguments internal to V will have to compose at the kind-level if they can. Russian bare singular NPs can compose at the kind-level, as they are underspecified with respect to the kind-/token-distinction.

What such an analysis boils down to, then, is that a bare singular argument in the context of a factual ipf functions as a kind term. That can explain why it has narrow scope only, why it shows reduced discourse transparency, why it lends bad support for pronominal anaphora and why it can give rise to establishedness effects.¹¹ Moreover, it does not come with the too strong prediction (recall (32)) that sentences that denote events with "eternal target states" must have a pf verb.

4.1 Background Assumptions

The analysis is stated in terms of DRT (Kamp & Reyle 1993, Geurts & Beaver 2007). I assume that Russian has an obligatory AspP above VP. Asp turns the predicate of events designated by the VP into a predicate of (assertion) times, thereby declaring a discourse marker for the event. Tense will deliver an assertion time. In all of our examples this will be a time prior to utterance time. So far, everything is in line with the theory developed in Grønn (2004).

9 Grønn (2004:150) explicitly refrains from making this assumption.

10 On the structured meaning account, see Krifka (2001), (2006).

11 I will elaborate on that in section 5.

(33) [..._{Aspp} Asp [_{VP} V NP]]]

As far as ontology is concerned, my background assumptions, as already noted, differ from Grønns as I take there to be event kinds besides event tokens. They are related to each other by means of a realization relation “R”, on analogy to what has been proposed by Carlson (1980) for the domain of nominal reference. This move does not affect the semantic type of a lexical verb—it will still be a predicate of event tokens. Crucially, however, the meaning of a verb now involves two different sorts of eventive arguments (“ e_k ” for event kinds, and “ e ” for event tokens). (34) gives the standard (DRT-)meaning of a lexical verb, (35) gives the one based on event kinds besides event tokens in the ontology.

(34) $V \Rightarrow \lambda e \lambda e' [[V'(e)]]$

(35) $V \Rightarrow \lambda e \lambda e_k [V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)]$

As can be seen, I start off from a more complex meaning than what is standardly assumed. This might seem unpleasant at first sight. As will be seen shortly, however, it is exactly this increase in complexity that enables me doing something that otherwise cannot be done.

Arguments and modifiers of the verb add to the verbal meaning (35) to form the meaning of the VP. They are modeled as additional predications over the referential event argument, as I take for granted a Neo-Davidsonian framework (see Maienborn, 2011; also Grønns, 2004). Central for the proposed analysis is the idea, which I adopt from Grønns, that the meaning of the VP is structured into a background and a focus part: <B,F>. This structured meaning will be input to Asp waiting above VP. Asp is conceived of as a covert operator that maps a property of event tokens onto a property of (assertion) times. Doing so, it transforms the background part of the VP into a presupposition, and the focus part into an assertion. This process is guided by Geurts & Van der Sandt's (1997, 2004) Background-Presupposition-Rule.¹²

4.2 On the Interpretation of Russian Singular Nominals

Before I show how the composition works, a note on meaning and interpretation of Russian bare singulars is in order. Although bare singulars in Russian clearly have the semantic capacity to denote at the token-level as well as at the kind-level, there seems to be a pragmatic dispreference of the latter in the

absence of contextual support. This can be revealed by a comparison of the judgements of native speakers in view of (36), (37) and (38):

(36) **Mamont ymer*

mammoth died_{out.PF}
'The mammoth died out.'

(37) ?*Šerstisťj mamont ymer*

woolly mammoth died_{out.PF}
'The woolly mammoth died out.'

(38) *Šerstisťj nosorog ymer*

woolly rhinoceros died_{out.PF}
'The woolly rhinoceros died out.'

(36) is usually rejected, as speakers of Russian strongly prefer to hear the plural version *Mamonty ymeri* (= “The mammoths died out”). The reaction in view of (37) is different. This example is usually accepted, but it causes an irritation because it does not conform to world knowledge. It provokes a request, something like “And the others are still alive?”. Such irritation is absent in (38), which is usually accepted.

What I conclude from these observations is that the grammatical system of Russian does allow for token-level as well as for kind-level bare singular NPs. However, to determine denotation at the kind-level, the context has to provide a cue to trigger the relevance of taxonomic kind relations for interpretation. In the absence of such a cue the bare singular will be understood to be token-referring. In (37) and (38) a kind-level trigger is given by that the respective subject expressions are explicitly naming subkinds.¹³ This conclusion is supported by the fact that even (36) is accepted if it is uttered in a strong context that highlights the kind-level, e.g. within a scientific text about the kind mammoth.¹⁴

¹³ To be a bit more explicit: The subjects name subkinds of the kind named by the word *mamont*, which corresponds to a basic-level category in the sense of Rosch et al. (1976). Since the hearer can expect the speaker to choose the basic-level word unless there is specific reason for not doing so, the hearer is led to infer that the speaker has specific reason to choose the subkind-naming word, i.e. that the kind-level is relevant.

¹⁴ Example (39) is taken from the Internet Encyclopedia Bolšoj enciklopedičeskij slovar' (BES); see <http://www.vvedu.ru/bigenctic/36356/>.

- (39) *Mamont ymer v konce pleistocena v rezultate*
mammoth died_out.pf in end.LOC Pleistocene.GEN in result.LOC
izmenenija klimata
change.GEN climate.GEN

'The mammoth died out at the end of the Pleistocene due to climate change.'

4.3 The Meaning of a *pfVerb*

It is a common statement about Russian aspect that the use of *pf* aspect would put focus on the result or completion of the action. I implement that intuition in a straightforward way; by treating *pf* morphology as an explicit focus marker. The idea is that the presence of *pf* imposes a particular $\langle B, F \rangle$ -structuring on the VP. Specifically, it signals the existence of some time immediately after the run time of the event token (signaling that implies completion) and requires that this condition is in the focus part of the VP:¹⁵

- (40) $VP\text{-}pf \Rightarrow \langle \lambda e [e_k [V'(e_e), R(e_e, e_k)], \lambda e [t'(\tau(e)) \rangle \langle t'] \rangle$

" $\tau(e)$ " is Krifka's (1998) temporal trace function which maps events onto their run time. Taking into account that the Background-Presupposition-Rule (= BPR) holds (cf. Geurts & Van der Sandt 1997) and making use of a Grønn-style notation, where a subscript DRS represents presuppositional information, we get the following DRS for (40):

- (41) $VP\text{-}pf_{BPR} \Rightarrow \lambda e [t'(\tau(e)) \rangle \langle t'] [e_k [V'(e_k), R(e_e, e_k)]$

This VP-meaning will then be subject to the application of Asp. With respect to the meaning of Asp, I take for granted a time-relational theory of aspect in the spirit of Klein (1994, 1995), which says that aspect is a temporal relation between the time of the situation and the time of the assertion (cf. Klein 1995). Importantly, within Klein's conception, the "time of the situation" is not always the run time of the situation. Klein's generalization is rather that aspect relates the assertion time to the time of a so-called distinguished state. It is only for

¹⁵ There is an alternative to (40): that there is no backgrounded VP-material at all. I ignore

this possibility because the argument being worked out in this paper builds on the assumption that factual imperfectives are characterized by the event kind discourse marker alone sitting in the presuppositional universe, see (5). It should be clear that this is no option if everything is in focus.

activities and states ("1- and 0-state contents" in Klein's terminology) that the time of the distinguished state matches the run time of the situation. In the case of accomplishments and achievements ("2-state contents") the distinguished state is determined on the basis of language-specific rules.

I want to propose something similar:¹⁶ Asp(ect) establishes a relation between the time of the assertion and the distinguished time of the event token. The distinguished time of the event token will be the run time of the event token, $\tau(e)$, unless there is evidence to the contrary. "Evidence to the contrary" is given if the input to Asp explicitly highlights ("distinguishes") a particular time which differs from $\tau(e)$, but is truth-conditionally connected to it. Russian *pf* morphology is a case in point. Since it signals focus on the time immediately after the run time of the event token, it explicitly distinguishes that time for becoming related to assertion time.

Let us define a function δ that maps event tokens to their distinguished time:

- (42) δ is a function that maps event tokens into times.

Given a DRS K with a condition involving $\delta(e)$:

If U_K contains a discourse marker for a time t and Con_K specifies a temporal relation between t and $\tau(e)$, then $\delta(e) = t$.

If not, then $\delta(e) = \tau(e)$.

That being said, I propose that Asp in Russian has the following meaning (\circ expresses temporal overlap):

- (43) $Asp \Rightarrow \lambda P \lambda t [e] P(e), \delta(e) \circ t]$

Note that, following Paslawska & von Stechow (2003) and Grønn (2004), I draw a distinction between semantic aspects and morphological aspects. Unlike these authors, however, I assume only a single semantic aspect. According to my proposal, the two morphological aspects *pf* and *ipf* induce different $\langle B, F \rangle$'s at VP leading to different interpretations after application of the single semantic aspect operator Asp.

If (43) applies to (41), the meaning of a morphologically *pf* VP, it will give us (44). To fully understand this move, it should be noted that composition

¹⁶ Note that Klein's (1995) theory fails to account for factual *ipf* (Grønn 2004:53). The reason

is that the meaning that Klein proposes for the Russian *ipf* includes a condition requiring that the time of the target state must not overlap the time of assertion. Therefore he cannot account for *ipf* examples like, for instance, (29).

adheres to a (trivial) principle according to which presupposed conditions require their arguments to be declared in presupposition universe (this is why the discourse marker *e* ends up in the presuppositional part):

$$(44) \text{ Asp-P-pf} \Rightarrow \lambda t [t'[\tau(e)] > <t'; t' \circ t] [e, e_k[V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)]]$$

4.4 Composition with a Bare Singular Object

Now let the pf verb have a bare singular nominal as internal argument. How will the composition proceed? Recall from (40) the structured meaning of a VP containing a pf verb:

$$(45) \text{ VP-pf} \Rightarrow <\lambda e [e_k[V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)], \lambda e [t'[\tau(e)] > <t'] >$$

In section 4.2 we saw that a Russian bare singular is by itself underspecified with respect to whether it denotes at the token-level or at the kind-level. From this it follows that there are in principle two possibilities as to the level at which the internal argument NP composes with the verb. (46) shows the first option. The lexical property of the noun characterizes a token argument ("x") and relates via Theme to the event token argument ("e").¹⁷

$$(46) \text{ VP-pf} \Rightarrow <\lambda e [x, e_k[V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)], N'(x), \text{TH}(e, x)], \lambda e [t'[\tau(e)] > <t'] >$$

(47) shows the second possibility. Here the property of the noun characterizes a kind argument ("x_k") and relates via Theme to the event kind argument ("e_k").

$$(47) \text{ VP-pf} \Rightarrow <\lambda e [x_k, e_k[V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)], N'(x_k), \text{TH}(e, x_k)], \lambda e [t'[\tau(e)] > <t'] >$$

Which one of these two options will be the actual one? We have no cues triggering kind-level relevance (recall section 4.2). Therefore, the predicted road of interpretation will be along (46). Subject to the BPR rule, this structured meaning will give rise to the DRS in (48):

$$(48) \text{ VP-pf}_{BPR} \Rightarrow \lambda e [t'[\tau(e)] > <t'] [x, e_k[V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)], N'(x), \text{TH}(e, x)]$$

¹⁷ The discourse marker "x" and the conditions "N'(x)" and "TH(e, x)" appear in the background part of (46). If the situation was as noted in footnote 15, they would appear in the focus part, which would give rise to a specific indefinite interpretation of the object, as in (2a), for instance.

When Asp applies, repeated in (49), this gives us (50):

$$(49) \text{ Asp} \Rightarrow \lambda P \lambda t [e][P(e), \delta(e) \circ t]$$

$$(50) \text{ Asp-P-pf} \Rightarrow \lambda t [t'[\tau(e)] > <t'; t' \circ t] [x, e, e_k[V'(e_k), R(e, e_k)], N'(x), \text{TH}(e, x)]]$$

As can be seen, the nominal supplies a token-level discourse marker in the presuppositional universe of the resulting DRS. Accordingly, the bare singular object gets a definite token-level interpretation—in line with the Russian facts presented in section 2.

4.5 The Meaning of an ipf Verb

At least since Jakobson (1984[1932]) it has been proposed that the two grammatical aspects in Russian form a privative binary relationship, with the ipf being the semantically unmarked pole of the opposition (e.g. Comrie 1976; Paslawska & von Stechow 2003). In the present analysis, this idea is reflected in that, while pf is a focus marker with the content described above, ipf has no own positive content. It is compatible with any <B, F>-structure, except for the one for which pf represents the specialized expression.

Factual ipf thus corresponds to one out of many possibilities that ipf aspect allows for. Following Padučeva (1996:36), I assume that it is characterized by focus on event realization—an existential information structure, so to speak. Accordingly, in the context of a factual ipf, the information contained by an ipf VP will be structured as follows:¹⁸

$$(51) \text{ VP-ipf} \Rightarrow <\lambda e [e_k[V'(e_k)], \lambda e [[R(e, e_k)]] >$$

With BPR, this amounts to the following input for the semantic aspect operator Asp:

$$(52) \text{ VP-ipf}_{BPR} \Rightarrow \lambda e [[R(e, e_k)] [e_k[V'(e_k)]]$$

To avoid misunderstandings, I emphasize once again that focus on realization is only one out of many "meanings" that a Russian ipf VP can express. On other occasions ipf happens to come with focus on other pieces of information, e.g.

¹⁸ As a reviewer pointed out, the background part of (51) has a vacuous abstraction of λe . Since this formal problem is immediately resolved by application of BPR, however, I consider it to be harmless.

on the internal phase of the event token ("progressive ipf") or on this or that event participant ("presuppositional ipf").

The semantic aspectual operator Asp is reproduced in (53):

$$(53) \text{Asp} \Rightarrow \lambda P \lambda t [e]P(e), \delta(e) \circ t]$$

If it applies to (52), we get the following AspP:

$$(54) \text{AspP-ipf} \Rightarrow \lambda t [e]R(e, e_k), t \circ \tau(e)] [e_k V'(e_k)]$$

4.6 Composition with a Bare Singular Object

Now the stage is set to ask the crucial question. Assume that the ipf verb appears in a context which gives rise to a factual information structure at VP (51). Given that, what happens to semantic composition when the verb has an internal bare singular argument?

Above we saw that a Russian bare singular can in principle have a token-level as well as a kind-level interpretation. Now I will show that in the particular context of a factual information structure at VP the token-level interpretation is ruled out. I proceed as follows: I will first explain why composition must fail when the bare singular takes on a token-level interpretation. Then I will demonstrate that the alternative, a kind-level interpretation, will work.

A "factual VP" is characterized by focus on the event's realization. Accordingly, every other piece of information will belong to the background, including the information supplied by the object NP.¹⁹ Now let the bare singular object denote at the token-level. The VP meaning will then be as stated in (55):

$$(55) \text{VP-ipf} \Rightarrow \langle \lambda e [x, e_k V'(e_k), N'(x), \text{TH}(e, x)], \lambda e [R(e, e_k)] \rangle$$

Application of BPR translates (55) into (56):

$$(56) \text{VP-ipf}_{BPR} \Rightarrow \lambda e [[R(e, e_k)] [x, e_k V'(e_k), N'(x), \text{TH}(e, x)]]$$

It is obvious that this DRS is not verifiable. To embed it into an ongoing discourse, an input context would be required that does not (yet) contain a discourse marker for the event token symbolized by "e". This follows from the

19 Note that the verb and the object noun strictly speaking do not form a single information structure unit, which is how Serdobolskaya (this volume) explains the pseudo-incorporation-like effects of morphologically unmarked objects in Eastern Mari.

condition "R(e, e_k)" sitting in the assertoric part of (56), which tells us that the information about the event token e is newly introduced by the sentence DRS. At the same time, the presuppositional part of the DRS requires the input context to meet the condition "TH(e, x)". Accordingly, the input context will have to contain an object token x and an event token e that relate to each other via THEME. This is impossible, however, if the input context must not have a discourse marker for the event token e. Hence, the DRS (56) calls for an impossible context. We note that, with a factual information structure and a token-level bare singular object, the composition of the ipf verb and the bare singular nominal fails.

Let the bare singular object denote at the kind-level instead:

$$(57) \text{VP-ipf} \Rightarrow \langle \lambda e [x_k, e_k V'(e_k), N'(x_k), \text{TH}(e_k, x_k)], \lambda e [R(e, e_k)] \rangle$$

BPR will translate (57) into (58):

$$(58) \text{VP-ipf}_{BPR} \Rightarrow \lambda e [[R(e, e_k)] [x_k, e_k V'(e_k), N'(x_k), \text{TH}(e_k, x_k)]]$$

This time we reached a possible DRS. It suits to an input context that contains an individual kind discourse marker x_k true of the nominal predicate N', and an event kind discourse marker e_k true of the verbal predicate V', whereby the event kind is restricted by that the theme of any realization of it must be of the individual kind.

5 Readdressing the Properties from Section 2

In section 2, bare singular object noun phrases of factual ipfs were diagnosed to have the properties that are typically associated with pseudo-incorporating nominals. In the present section I show, in an informal way, how these properties follow from the account proposed in the previous section.

The crucial property of the proposed analysis is that, as a consequence of the particular information structure of factual ipfs, a bare singular object will not supply its own token-level discourse marker. It merely names a kind. This can be read from (57) and (58), where there is no discourse marker "x" in the discourse representation structure. This is unlike the situation with a pf verb, or with an ipf verb in canonical use.

Importantly, saying that the bare singular object of a factual ipf does not supply its own token-level discourse marker is not saying that the utterance as a

whole would not entail the existence of a token entity realizing the kind named by the bare singular. It does. The reason is that, according to the proposed analysis, the utterance of a factual ipf with a bare singular object instantiates a configuration that is known to automatically activate a semantic adjustment process:²⁰

[W]henver an object-level argument slot in a predicate is filled by a kind (in an episodic frame), the type of the predicate is automatically adjusted by introducing a (local) existential quantification over instances of the kind [...] Derived Kind Predication (DKP): If P applies to objects and k denotes a kind, then $P(k) = \exists x [\cup k(x) \ \& \ P(x)]$

CHIERCHIA 1998:364

In other words, the representation that I gave in (58) is in a way incomplete, as it invites a semantic inference as to the existence of a token of the kind. In terms of DRT, this means that an additional token-level discourse marker "x" will be added to the assertion part of the DRS in (58), as well as a condition "R(x,x_k)":

(59) VP-*ipf_{ppr}* $\Rightarrow \lambda e [x \ R(e, e_k), R(x, x_k)] [x_k, e_k, \cup V'(e_k), N'(x_k), TH(e_k, x_k)]$

This being said, let us now readdress the properties that we came across with in section 2.

5.1 Number Neutrality

The bare singular object of a factual ipf by itself does neither assert nor presuppose the existence of a token entity. Assuming that number interpretation proceeds locally, we therefore predict that there is no token-level target for number morphology to impose a cardinality constraint on. Accordingly, from a strictly semantic point of view, we expect the denotation of the singular nominal to be compatible with singularities as well as with pluralities.

What is said here does not mean, of course, that a plural interpretation of the bare singular would be available on any utterance of a factual ipf. Pragmatic inferences may intervene, rendering a plural interpretation impossible. Nevertheless, we can attest number neutrality. The relevant example was (6), repeated here for convenience. The point is that, although *strausinoe jajico* is singular by morphology, the factual ipf sentence is compatible with a continuation in which explicit reference is made to two ostrich egg tokens.

(60) *Ja el strausinoe jajico. Odno v detstve, odno sosenm*
I ate:1PF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC one in childhood.LOC one very
nedavno
recently

'I have eaten an ostrich egg. One in my childhood, one quite recently.'

Pragmatic inferences arise in particular due to that plural morphology is in principle available as an alternative to singular morphology. In the present paper, I have examined bare singulars only, leaving bare plural objects of factual ipfs for future research. A precise determination of the impact of number morphology on the interpretation of bare nominals in the object position of factual ipfs is therefore beyond the scope of this paper (but see Dayal 2004 for suggestions).

5.2 Narrow Scope

It was also observed in section 2 that bare singular objects of factual ipfs only exhibit narrow scope with respect to negation. A wide scope reading seems to be excluded. The relevant example was (13), repeated here:

(61) ?*Nedelju nazad Ivan dal mne strausinoe jajico. On skazal*
week.ACC before Ivan gave:PF me ostrich.ACC egg.ACC he said
čto by ja ego s'el do segodnjasnego dnja. No ja ne el
that I it ate:PF until today:GEN day:GEN but I not ate:1PF
strausinoe jajico
ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
'A week ago Ivan gave me an ostrich egg. He said I should eat it until today.
But I have not eaten an ostrich egg.'

Let us now see how this behaviour follows from the present account.

According to the proposed analysis, due to the specific information structure of factual ipfs (focus on event realization), the nominal *strausinoe jajico* in the final sentence of (61) must be interpreted at the kind-level. By itself, it merely names a kind. The supplementary application of a semantic adjustment process (corresponding to Chierchia's DKP-rule) guarantees that a discourse marker standing for a token of the kind named by *strausinoe jajico* will nonetheless be declared. What is crucial to understanding (61) is that the adjustment process is *local*. This property, locality, implies "the requirement of earliest application" (Mueller-Reichau 2011:36), which rules out the possibility of a wide-scope reading in case the predicate is negated: If the predicate is under negation, and if its internal argument only locally creates a token-level dis-

²⁰ Dayal (this volume) presents some discussion of the DKP-rule.

course marker, then this discourse marker will necessarily be under negation too. This explains why a factual ipf is misplaced in a text like (61) where a wide-scope reading is suggested.

5.3 *Reduced Discourse Transparency*

Under this heading, I discussed the fact that the bare singular object of a factual ipf apparently cannot access a referent introduced in the preceding discourse. Note that the relevant example is very similar to (61) discussed just before, the difference being simply that this time the predicate is not negated.

- (62) *Ja našel odno strausinoe jajco i dva kokosovyx orexa*
 I found.PF one ostrich.ACC egg.ACC and two coco.GEN nut.GEN
Ja el strausinoe jajco
 I ate.ipf ostrich.ACC egg.ACC
 'I found one ostrich egg and two coconuts. I was eating the ostrich egg.'

The observation was that the ipf sentence fails to exhibit the factual reading in (62), which repeats (16). This observation can likewise be explained by appealing to the DKP-rule. What is relevant this time is that the rule describes the introduction of an *existential* quantification. In our framework, this corresponds to the declaration of a token-level discourse marker in the *assertion* part of the DRS. Accordingly, there is no advice to link the discourse marker to some other, already established one. In other words, the object of the ipf sentence, *strausinoe jajco*, cannot but get an indefinite interpretation.

The text in (62) suggests a definite interpretation for *strausinoe jajco*, however. For the sake of coherence, the hearer will therefore better resort to some other ipf reading than the factual one, one that allows for a definite interpretation of the bare nominal. As such an alternative is generally available in form of the ongoing reading (recall 1.1), it is to be expected that the ipf sentence in (62) will be read such that the speaker is engaged in eating the ostrich egg that he has found before. This is what we find.

5.4 *Bad Support for Pronominal Anaphora*

The bare singular object of a factual ipf is not the optimal antecedent for a subsequent pronoun. This was noted with respect to (63) (= (19)). As for the ipf sentence in this discourse segment, the factual reading seems to be suppressed in favor of the ongoing reading.

- (63) *Ja el strausinoe jajco. Ono bylo podarkom Ivana*
 I ate.IPF ostrich.ACC egg.ACC it was present.INS Ivan.GEN
 'I was eating a/the ostrich egg. It was a present from Ivan.'

In harmony with the analysis proposed in this paper, this observation can be accounted for by appealing to principles of Centering Theory (Grosz et al. 1995, Strube & Hahn 1999). Let us see how.

As should be clear by now, the factual use is only one out of several interpretations that a Russian ipf sentence can get. Thus, as it stands, the first sentence of (63) allows for alternative interpretations. Here I restrict discussion to two alternatives, i.e. the factual use and the ongoing use.

It has been noted that the factual use of *Ja el strausinoe jajco* is special in that the denotation of an ostrich egg token is the product of an adjustment rule. The rule dictates the introduction of an existential quantification over instances of the kind named by the nominal. In terms of the DRT-framework, to repeat, this means that discourse marker standing for the ostrich egg token will be declared in the assertion part of the DRS. This implies that, under the factual construal, the token-level discourse marker necessarily represents a hearer-new ostrich egg.

This is different from the ongoing use of *Ja el strausinoe jajco*. In that case, the object nominal can have "existential force" by itself, i.e. the verb can compose with a token-level bare singular object. Therefore, there is nothing that would exclude the possibility of linking the token-level discourse marker to some other, already established discourse marker. In other words, under the ongoing construal, the utterance of the sentence may well refer to a hearer-old ostrich egg.

This is now where Centering Theory comes into play. Its basic tenet can, very briefly, be summarized as follows:²¹ Let there be two subsequent utterances U_i and U_{i+1} , with U_{i+1} containing an anaphorical pronoun. Let furthermore U_i contain more than one candidate antecedent for the pronoun. The idea now is that the candidates in U_i can be ranked according to certain criteria, and that the ranking provides the preference for the interpretation of the pronoun.

For a language like English, a ranking according to grammatical role is usually suggested. For free-word-order languages, which Slavic languages are, Strube & Hahn (1999:309) argue that "grammatical role criteria should be

²¹ See Imer 2011:103ff. for a review of theories of anaphora resolution, including a more elaborate presentation of Centering Theory.

replaced by criteria that reflect the functional information structure of the utterances". In particular, they propose that "[h]earer-old discourse entities are ranked higher than hearer-new discourse entities" (Strube & Hahn 1999:320).

Given this, and given the above noted difference between the factual use and the ongoing use if the ipf sentence has a bare singular object, we arguably hold the key to understanding (63). The ongoing reading will be preferred over the factual one, because that will maximize the coherence of the discourse segment.

Note that this analysis is in line with the apparent counterexample (21), where there is no competition among possible ipf readings. In the absence of alternatives, the hearer-new discourse entity is chosen to resolve the pronominal anaphor.

5.5 *Establishedness Effects*

Finally, we saw that establishedness effects are observable in the factual use of an ipf sentence. The critical pair of examples was (24). Here I present another "minimal pair" to illustrate the point.

- (64) a. *Ja pil beresovyj sok*
 I drank.IPF birch.ACC juice.ACC
 'I have drank birch sap.'
 b. *?Ja pil želtyj sok*
 I drank.IPF yellow.ACC juice.ACC
 'I have drank yellow juice.'

If reference to a completed drinking event is intended, (64a) will give a possible utterance, but utterance (64b) will sound odd.

It was argued that the oddness of (64b) and (24b) is due to that the kinds of activities described by the respective verb-noun-complexes are not grounded in background knowledge as well-established categories. This sets them apart from the kinds of events described in (64a) and (24a), which are. But what is a well-established category?

The establishedness of an activity cannot be traced back to the frequency of its occurrence. This can be seen from the fact that the activity of drinking yellow juice is very frequent, yet (64b) is bad as a factual ipf. Well-establishedness should furthermore not be equated with noteworthiness (in an intuitive understanding). This would run counter to the fact that (24b) gives a bad factual ipf although the realization of the event kind 'eating an ostrich feather' is definitely worth noting.

I propose that an activity is well-established if it is shared knowledge that a realization of the activity will have a specific consequence: it must imply a recategorization of the agent of the event. Using Carlson's (1980) terminology, this is tantamount to saying that the realization of the activity must be known to imply the assignment of a new individual-level property to the agent.

Note that the definition given above presupposes that the event kind has to be familiar to the interlocutors. This condition rules 'eating an ostrich feather' out as a well-established category, because this event kind can normally not be taken to be familiar. But recall from (26) that, once the hearer is acquainted with this otherwise unknown activity, a factual ipf reading becomes possible.

As for the activity of 'drinking yellow juice', it can be assumed that it is known. Given the proposed definition, it nevertheless does not qualify for being well-established. The reason is that it is too ordinary. Nothing interesting follows from its realization that would license a recategorization of the agent. In contrast to that, the event kind 'drinking birch sap' is known and there is something noteworthy about the performer of this kind of activity. Upon hearing (64a), the addressee is invited to newly classify the speaker as one who has made the interesting experience of drinking birch sap. Something along the same lines could be said with respect to 'eating an ostrich egg'.²²

The account proposed in this paper captures the well-establishedness requirement of Russian factual ipfs in the following way. According to (58), the DRS of a factual ipf has a kind-level discourse marker "e_k" in its presupposition part. Thus, for a successful utterance of a factual ipf, the event kind identified by the VP must be entailed by the input context. This explains why it must not be hearer-new. The general fact that the utterance of a factual ipf should have consequences follows from ordinary pragmatic principles (an utterance without consequences would be irrelevant). The more specific fact that the consequences that factual ipfs imply concern the actor rather than the activity follows from aspectual competition: Since the function of expressing consequences concerning the completion of a specific event token ("target state relevance" in the terminology of Grønn 2004) is taken by pf aspect, factual ipfs are used instead to draw attention to consequences concerning the completion of an event token of a specific kind.

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At this point recall my claim from footnote 3 that the present analysis is not in conflict with the view that factual ipfs are, more often than not, experientials.

6 Summary

In this paper, I have presented an explanation as to why bare singulars as internal arguments of a factual ipf have weak reference. The explanation rests on the assumption that factual ipf are characterized by exclusive focus on event realization. This specific information structure brings it about that arguments and modifiers below V must compose at the kind-level. I have shown how all the typical properties of pseudo-incorporating nominals derive from that in the course of semantic composition.

A final remark concerning the “completedness” of the event: According to the proposed analysis, pf aspect expresses event completion due to a semantic condition which requires the assertion time to overlap the time that begins when the run time of the event token is just over. Consider (65) (= (44)):

- (65) AspP-pf $\Rightarrow \lambda t [t' | \tau(e) > < t'; t' \circ t'] [e_k | \forall' (e_k), R(e, e_k)]$

In contrast to that, the “completedness” of a factual ipf is a pragmatic inference. It is invited if the event kind is telic and tense is past. Recall (54):

- (66) AspP-ipf $\Rightarrow \lambda t [e | R(e, e_k), t \circ \tau(e)] [e_k | \forall' (e_k)]$

The reason for the inference that the event token culminated (i.e. reached completion) is the speaker’s claim that the past event token be a realization of the telic event kind. If the event token did not culminate, such a claim would amount to a miscategorization. Therefore the hearer is led to infer a completed event token. If required, however, the speaker can cancel the implicature (Grønn’s example):

- (67) *Voobče ja čital ‘Vojnu imir’* *Xotja po pravde, ja*
 overall I read_{1PF} War_and_Peace_{ACC} although after truth_{LOC} I
pročital tolko neskolko stranic
 read_{1PF} only few pages_{GEN}
 ‘In principle I have read ‘War and Peace’ but, honestly speaking, I have read only a few pages.’

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