The involuntary state/'feel-like'/dative desiderative construction: a reply to Rivero (2009)

Rivero (2009) claims that the "modal" interpretation of the South Slavic Involuntary state construction (ISC), (1a), comes from a viewpoint-aspect imperfective operator, IMP^{OP}, which is claimed to share syntactic and semantic properties with the English progressive operator in 'futurates', (2), and the Spanish modal 'imperfecto'. We will argue that the proposed parallel between ISCs and English futurates is empirically problematic, and so Rivero's (2009) analysis cannot be maintained. We also identify several problems in Rivero's (2009) analysis, and conclude that the analysis of Marušič and Žaucer (2006), which proposes that (1) contains a null verb 'feel like' which takes the clausal complement 'dance samba' (very similarly to the situation in (2b)) still proves superior.

- (1) a. Tonetu se pleše sambo.

 Tone.dat refl dances samba.acc

 'Tone feels like dancing samba.'
- b. Tonetu se lušta plesat sambo. (Slovenian)
 T.dat refl feels-like dance.inf samba.acc
 'Tone feels like dancing samba.'
- (2) For two weeks, the Red Sox were playing the Yankees today. (Rivero 2009: 153)

Rivero shows that English futurates (Copley 2008), such as (3), which typically involve something like a plan of an event that is supposed to happen in the future, also make use of the IMP^{OP} that comes into the sentence with the progressive verb form. She compares futurates with ISCs and claims that because futurates have the IMP^{OP}, they allow a range of data that makes them parallel with ISCs. The IMP^{OP} does not seem to be the crucial ingredient of futurates, however, since there exist futurates without progressive morphology, as (4).

(3) The Red Sox are playing the Yankees today. (Rivero 2009: 157)

(4) The Red Sox play the Yankees today. (Rivero 2009: 157)

Rivero (2009) says that futurates and ISCs differ in the type of modal interpretation, which results from the presence/absence of the TP-embedding applied (dative) argument. Whereas futurates have a nominative subject that supplies the 'director' with a plan (in the sense of Copley 2008), ISC have only an oblique subject that cannot act as a director. As a result, ISCs denote a plan without a director, which (so it is assumed) can be understood as a disposition. There seem to be at least two problems with this logic. Copley (2008) is not so explicit about the identity of the director and claims it is supplied contextually (op.cit.: 270), the nominative subject is a possible director but it is by no means the only possible director. As claimed by Copley (ibid.), the director of (3) is not The Red Sox, but rather the Major League Baseball officials who make the schedule of baseball matches. So since the director is at least in some cases apparently supplied by the context, it is not clear why it could not be supplied by the context also in ISCs. The other problem is that according to Rivero's (2009) view of ISCs, the dative subject controls the reflexive clitic *se*, which stands for the external argument (Rivero 2009: 154). So if ISCs have an external argument controlled by the dative, it is not clear why this external argument should not also supply the director.

Furthermore, Rivero claims that the 'modal' interpretation of futurates and the 'modal'/dispositional interpretation of ISCs both stem from the viewpoint-aspect operator (IMP^{OP}), with the difference that for the dispositional interpretation of ISCs to arise, a TP-embedding dative argument is also required. Regardless of this additional requirement for the dispositional interpretation of ISCs, however, placing the basic ingredient of futurates and ISCs in the same projection makes a clear prediction: we cannot have a futurate ISC, the two should be in complementary distribution. This prediction, however, is incorrect, as shown in (3) (cf. Marušič and Žaucer 2006: 1101). Even though futurates of most statives are not nearly as natural as futurates of predicates such as *play the Yankees*, they are possible, and the same goes for ISCs.

(5) Včeraj se mi danes še ni šlo v hribe. (Slovenian) yesterday refl I.dat today still not go to mountains 'Yesterday, I wasn't gonna be in the mood today for going to the moutains.'

Therefore, the futurate 'modal' interpretation and the dispositional 'modal' interpretation cannot both originate in the same viewpoint-aspect projection.

Moreover, Rivero (2009) proposes that the prefix *pri*-, when it occurs in Bulgarian ISCs to mark the inception of the disposition, instantiates the imperfective operator which is the source of the intensionality (just like the suffix -va-) (op.cit.: 178). Looking at Serbian/Croatian/Bosnian, where ISCs can also contain an inceptive *pri*-, (6), three problems arise with respect to Rivero's (2009) account. Firstly, as shown in (6), leaving out the prefix removes the inception meaning, but the structure remains intensional, so it cannot be that the prefix encodes intensionality. Secondly, if ISCs with an inceptive *pri*- are claimed to be imperfective, on a par with -va-marked forms, this would make these forms the only imperfectives which are not at all compatible with the *for-x-time* adverbials, (7). And thirdly, with some imagination, one can produce (8), in which the verbal form contains both the inceptive prefix and the imperfective suffix -va-, both of which should be encoders of imperfectivity and intensionality located in the same projection. If this were correct, then *pri*- and -va- should be in complementary distribution. And furthermore, if one were, for instance, claimed to be a head and the other its specifier, thus potentially allowing cooccurrence, they should have undefinable relative scope, which is also not the case (-va- scopes over *pri*-).

- (6) a. Pri-piškilo mi se. b. Piškilo mi se. (S/C/B) at- piss I_{DAT} refl piss I_{DAT} refl
- (7) a. Piškio sam 5 minuta. b. Piškilo mi se 2 sata. (S/C/B) pee aux 5 minutes pee I_{DAT} refl 2 hours 'I was peeing for 5 minutes.' 'For 2 hours, I felt like peeing.'
 - c. * Pri-piškilo mi se 2 sata. (S/C/B) at-pee I_{DAT} refl 2 hours
- (8) Baš mi se pri-piški-va-lo, kad je zazvonio telefon. (S/C/B) 'I was just coming to feel like peeing when the phone rang.'

Finally, Rivero (2009) also proposes a superhigh applicative, which is an argument projection that is merged above TP and introduces the dative into ISCs. Root modals are typically claimed to originate under TP (unlike epistemic modals which are above TP) (e.g. Butler 2003). It is not completely clear whether it is the applicative that brings in the disposition or the imperfective aspectual operator. In case it is the applicative, we would not expect to find the root modal to scope over the disposition, in case it is the aspectual operator, we would not expect to find the root modal to be in the scope of the disposition. Which ever option we choose, we end up with the wrong prediction, since the root modal can scope both under and over the disposition, as pointed out by Marušič and Žaucer (2006), (9).

(9) Petru se sme igrat fuzbal.
 Peter_{DAT} refl aux play soccer
 a) "Peter feels like being allowed to play soccer."

(Slovenian)

b) "Peter is allowed to feel like playing soccer."

Butler, Jonny. 2003. A minimalist treatment of modality. Lingua 113: 967-996.
Rivero, María-Luisa 2009. Intensionality, high applicatives, and aspect: involuntary state constructions in Bulgarian and Slovenian. *Natural Language Linguist Theory* 27: 151–196.
Copley, Bridget. 2008. The Plan's the Thing: Deconstructing Futurate Meanings. *LI* 39.2: 261–274
Marušič, Franc, and Rok Žaucer. 2006. On the intensional FEEL-LIKE construction in Slovenian: A case of a phonologically null verb. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 24: 1093–1159.