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The Neutral Aspect in Diachrony and Discourse

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In her groundbreaking study (Smith 1991), the late Carlota Smith made a strong case for the claim that the notions of imperfectivity and perfectivity alone are not sufficient to account for the full range of aspect categories attested across languages, and postulated a third, so-called neutral aspectual type which is compatible with imperfective-like and perfective-like readings. A number of studies, including Dahl (2010, 2016) have made profitable use of this category, developing analyses that are able to account for a non-negligent number of synchronic and diachronic facts. In a number of recent publications, however, Altshuler (2013, 2014) claims that there is no need to assume the existence of a third aspectual viewpoint, drawing on a notion of aspectual morphosyntax as partitive operators. This paper refutes Altshuler's claim, arguing that neutral aspectual operators indeed exist, building on the Neo-Reichenbachian framework developed in previous work (e.g. Dahl 2010) and exploring synchronic and diachronic data from various Indo-European languages (Latin, Greek, Vedic), where the tense/aspect systems undergo more or less fundamental changes in the course of their attested history. The data for this study derives from available electronic corpora and texts, and the paper aims to enrich the essentially qualitatively oriented perspective of previous studies with a quantitatively oriented approach.

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It is what it has been or will be: tense-aspect shift in Slavic performatives

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Although not new to the linguistic arena (see the thorough historical reconstruction in ŽAGAR, GRGIČ 2011), only in the last couple of decades has exploration of the aspectual characteristics of several classes of performative verbs been extensively carried out by Slavic aspectologists, both in synchrony (DICKEY 2000, SLAVKOVA 2014, VIMER 2014, VOJVODIČ 2015, 2018, POPOVIĆ 2018, FORTUIN 2019) and in diachrony (DICKEY 2015, DEKKER 2018). However, with some exceptions (e.g. PADUČEVA 1994), far less investigated are the temporal properties of these verbs, with special reference to those languages (e.g. Russian) where temporal meanings are often conveyed through aspectual grams (see the thorny issue of the so-called 'present perfective paradox' as analyzed in DE WIT 2017). Assessing some data elicited from questionnaires and gathered through national corpora (main reference is being made to Russian and Serbo-Croatian, however against a broader Slavic background), the present contribution aims at

clarifying in what fashion aspectually divergent performative verbs express temporal properties somehow at odds with the 'presentist' assumption – the assumption of performative utterances being self-referential and thus belonging (whatever the context) to the very same moment of utterance. Of particular interest are those performatives commonly used in declarative (e.g. Russian *ob"javljat'/ob"javit'* <soveščanie <zakrytym>> 'to adjourn <the meeting>') and directive [e.g. Russian *prosit'/poprosit'* 'to ask (for)'] illocutive acts (SEARLE 1976).

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The role of modality in Russian aspect: Evidence from an experimental study

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We apply experimental data to identify contexts in which Russian aspect is categorically determined (“categorical contexts”) and contexts in which both aspects can appear (“overlapping contexts”). Traditional analyses suggest that these contexts are distinct and that certain features are typical for each type of context. Such analyses tend to rely on constructed examples typically consisting of a single sentence. Our experiment, by contrast, is based on extensive (over 1100 words each) authentic texts (created by and for native Russians), and the identification of contexts is not a priori, but emerges from contexts normed by over 500 native speakers. We present two main findings: 1) the distinction between categorical contexts and overlapping contexts is scalar, not discrete; and 2) a multitude of factors distinguish the two types of contexts, in particular modality is prominent in overlapping contexts, a factor that has received little prior attention. Our data both confirms and significantly extends previous analyses by presenting empirically justified factors that distinguish categorical from overlapping contexts.

Distributional and aspectual properties of the perfect auxiliary construction [*tener* + participle] in Eonavian Spanish

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Eonavian Spanish is a Northwestern variety of Peninsular Spanish spoken in between the Eo and Navia rivers in Asturias, an area where for centuries there has been a situation of language contact between Spanish and dialects of Galician-Portuguese. The verbal system of Eonavian Spanish, and in particular its perfect construction (formed by a tensed auxiliary form of *tener* ‘have’ + perfect participle), constitute interesting examples with a mixture of properties that arise from a longstanding situation of contact.

In this talk, I will present the basic empirical facts about [*tener* + participle], an example of which is given in (1), taken from spontaneous speech data. This construction can only be interpreted as an iterative experiential perfect, subject to Aktionsart restrictions on the types of verbs that can form the participle. I will evaluate the implications of the Eonavian data for the formal accounts of perfect constructions that have been proposed (both from the point of view of Syntax and Semantics).

- (1) Juan los tenía visto caer y seguir jugando
John. DOcl. tener.3sgIMPERF see.PERFppl fall.INF & continue.INF play.GER
‘John has seen them fall and continue playing’ (many times)
NOTE: they fell and they continued to play afterwards

Russian future and much more: perfective and imperfective future forms and their meanings

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The future in Russian is expressed either by a non-past conjugated verb form of a perfective verb or by a periphrastic future consisting of the auxiliary verb *byt'* 'be' and an imperfective infinitive. My study shows that Russian perfective future does not mean future or only future in roughly 40% of cases. Example (1) illustrates gnomic advice.

(1) *Otdelka dekorativnoj stročkoj na brjukax **pozvolit** polnovatym bedram vygljadet' strojnee.*

'Trimming with decorative stitching on the trousers **allows** plump hips to look slimmer.'

The amount is smaller for Russian imperfective future. Example (2) shows a version of a general personal construction. However, the categories of meanings overlap for perfective and imperfective verbs.

(2) — ***Nu, čto ty tut budeš' razob''jasnjat'**, — skazal on dosadlivo — vot vozvratitsja ego xozjain, togda i budet razgovor.*

'Well, what are (you) going to explain here,' he said annoyingly '(when) his master will return, then there will be a conversation.'

In this talk, I would like to demonstrate where the meanings of perfective and imperfective future overlap and what is the difference between the two.

True exponents of viewpoint aspect, and exponents triggering specific aspectual interpretations

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In this talk I will look at the tense-aspect systems in Swedish, English, Russian and Spanish, and argue that Spanish is the only language among these that overtly encodes viewpoint aspect (in the sense of e.g. Comrie: bounded (perfective) vs unbounded events (imperfective)). I will argue that the progressive marking in English, as well as verb particles and conative alternations in Swedish, directly modify the aktionsart/lexical aspect of the predicate, e.g., turning activities/accomplishments to states (progressives), activities into accomplishments/achievements (verb particles) and accomplishments into activities (conatives). The sub-eventual properties of the different types of the aktionsarten will influence the viewpoint aspect interpretation, but not fully determine interpretation. The Russian system of aspect seems initially harder to give an aktionsart treatment, due to the apparent direct mapping from morphological marking to aspect interpretation. Yet I will argue that a more lexical treatment of Russian aspect explains phenomena like bounded interpretations of "imperfective" predicates (*Drink (imp.) water for one minute*), the absence of progressive readings of imperfective predicates (e.g. **V eto vremja on pil stakan vody*, intended: "At that moment, he was drinking a glass of water", see Romanova 2006) as well as "lexical"/unmarked perfective verbs.

Aspect and Quantification in Russian

Sergey Minor

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Russian generally disallows the use of Perfective aspect in (past tense) contexts involving quantificational adverbs (e.g. *vsegda* 'always', *obyčno* 'usually', etc.). This restriction applies both to main (nuclear scope) clauses and *when/if* (restrictor) clauses that combine with the adverb. In this talk I examine the use of aspect in clauses deeply embedded in the scope of quantificational adverbs, e.g. relative clauses embedded in an argument of the adverb's nuclear scope clause. I demonstrate that when such clauses describe situations that co-vary with the situation of the main clause, the use of Perfective aspect is licit just in case the tense of the deeply embedded clause is interpreted as a relative, rather than absolute tense. I show how this restriction can be made to follow from a formalized theory of Russian Perfective aspect as encoding *temporal definiteness* (cf. Dickey 2000, and related observations in Barentsen 1995, 1998).

What's in an aspectual prefix?

Tore Nesset

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In the CLEAR group, we have described the meanings of Russian aspectual prefixes in terms of networks of subcategories organized around a prototype. In these networks, each subcategory is represented by a simple label, such as MOVE AWAY, MOVE DOWNWARDS, and REDUCE for *u-* (Janda et al. 2013: 31). The purpose of the present paper is to go beyond simplistic labels and investigate the "semantic atoms" of Russian aspectual prefixes. Many earlier approaches have addressed this issue (see e.g. Dobrušina et al. 2001, Zaluznjak 2006), but cognitive linguistics is different insofar as we analyze concrete submeanings rather than abstract underlying meanings (Wierzbicka 1980). My working hypothesis is that the following four elements facilitate insightful analyses of the relevant prefixes: (i) the image schemas PATH, POINT, SURFACE, and CONTAINER; (ii) deixis, i.e. whether or not the PATH image schema is related to the deictic center; (iii) construal, i.e. the ability to conceptualize a state of affairs in alternate ways (Verhagen 2007: 48-49); and (iv) trajectory/landmark alignment (relative prominence of arguments, Langacker 2008). In particular, it is argued that trajectory/landmark alignment is important, since the trajectors and landmarks of the aspectual prefix do not coincide with the trajectors and landmarks of the verbs they attach to (Nesset 2011).

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Prefixed “dyads” and how they work in modern Russian

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The present paper discusses a phenomenon in the Russian aspectual system that so far has received little attention, namely cases where two perfectives from the same verb cluster are derived by means of the same prefix. I call these verb constellations “prefixed dyads” and they are illustrated below with perfectives from the clusters of *ščělkat* ‘click’ and *pixat* ‘shove’. One perfective is derived from the imperfective verb (*ščělkat*, *pixat*); the second perfective is derived from a perfective verb with the suffix *-nu-* (*ščělknut*, *pixnut*). In the first cluster, the prefix yields perfectives with distinct lexical meanings. In the second cluster, the lexical meanings of the two perfectives seem identical, and this, in turn, raises the question of whether full synonymy exists. The study is based on corpus data of a number of dyads and seeks to shed light on their behavior and usage in modern Russian.

Table 1

Base verb	<i>ščělkat</i> ^{1PF} ‘click’	<i>ščělknut</i> ^{PF} ‘click once’
Prefixed verb	<i>zaščělkat</i> ^{PF} ‘begin to click’	<i>zaščělknut</i> ^{PF} ‘fasten’

Table 2

Base verb	<i>pixat</i> ^{1PF} ‘shove’	<i>pixnut</i> ^{PF} ‘shove once’
Prefixed verb	<i>zapixat</i> ^{PF} ‘shove into’	<i>zapixnut</i> ^{PF} ‘shove into’

Convergence with Divergent Performance:

Grammatical Aspect and the Competing Systems Hypothesis (CPH)

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The Competing Systems Hypothesis (CPH, Rothman 2008) attempts to explain *some* variability within individual advanced/near-native L2 learners in light of competition between two types of mental systems for the target L2. The first system is one of abstract mental representation – qualitatively similar to native grammars – whereas the other is a system of metalinguistic knowledge and explicit rules taught to classroom learners. The latter system, comprised of purposefully designed pedagogical rules, does not typically align perfectly with how the target grammar operates. The CPH claims that classroom learners filter language production through both systems whereby the metalinguistic based system can induce predictable production errors. The CPH makes two testable claims: (a) even the most advanced L2 learners who started their L2 experience in a classroom setting will show some lingering non-native effects in production (or grammaticality judgement) for structures that are used grammatically but run in disaccord to how the structure is pedagogically explained and (b) naturalistic L2 learners by comparison matched for overall proficiency will not show this effect.

We test two groups of Spanish speakers focusing on prediction (a) above: (i) L1 native controls and (ii) English non-naturalistic L2 learners of Spanish with various levels of

proficiency. Group (ii) varies in proficiency to test latent predictions of development of the CPH: that learners will eventually show patterns of convergence towards native norms progressively while retaining specific issues regardless of ultimate attainment proficiency that align with pedagogical oversimplifications. We present data from three experiments on grammatical aspect (perfective vs. imperfective): (a) close fill in the blank production task where there is no mismatch between how aspect selection is taught in classrooms and how the native system works (b) an aspectual selection task where there are specifically designed mismatches with overreaching pedagogical rules (e.g. stative verbs used in the perfective form, perfectives used after adverbs of universal quantification “always”) and (c) a Grammaticality Judgement Task where the semantic entailment (how it relates to the truth value condition in light of the lexical aspect of the verb) of perfective/imperfective morphology is not taught in the classroom but has been shown to be acquired successfully (Montrul & Slabakova, 2003). The CPH predicts all learners with minimally sufficient (high intermediate) proficiency should perform very similarly on task (a) whereas in task (b) they should all show evidence of metalinguistic interference. In task (c), we should see an effect of proficiency where the advanced learners show ceiling results providing evidence for target-like acquisition of the featural configuration of the distinction between perfective and imperfective. Together, task (a) and (b) are predicted to show positive and negative effects of teaching, whereas (c)—not taught—will show the development of the underlying interlanguage system.

Aspect in Coordination:

The basic aspectual patterns in Russian narrative sequences

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Although lexical triggers predict aspect with fairly good reliability (96%), they appear in association with only 2% of verbs in corpus language samples (Reynolds 2016). An additional factor that can help to capture the relationship of context to aspect is sentence complexity. While subordinating conjunctions are sometimes associated with a certain aspect (for instance, *kak tol'ko* ‘as soon as’ requires PF, whereas *poka* ‘while’ is associated with IPF in the subordinate clause, see Barentsen 2008), it is harder to operationalize aspectual patterns in sentences with coordination. Can we make predictions about aspect and context (repetition, sequence of events, simultaneity) based on such factors as the number of verbs and subjects in the sequence and the presence or absence of coordinating conjunctions? We will test this hypothesis through a quantitative study of all Russian past narrative sequences extracted from the Syntactic Corpus of Russian (SynTagRus). A “narrative sequence” in this case is a coordinating sequence of verbs (two or more), with or without a coordinating conjunction, with one or more subjects. We will show what kind of aspectual patterns can be singled out in Russian past coordinating sentences and what kind of semantics is associated with each of the patterns.

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