

# Slavic aspect and (diachronic) corpora

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## Abstracts

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### Playing Hide and Seek, or the Qualitative Side of the Aspect-Modality Interplay (Old Russian and Old Serbian Case Studies)

Research in the grammaticalization of future tense in various Slavic languages, although rich and articulated, has been suffering from a limited systematization, especially with reference to periphrastic (analytic) constructions. The reasons for these shortcomings are possibly twofold. First of all, the limited use of diachronic corpora, which were mostly absent and/or insufficiently annotated at the time the majority of these studies were written, consequently scaled down the validity of the generalizations drawn by the authors. Secondly, the primarily functionalist approach adopted by most of these studies, although useful to approach and describe a great deal of context-dependent meanings typical of each construction, tended to disregard the pivotal role played by their interaction with other syntactic factors, such as word order (PAVLOVIĆ 2018), the type and the quantification of the internal object (when present), floating quantifiers, the semantic features of the external arguments etc.

Central to the issue is the role of a set of periphrastic constructions of Old Church Slavonic origin (VAILLANT 1966: 106-108, KOZLOV 2014) which are governed by a modal or a semi-modal verb. They are believed to have retained a more or less prominent lexical autonomy, although they were also used as grammatical devices in future contexts with particular modal overtones (JUR'EVA 2009). For instance, in Old Russian (XI-XV centuries), long before the rise and the stabilization of *byt'* 'be' as the standard auxiliary selected for the periphrastic (imperfective) future construction (ANDERSEN 2006), a number of modal verbs were used in combination with infinitives of both aspects (GALINSKAJA 2015), such as *xotěti* 'want' (1), *iměti* 'have' (2), *jati* 'seize' (3), and *načati* 'begin' (4), as in the following examples:

- (1) *a ne prisъleši mi polu pjaty grivъny a xocu ti vyryti vъ tja lucъšago novъgorožanina* (N246, DND 2004: 280-281)  
'If you do not send four and a half grivnas to me, I'll confiscate goods from the most illustrious citizen of Novgorod'
- (2) *I reče patrearxъ: «Čado věrnoe! Vo Xrista krestilasja esi, i vo Xrista oblečesja, Xristosъ imatъ sxraniti tja»* (PVL 1978: 76, 7-8)  
'And then said the Patriarch: «Faithful creature! You were baptized into Christ and you donned Christ's garment, and Christ will preserve you»'
- (3) *Tolko, ospo, imete mene žalovatъ, ottošlite, ospodo, ko mně gramotъku do Petrova dñi* (N962, NGB 2015: 69-73)  
'Should you deem me worthy of your attention, my lords, please send a small letter to me before the feast of Saints Peter and Paul'
- (4) *Vidim bo igrišča utoločena, i ljudij mnogo množьstvo na nix, jako upixati načnutъ drugъ druga, pozory dējušče ot běsa zamyšlenago děla, a cerkvi stojatъ* (PVL 1978: 184, 4-7)  
'We see fields for merrymaking where a multitude of people keeps hanging around, a multitude so great that they start trampling each other and setting up devilish spectacles, while churches stand empty'

As for Old Serbian texts (i.e. those written up to the XVIII century), the volitive periphrastic with *xtěti* (5), which in the contemporary language has become the standard morphological device to express future tense, was allegedly grammaticalized around the XIV century (GRKOVIĆ-MEJDŽOR 2012), with the concurrent constructions already backgrounded:

- (5) *takozi ga kjemo pedepsatъ da njega gledaje nitko ne sme vekje toga oučini|t|(i)* (GRKOVIĆ-MEJDŽOR 2012: 91)  
'So we will sign it, so that (he) can see it and no one else will dare to do the same again'

Interestingly enough, in certain contexts the functional sphere of these periphrastics overlaps with that of other modal constructions, e.g. Old Russian impersonal sentences with an infinitive form (either proto-perfective or proto-imperfective) and a logical subject standing in the dative case (6):

- (6) *I reče Bludъ Jaropolku: «Vidiši, kolъko vojn u brata tvoego? Nama ixъ ne pereboroti. Tvori mirъ sъ bratomъ svoimъ»* (PVL 1978: 92, 9-11)  
'And then Blud said to Jaropolk: «Can you just see how many soldiers are at your brother's disposal? There's no way we can overcome them. Make up peace with your brother»'

My talk aims at spotting patterns and differences in the morphosyntactic behaviour of these periphrastic constructions, both in Old Russian and Old Serbian. The study revolves around the following *main research questions*:

- 1) Can a qualitative-quantitative research run through electronic and/or manually annotated diachronic corpora reveal us some tendencies in the grammatical association between tense, aspect and modality (i.e. some modal constructions preferably employed in association with certain lexical classes of verbs)?
- 2) Can a qualitative analysis shed some light on the deep semantic similarities between these modal periphrastics and other modal constructions, i.e. (certain types of) impersonal sentences, with particular respect to aspect choice and the interplay with other clausal elements?

In order to answer these questions, *the data* were first collected resorting to the Old Russian and Middle Russian subcorpora of the Russian National Corpus (NKRJa) and then implemented by other written sources (see the references below). As for Old Serbian, due to the actual lack of (electronic) diachronic corpora, we fell back on a number of written sources compiled between the XIX and the XX century and digitalized by the author (see the references below).

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## 2) Old Serbian

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## Electronic corpora

Russian National Corpus (*Nacional'nyj Korpus Russkogo Jazyka*, NKRJa):

- a. Old Russian: [http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/search-old\\_rus.html](http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/search-old_rus.html)
- b. Middle Russian: [http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/search-mid\\_rus.html](http://www.ruscorpora.ru/new/search-mid_rus.html)

TOROT: The Tromsø Old Russian and OCS Treebank (<https://nestor.uit.no/>)

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## The prefix *po-* and verbal aspect in Upper Sorbian

The paper presents a comparison of the usage of *po-* in Older Upper Sorbian (US, 19th century) and in the contemporary language (1990–2010). In a first step, I give an overview of the types and tokens found in those two periods in the corpus *Hotko*. There is a number of word formational functions, which seem to dominate in the younger texts, except for the new edition of the Bible (2006). However, these functions are already frequent in the older texts as well: In both periods the function of derivating new verbs from nouns and adjectives (e.g. *polěpšić* ‚to improve‘) and the temporal and local functions occurs often. Further I am going to analyse those examples of verbs with the prefix *po-* in more detail, where an aspectual function of the prefix can be expected. These are, judging from the results in Scholze (2008), mainly telic verbs such as *rubać* ‚clear trees, stub‘ or *bić* ‚hit‘. Examples from the older texts show that already during the 19th century for many of these pf. verbs homonymous biaspectual verbs with one or several lexicalized meaning(s) existed.

In Werner (2003, 124 – 128), all usages of *po-* in US are interpreted lexically, a pure aspectual function is neglected. He distinguishes a group of unmotivated derivates and another group of calques from German verbs with *be-* (ibid., 127 f.) from the word formational functions of the prefix. However, in the case of this prefix, it seems especially hard to distinguish calques from “indigenous” derivates: *po-* has numerous lexical meanings as well as a tendency to semantic bleaching in Slavic (Oertle 2016, 215–223).

Furthermore, we are going to check for Scholze’s (2008, 255) suggestion, that a number of prefixed verbs are used biaspectually because of their lexicalization as equivalents to German prefixed verbs. An example is the verb *počahnyć/počahować* (*so*): While in the 19th century and in the Bible translation it is used mainly as a verb of motion with future or perfective meaning ‚go, move‘, in the contemporary texts, lexicalized derivates with other local meanings such as ‚(mit Farbe) überziehen; beziehen‘ ‚(cover with) paint‘ dominate. The possible former ‚aspect partner‘ with the suffix *-owa-* is still ipf., but used in a different meaning ‚relate to‘. It is well possible, that this development is related to the polysemous usage of German (*sich*) *beziehen* ‚relate; refer to, correspond to; upholster‘.

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### “True” perfectives in Old Church Slavonic

In most approaches to Slavonic aspect, the “true” or “natural” perfective verb has a special place, that is prefixed perfectives with a simplex imperfective partner, such as Russian *napisat’* with *pisat’*. In such partnerships, the prefix is arguably “empty”, in that it does not seem to add any lexical meaning, only perfectivity. It is thus different from the prefixed perfective in pairs such as *perepisat’/perepisyvat’*, since in the latter case the prefix clearly adds a lexical meaning that alters the verb so much that it cannot partner up with the simplex base verb. In modern Slavonic languages, both of these perfective types are very common. However, in historical stages of Slavonic, “true” perfectives can be very hard to distinguish from other types, since we cannot rely on native-speaker intuitions to identify aspectual pairs. In this paper I will suggest that parallel corpora of translated texts may be our best way to identify such aspectual pairs.

The situation in Old Church Slavonic (OCS) serves as an illustration. There is considerable disagreement about the role of aspectual derivational affixation in OCS, but statistical studies (Eckhoff and Janda 2014, Eckhoff and Haug 2015) suggest we can assume that prefixed verbs that were not derived by suffixation from another prefixed verb were perfective. There are formations that seem very similar to both of the abovementioned types, such as *napъsati/pъsati*, *prědati/predajati*. To establish aspectual partnerships I draw on the tagging for derivational morphology (prefix, suffix, stem) in the PROIEL/TOROT treebanks as well as the aligned Greek source text. The Greek serves as a filter to identify aspectual pairs in the Codex Marianus and the Codex Zographensis. If a Greek verb is translated by multiple morphologically related verbs, this will be considered a pair (or triplet). This is a small dataset, but a number of verb pairs can be identified.

The most stable pairs are “lexical” perfectives with derived partners (*pristopiti/pristopati*, *načeti/načinati*, *ostaviti/ostavljati*; 49 pairs). We can also identify 46 verb pairs where a simplex verb is partnered by a prefixed perfective verb. Importantly, these pairs are far less stable than the specialised perfective pairs, in that the simplex verb in many of them appears to be aspectually neutral. Also, very few of these verb pairs seem to involve “true” perfectives – most of the perfective partners are procedural perfectives. We only find 17 pairs where the simplex is partnered by a verb with completive/resultative semantics (*stvoriiti/tvoriti*, *naučiti/učiti*). It would seem that lexical and procedural perfectives predate “true” perfectives, and that the latter type is found in a nascent state in OCS.

Nonetheless, the arguable “true” perfectives in OCS are similar to the modern Russian ones in that they display a wide range of prefixes (10 different ones, all of which are also used for “true” perfectives in modern Russian), and that the choice of prefix is not semantically random.

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### Aspectual triplets in the scope of a two-component model of the Russian Aspect

The paper reconsiders from a new perspective the so-called aspectual triplets such as *goret'*<sup>IPFV1</sup> — *sgoret'*<sup>PFV</sup> — *sgorat'*<sup>IPFV2</sup>, which have been subject to extensive study, see Apresjan 1995, 1997; Zaliznjak, Šmelev 2000; Petrušina 2000, 2009; Jászai 2001; Xrakovskij 2005; Tommola 2008; Zaliznjak, Mikaéljan 2010; Tatevosov 2010; Zaliznjak et al. 2010; Janda, Lyashevskaya 2011; Janda 2012; Janda et al. 2013; Gorbova 2014, 2015; Zaliznjak et al. 2015, Wiemer 2019.

According to the two-component model of Russian Aspect presented in (Gorbova 2019b), imperfective simplicia (Ipfv<sub>1</sub>), such as *goret'*, are monoaspectual verbs (imperfectiva tantum) that are either states or atelic processes. The corresponding prefixed perfectives, such as *sgoret'*, and so-called secondary imperfectives (Ipfv<sub>2</sub>), such as *sgorat'*, are aspectual forms of one lexeme, forming an aspectual pair within the framework of a binary inflectional category of Russian Aspect. Such a lexeme is usually a telic process (*sgorat'* — *sgoret'*), or an instant event (*prixodit'* — *prijti*). In the framework of the proposed theoretical model, the imperfective simplex in each aspectual triplet is invariably redundant, and its semantic affinity to the prefixed secondary imperfective is explained by (quasi)synonymy.

At the same time, there is a functional similarity of Ipfv<sub>1</sub> and Ipfv<sub>2</sub>: the same set of tense forms and compatibility with matrix phase verbs (<sup>OK</sup>*načat'*, *prodolžit'*, *končit'* *goret'* and *sgorat'* vs. *\*načat'*, *prodolžit'*, *končit'* *sgoret'*), as confirmed by the study of grammatical profiles of prefixal and suffixal aspectual pairs in (Janda, Lyashevskaya 2011). However, there are different reasons for the functional similarities of the two imperfectives: the actionality (lexical aspect) in the case of imperfectives simplicia, and the morphological marker of imperfectivity (*-(y/i)va-* or *-a-*) in the case of prefixed secondary imperfectives.

In addition to the different morphological structure, there are also significant syntactic and semantic differences between the Ipfv<sub>1</sub> and Ipfv<sub>2</sub> verbs. The syntactic difference is as follows: the Ipfv<sub>2</sub> inherits transitivity (if any) from the prefixed Pfv, while the corresponding Ipfv<sub>1</sub> can be intransitive (see Karcevskij 1962, Xrakovskii 2005, Tatevosov 2010), cf. *bit'* vs *razbit'* / *razbivat'* (intransitive: <sup>OK</sup>*bit'* *nogoj po mjaču*; transitive: <sup>OK</sup>*bit'* *čaški*; intransitive: *\*razbit'* / *razbivat' nogoj po mjaču*; transitive: <sup>OK</sup>*razbivat'* / *razbit' čaški*). From the point of view of semantics, noteworthy is the “unequal semantic potential” of the primary and secondary imperfectives (Apresjan 1995), including possible constraints on the use of Ipfv<sub>2</sub> to express process and a special “joker” function of the Ipfv<sub>1</sub>, as a possible substitute for any corresponding Ipfv<sub>2</sub> derivative, cf. compare *bit'* (*vraga*) — *pobit'* — *pobivat'*; *bit'* (*časy b'jut*) — *probit'* — *probivat'*; *bit'* (*posudu*) — *razbit'* — *razbivat'*; *bit'* (*maslo*) — *sbīt'* — *sbivat'* (ibid: 106).

The general principles of the formation of aspectual triplets with a quasi-synonymy of two imperfectives were set forth in (Gorbova 2015: 28). A triplet is natural and expected in those cases where the Ipfv<sub>1</sub> is either lexicographically telic or can denote a telic situation in the context, while the Ipfv<sub>2</sub> denotes a telic process: *čitat'* — *pročitjvat'* (*stat'ju*), *gruzit'* — *na(po, za)gružat'* (*drova, veščī, kuzov*). Conversely, it is not expected in the case when the Ipfv<sub>1</sub> is a state verb, and the Ipfv<sub>2</sub> is formed from an achievement Pfv. In the latter case, secondary imperfectivization results in iterativization of the achievement Pfv, which may not be lexicographically correlated with the Ipfv<sub>1</sub>: *znat'*<sup>Ipfv1</sup> → *uznat'*<sup>Pfv</sup> → *uznavat'*<sup>Ipfv2</sup>; *znat'* (*istoriju*) ≠ *uznavat'* (*istoriju*).

The two-component model of Russian aspect (Gorbova 2019b) contrasts suffixal imperfectivization as an inflectional mechanism of aspect formation with prefixal perfectivization as a word-formation mechanism, and views actionality (lexical aspect) as a reason for the imperfective behavior of simplicia. Thus, a new explanation is proposed for the similarities and differences between the quasi-synonymous primary and secondary imperfectives of aspectual triplets. The verification of this explanation is carried out on the basis of case studies of the imperfectivability of *pro-*, *s(o)-*, *pere-*, *ot(o)-* verbs found in the Russian National Corpus (RNC) and on the Russian-language Internet. Some results of such analysis were partially published in (Gorbova 2019a, 2019c). For the analysis of the aspectual triplets on the RNC material, four subcorpora of the main corpus have been created organized by the text creation time: 18<sup>th</sup> century (1700-1799), 19<sup>th</sup> century (1800-1899), 20<sup>th</sup> century (1900-1999) and 21<sup>st</sup> century (2000-2019). The Ipfv<sub>1</sub>, Ipfv<sub>2</sub> and Pfv of each of 10 triplets selected for analysis will be searched in each subcorpus. The results obtained are subject to comparative semantic analysis (Ipfv<sub>1</sub> vs Ipfv<sub>2</sub> and Ipfv<sub>1</sub> vs Pfv), and the numbers of occurrences of Ipfv<sub>1</sub> and Ipfv<sub>2</sub> in each of the diachronically different subcorpora are compared.

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### Verbal nouns in the light of corpus data

The investigation of aspect often focuses on predicative verb forms. However, the category of aspect is also expected, in some Slavic languages, with a specific group of deverbal substantives (so-called verbal nouns). The ability of nouns to express aspect is often questioned and the differences between the languages are striking. *This paper is based on a broader research project which aims to compare and to describe the properties of verbal nouns in Czech and Russian.*

Czech (as other West Slavic languages) forms verbal nouns regularly from both aspects of a verb (c.f. impfv. *vzpomínání* / pfv. *vzpomenutí* ‚remember‘) and verbal nouns retain some of the verbal properties. The situation in Russian is quite the opposite, where the opposition of the forms derived from both aspects exists only in few cases (c.f. *строение* / *построение*, *лечение* / *излечение*), in most cases only one verbal noun is associated with both aspect forms of a verb (e.g., *освобождение* – *освободить* / *освободать*), and unlike Czech verbal nouns, this type of nouns in Russian also often loses completely its ability to express the meaning of the verb (e.g., *помещение*).

Early analyses were based primarily on dictionaries, introspective research and questionnaires (Jelínek 1967, Müncho 1995, Dickey 2000), which influenced the description of this phenomenon in some way (e.g. productivity of derivation). Corpora open new possibilities to verify former hypotheses and to better describe verbal nouns, in particular, they enable us to explore those forms that are not registered in dictionaries as well as the syntactic properties of verbal nouns (e.g. the hypothesis that phase verbs or prepositions denoting duration only connect with ipfv. verbal nouns).

Analyses based on the parallel corpus InterCorp of the Czech National Corpus (CNC) show an interesting relationship between the frequency of the Czech and Russian verbal nouns. While the Russian nouns in *-nie/-mie* have higher frequency in corpus, the number of lemmas is lower than in Czech. As the Czech verbal nouns are not annotated in CNC regarding their aspect, a detailed manual analysis will focus on the lemmas with the highest and lowest frequency in Czech, and it will monitor (a) whether the nouns could have a lexicalized (non-verbal) meaning, (b) the aspect of the base verb. The nominal lemmas will be compared with the verbal lemmas with the highest and lowest frequency. The object of this study is to support or refute the hypothesis claiming that there is a relation between the aspect of the base verb and the emancipation from the verb in terms of the meaning, and possibly the frequency.

As the Czech diachronic corpus Diakorpus CNC is only partially annotated, the diachronic dimension will be taken into account only marginally, within the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century. The results will be divided into three groups, 1900-1945, 1950-1980 and the latest period. However, we have to consider the interference regarding the differences in composition of the corpus SYN Release 7 in the respective periods (e.g. minimum of journalistic texts and of translated texts in the first period). Nevertheless, the verification of the basic hypothesis should not be affected by that.

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## Profiling the behavior of verbs in the Middle Russian Corpus

The talk will focus on the method of grammatical and constructional profiling (Janda & Lyashevskaya 2011ab, Kuznetsova 2015) as applied to historical data and, in particular, to the behaviour of aspectual pairs across time and various genres. First we introduce the Middle Russian Corpus as a source of our data for the development of the Russian verb system from 1300 to 1700. Next we present the grammatical profiling method, constructional profiling method, and the statistical method of correspondence analysis with brief illustrations from (Eckhoff and Janda 2014a, Eckhoff et al. 2014ab), who studied the aspectual behaviour of verbs in Old Church Slavonic, and from (Eckhoff et al. 2017), who proved that the aspect of Modern Russian verbs can be 'predicted' taking into account their grammatical profile, morphological structure, and interaction with genre. We analyze the Middle Russian data sorting out the prototypical behavior of aspectual pairs and the deviant behavior of several other classes. Finally we discuss the impact of genre and other metatextual features on the generalizability and robustness of our empirical findings.

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### Tagging Aspectual Pairs in the Polish-German Parallel Corpus of the Universities Mainz and Warsaw

The talk will present the Polish-German Corpus as an essential part of the common German-Polish *DiAsPol250*-project (see <http://www.diaspol.uw.edu.pl/eng/>).

The parallel corpus covers the whole reference period of the project (1750-2020), texts are balanced according to genres and registers (Meger et al. 2016). At present, contemporary texts under copyright protection are underrepresented, but the situation is changing now thanks to the agreement signed with Goethe Institute Warsaw. An important part of the corpus consists of legal texts written from the mid-18th century until now.

A new functionality of our corpus which makes it differ from all others is the tagging of aspectual pairs. In most corpora, all verbs are annotated for aspect value: perfective, imperfective or biaspectual (not tagged in the National Corpus of Polish), but not for the relation between aspect partners. Our aim is to fill this gap.

If aspect partners can be referred to each other in dictionaries (although this has not been done consistently in Slavic dictionaries; Łaziński 2020), it is also possible in corpora. However under the condition, that we extrapolate aspect features of lexemes to specific verb forms in specific uses. According to lexical submeanings, aspectual meanings and syntactic complements one imperfective verb form can have different perfective partners or can be labelled as imperfectivum tantum. A corpus tagged for aspect pairs, even with alternative references for every lexeme, opens new perspectives for research. The possibilities are especially rich in a parallel corpus with one Slavic and one aspectless language, as the Mainz-Warsaw parallel corpus.

The German verb *schreiben* 'write' is translated equally as *pisać* (349 results) and *napisać* (358) according to a Parasol Corpus query. *Pisać* is potentially an accomplishment verb which often refers to a telic action denoted by the ipfv. partner. A different ratio is counted for achievement verbs. German *kaufen* is much more often translated by pfv. *kupić* (193) than by ipfv. *kupować* (65). A query for all ipfv. and pfv. aspect partners, not including imperfectiva tantum, is possible only in a corpus tagged for aspect pairs. The ipfv:pfv ratio is 1.14. A similar ipfv:pfv ratio including imperfectiva tantum is 2.

In order to check the usefulness of our aspect pair tagging, a small experiment was conducted which allowed to compare the relation between suffixal and prefixal aspect pairs. Janda and Lyashevskaya (2011) claim that there is no essential semantic differences between two formal types of aspect pairs, because the pairs do not differ in their grammatical profiles (data were taken from the Russian National Corpus). The ratio of specific past, non-past and impersonal forms for each aspect in the Mainz-Warsaw corpus is similar to the ratio of Russian pairs. This proves the functional identity of prefixal and suffixal aspect pairs in Polish and – last but not least – the usefulness of tagging aspect pairs in the corpus.

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### **The annotation of aspect in diachrony: what parameters should be considered?**

A project, devoted to the annotation of aspect in Old Russian using ‘Morphy’ (the System for Digital Morphological annotation of Old Russian and Church Slavonic Texts, developed in Vinogradov Russian Language Institute RAS [Arkhangelsky et al. 2014]) is currently in progress. Some of the results, related to the parameters of annotation and the annotated data are going to be presented.

While studying Slavic aspect systems at the contemporary stage, we always know whether the verb is perfective, imperfective or biaspectual, however it is often not the case for the research of aspect in a diachrony perspective. The determination of the aspectual status of a particular verb for earlier stages has always to be based on a complex approach that takes into account a number of different parameters concerning statistics, morphology, functional distribution, syntax, lexical semantic, actionality, restrictions, etc. Obviously, for an effective use of corpora all these parameters should be annotated sufficiently in order to enable researchers to collect quickly the essential information that can help to build an aspectual profile for a verb. It is also important to understand the hierarchy of the parameters, as they might have different degrees of importance.

So far, all basic verbal categories (such as tense, number, person, mood; gender and case for participles) are annotated (using ‘Morphy’) and provided for search in the diachronic subcorpora in RNC (<http://www.ruscorpora.ru/>). These allow collecting different statistic data. Thus, the results of queries on frequency of the usage of tense forms show that in Old Russian (as in Old Church Slavonic) perfective verbs usually had forms of aorist and past participle and did not have forms of imperfect and present participle, whereas it is vice versa for imperfective verbs. On this basis, a definite (or preliminary) decision about aspectual meaning of a verb can be made [Eckhoff/Janda 2013; Mishina 2018]. However, relying on statistics solely is not sufficient, as there were some rare marginal patterns (such as Pfv. Imperfect [Maslov 1954]) that are also important and need to be accounted for when creating a realistic picture of the development of the aspect system in diachrony. Quite often, some marginal patterns survive even up to the modern language.

Moreover, RNC provides complex queries allowing to collect information on compatibility. For example, compatibility with negation apparently plays a notable role regarding choice of aspect in Old Russian. The usage of perfective aspect under negation seems to be wider in Old Russian than in Modern Russian in forms of non-actual present, imperfect, present participle, imperative [Mishina 2019]. Compatibility (or lack thereof) with some adverbial or other lexical indicators of iteration, duration, modality, etc., is significant as well. Besides, some forms tended to be restricted by particular syntactic constructions. For example, pfv. present, pfv. imperfect, pfv. imperative in iterative contexts often occurred in paired constructions with time or conditional subordinate clauses.

A comprehensive study of the mentioned above parameters through the entire historical period from Old Russian to modern Russian should enable to detect productive/unproductive patterns and then trace changes that have happened in the diachronic perspective.

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### The category of Aspect and *Nomina Actionis*

In our talk we develop the idea of the semantic complexity and movability of verbal aspect in diachrony and try to compare the diachronic data under investigation with the results of the analysis of children's mistakes in producing and using *Nomina Actionis* (NA) based on the material of corpora.

When Slavic verbs derive NAs, the category of aspect weakens (this phenomena is especially typical for Russian NAs). At the same time, the analysis of the category in *Nomina actionis* reveals specific features, which are usually implied and not obvious under direct examination. We suggest that a diachronic analysis of NAs using data from corpora can make clearer some nontrivial elements of the development of the category of aspect in Slavic languages. For instance, there is a special point of interest in the statistically significant emergence or decline during different historical periods which can be observed for such pairs of NAs like *нагруживание* — *нагружение* 'loading', *дързнутие* — *дързновение* 'dare, bold action' or unpaired ones like *сбытие* 'implementation'.

The list of Russian NAs of earlier historical periods differs greatly from that of the modern language. For example, in comparison to modern Russian, during the XI-XIVth centuries much more NAs were in semantic and derivational correlation with verbs of perfective aspect or with verbs of neutral aspect, which is supposed to be explained by the "fuzzy" semantic borders of the developing category of aspect in Old Russian. Later, during the XVI-XVIIIth centuries, at the same time as the means of perfectivisation and imperfectivisation were developing, the number of NAs such as *вбежание* — *вбегивание* 'running in' increased step-wise, many of which disappeared later (Pchelintseva 2016). We argue that the development of Russian perfective aspect was followed by the extension of time definiteness semantics taking step by step the main position among other semantic elements.

Our preliminary assumptions will be checked and elaborated by using the corpus of Chronicles, the St. Petersburg Corpus of Russian hagiographical manuscripts (SKAT) and other diachronical Russian corpora. We are going to check the use and the range in the formation of variants of *nomina actionis*. Our analysis studies semantics of aspect of the original verbs (continuous-limitative, distributive, etc.).

There are also some noteworthy correlations between our diachronic data and the mistakes which occur when children derive NAs. The material on children's mistakes is based on the Corpus of child written speech StartWrit (Akhapkina, Sosnovtseva 2017), i.e. *Пушкин оказался в ссылке за **имение** отношения к восстанию декабристов* 'Pushkin ended up in exile due to the fact **that he was related** to the Decembrist uprising'. It would be interesting to find out neologisms that contrast with current tendencies and those ones which exist in the variation zone in which the word-building potential of the system is realized in spite of prescriptive rules. We expect to find some coincidence of forms and/or grammatical tendencies in children's speech and in diachronic texts.

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## ДОУМАТИ (*DUMATI*) AND СЪДОУМАТИ (*SЪDUMATI*): ARE THEY A PERFECT ASPECTUAL PAIR?

This paper is about the aspectual meaning of the Old and Middle Russian verbs *доумати* and *съдоумати* used in the original Russian texts. The study is based primarily on the Old and Middle Russian subcorpus of the Russian National Corpus ([www.ruscorpora.ru](http://www.ruscorpora.ru)); in addition, I consider tagged texts from the collection of the Old Russian manuscripts (<http://www.lrc-lib.ru/>) as well as historical dictionaries.

In Modern Russian *dumati* denotes the mental process ('think'); *sdumati* doesn't exist anymore; but in Old Russian and almost until the end of Middle Russian *dumati* was close to the speech act verbs ('discuss a problem with somebody' / 'exchange ideas, trying to resolve a problem'), whereas *sdumati* meant a result of this discussion (Slovar 11-17, 4: 373-374; 23: 251-252). We can easily find examples where both verbs used together seem to be members of the following aspectual pair: и в собѣ думашу в двѣ и сдумавше послаша къ двѣ и (Povest Vremennykh Let, Laurentian Chronicle XIV c., 94b: 14) 'And they were discussing separately [what to do] with Davyd and having decided sent [the envoys] to Davyd'.

*Sъdumati* is regularly used in Old and Middle Russian as a perfective verb, mostly in the Aorist and in the Past Participle forms: а новгородци сдоумавше рекоша даи ны шюрина своего мстиславича (Suzdal Chronicle XIV c., 308: 24) 'And Novgorodians having discussed [and decided] said: Give us your brother-in-law Mstislavich'.

*Dumati* is usually used, both in Old and Middle Russian, in forms and in contexts which are typical for imperfective aspect: as in the example above, in Imperfect (often with the adverbs *много* 'much' / *долго* 'for a long time') or with *почати* / *начати* 'begin': изяславъ же <...> поча доумати съ дружиною своею (Kiev Chronicle, XII c., 148r: 27) 'And Izyaslav <...> began to discuss with his men [what to do]'; the Present Participle form is also possible.

But as we know, *dumati*, being a simplex, did not have special aspect characteristics in the early period and could be used both as an imperfective and perfective verb (see Mishina 2018: 168). In the following excerpt it is used as a perfective verb: и доумавъ с братомъ своимъ и поѣха ко батыеву река не дамъ полоу вчи ны свои (Galician Chronicle, XIII c., 806: 1) 'And having decided with his brother [to go] went to Batyj saying: I'll not give you half of my father's land'. However, this is almost a single example out of 65 tokens of *dumati* in the Old Russian subcorpus.

In two other contexts where we have *dumati* in the Past Participle and Aorist forms respectively, it is used with the adverbs *много* and *долго*, so it's a rather (rare) case of using an imperfective verb in these "perfective" forms (see Mishina 2018: 164): и р(ч)е володимиръ послоу изяславию поиди вонъ посѣди впять взовемъ долго же доумаша (Kiev Chronicle, 1276: 21) 'And said Volodimir to Izyaslav's envoy: Go away and sit for a while; we will call you once more. And they were taking council for a long time'.

The same situation is in Middle Russian: in the vast majority of examples (we have more than 200 tokens here) – in particular, in the construction like *много думав(ше)* – *dumati* is certainly an imperfective verb. There are also a number of ambivalent cases, where the both aspects are possible, e.g. князь же велики иванъ васильевичъ <...> сложилъ съ себѣ крестное цѣлованіе брату своему <...> за его измѣну что он <...> чрезъ крестное цѣлованіе думалъ на великого князя ивана васильевича (Nikonovskaya Chronicle, XVI c.) 'The Grand Prince Ivan Vasiljevich refused to keep the oath for his brother because of his treason: he thought / decided to take action against the Grand Prince Ivan Vasiljevich'. So *dumati* can not be considered to be an aspectually uncharacterized verb: according to Corpora, it has almost become imperfective one.

Nevertheless we can not consider *dumati* – *sdumati* to be an aspectual pair in the proper sense of the word: firstly, because of the contexts similar to the above mentioned *доумавъ* и *поѣха* which were possible at least for Old Russian; secondly, because *sdumati* as a perfective member of this hypothetical pair has a rival – the verb *оудумати*; e.g. и начаша думати хотѣче поѣхати по ни(х) и не оудумаша (Kiev Chronicle, 165a: 22). However, this was a weak rival: we have only 4 and 3 examples respectively in the Old and Middle Russian corpora.

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### **Pluperfect and Aspect in East Slavic : a quantitative approach**

In various Slavic languages Pluperfects are known to be limited with regard to their co-occurrence with aspect categories (cf. Barentsen 2015 for different Slavic languages in parallel corpora, Berger 2012 for Czech). Most typically the perfective aspect comes to prevail, and the imperfectives are used in very limited contexts or remained attested only in historical stages (eg in 19th century Czech, Russian, Slovene, and Serbo-Croatian). In the history of the East Slavic, however, the picture is more complex. According to Černov 1961, only a limited number of imperfectives could be used with Pluperfect in OES, and the author provided a list of them; however this list is far from being exhaustive.

We analyzed the historical and modern corpora within the RNC, the *Prostaja mova*/Ruthenian texts, the BNKorpus of Belarusian and the GRAC corpus of Ukrainian encompassing the texts of the 19<sup>th</sup>-21<sup>th</sup> centuries. Cluster analysis and multivariable regression analyses were applied to the data. Our data show that the ratio of imperfective Pluperfects rises in the medieval period and decreases in the 20<sup>th</sup>-century in the context of the Russian *bylo* particle, even more dramatically with regard to type-frequency (in Russian mainly it is the verb *xotet* 'want' that is attested with the *bylo* particle among imperfectives, although the token-frequency of this verb is very high). This however is not the case with Ukrainian and Belarusian, where the ratio of imperfectives is about 28% even in contemporary texts. Our claim is that this distribution is related to the rise of secondary semantics and evolution of the historical Pluperfects towards non-compositional uses. The forms that are still used as relative tenses tend to keep both aspectual variants (e.g. in Bulgarian), whereas the non-compositional uses that develop in East Slavic and also in Slovene and Serbo-Croatian (cancelled result, unsuccessful attempt, disturbance of the natural flow of events) tend to be expressed by perfective verbs. In Belarusian and Ukrainian the relative tense uses of the form in question still exist.

A higher productivity of pluperfect imperfectives in Belarusian and Ukrainian is also explained by frequent constructions with modal verbs like Ukr. *mohty* 'be able to' and Br. *musyty* 'owe to', that developed in these languages to signal an irreal obligation or possibility (perhaps under Polish and eventually West European influence). The lists of most frequent Ukrainian and Belarusian verbs that occur with Pluperfect have similarities with the Russian one (verbs of attempt, start, and volition), but it also features modal verbs and other frequent imperfectives (such as *znaty* 'know').

The issue of imperfectives functioning in many contexts as perfectives (like Old East Slavic *viděti* or *slyšati* or Modern Russian *otvečat*) is also addressed with regard to the combinability with Pluperfect (or resp. the *bylo* particle).

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### The *DiAsPol* database of aspect triplets

A central aim of the Mainz-Warsaw diachronic project on verbal aspect in Polish, Czech and Russian (<http://www.diaspol.uw.edu.pl/eng/>) consists in the creation of a database on potential aspect triplets that can be identified in these languages for the period from 1750 until today. Each language has its own database, but the format is unified, not only for easier comparability, but also for the purpose of (partial) statistic data processing (for a first application on Polish and Czech data cf. Wiemer et al. 2019, Wiemer & Kwiatkowska 2019). The data sources are dictionaries and electronic corpora (for the latter see below). The database includes detailed information on the two imperfective members of potential triplets, the unprefixed simplex (= IPFV1) and the “secondarily suffixed” imperfective stem (= IPFV2). In particular, it contains information not only on different prefixes, on suffix variation, on the first and last attestation of the IPFV2-stem over six subperiods, but also the token frequency of its different grammatical forms in the most recent subperiods (as far as available from corpora).

An earlier database on potential aspectual triplets existed only for contemporary Russian, as part of the Emptiness Database at Tromsø University (see [http://emptyprefixes.uit.no/triplets\\_eng.htm](http://emptyprefixes.uit.no/triplets_eng.htm)). This database was developed in connection with a larger project whose results are presented in Janda et al. (2013). While sharing many premises with that project (in particular as regards the notion of Natural Perfectives and its methodological background), we take a more critical view on the notion of triplet itself (that’s why we are speaking of *potential* aspectual triplets) – not only since we are interested in diachronic changes, and thus the dynamics, of this part of the aspect system and their comparability in three different Slavic languages, but also because we see problems in establishing potential triplets which have been glossed over in the Emptiness Database.

Thus, by presenting our database in its current stage and showing, for the first time, its advantages (as well as disadvantages) to an informed audience, we want to summarize the methodological and empirical problems which have to be coped with (sometimes rather unexpectedly) in its creation and further improvement. Moreover, we want to address the issue of productivity, which is not only a problem of different data sources (dictionaries, corpora, Google, other), but also one which leads to paradoxical conclusions concerning the architecture of the Slavic aspect system as such. Some of these conclusions show that certain premises implicit to some of the talks included in this workshop might be reconsidered. Hopefully, these insights will help to better understand what corpora can be good for, provided some initial assumptions are settled, when we study aspect in Slavic languages, in particular from a diachronic perspective.

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#### Corpora

##### Polish:

*Polish National Corpus* (NKJP): <http://nkjp.pl/>

*KorBa* (for 1750-1772): [https://korba.edu.pl/query\\_corpus/](https://korba.edu.pl/query_corpus/)

corpus of 12 mln tokens (texts from 1750-1917) compiled for DiAsPol

Czech:

*korpus syn7* and *Diakorp 6*: <http://www.korpus.cz>

Russian:

Russian National Corpus (NKRJa, old version): <http://www.ruscorpora.ru/old/>

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**The accusative-instrumental alternation in seventeenth-eighteenth century Polish:  
the relation with aspect**

A kind of accusative-instrumental alternation may be observed in Polish with a number of verbs of physical manipulation (e.g. verbs of throwing, pulling, swinging):

- (1) a. *Blokują ulice, podpalają opony i* (NKJP)  
block(IPFV).NPST.3PL street.ACC.PL set\_fire(IPFV).NPST.3PL tyre.ACC.PL and

*rzucają kamienie.*  
throw(IPFV).NPST.3PL stone.ACC.PL

‘They are blocking the streets, setting tyres on fire and throwing rocks’

- b. *Dzieciaki rzucają kamieniami, ale jeśli je* (NKJP)  
kid.NOM.PL throw(IPFV).NPST.3PL stone.INS.PL but if 3PL.NM\_PERS.ACC

*pogonisz, wychodzą ich bracia.*  
chase\_away(PFV).NPST.2SG come\_out(IPFV).NPST.3SG 3PL.GEN brother.NOM.PL

‘Children throw rocks, but if you chase them away, their brothers will come out’

While variation is still – to a substantial degree – observable in the contemporary use, its scope gradually diminishes (Buttler 1976, Żelazko 1975), with case choices in specific contexts undergoing attrition or specialisation. This may be exemplified by the presence of verbs of ruling/control which used to alternate between accusative and instrumental objects, now appearing only with the latter, cf. ex. 2-3.

- (2) a. *Król rządzi krajem/ \*kraj.*  
king.SG.NOM rule(IPFV).NPST.3SG country.INS.SG /  
country.ACC.SG

‘The king rules the country’

- (3) a. *[...] przykładnie i pożytecznie rządziła ten Klasztor* (KorBa, 1644)  
exemplarily and profitably rule(IPFV).PST.F.3SG this.M.ACC.SG monastery.ACC.SG

‘She governed the monastery exemplarily and profitably’

Several factors were discussed in order to explain the case choice (cf. discussions at Buttler 1976, Dąbrowska 1993, Dąbrowska & Tomasello 2008, Holvoet 1991, Żelazko 1975). They include aspect, meaning of displacement (esp. Dąbrowska 1993), affectedness, volitionality-related factors, physical/non-physical character of the described event, explicit localisation of the impact of the action (esp. Holvoet 1991). A corpus study on contemporary Polish (Wyroślak 2018) points to *contiguity to the acting force* and *holistic construal* as the crucial factors. However, the study was not conclusive as for the influence of aspect. Neither strong relation instrumental-imperfective and accusative-perfective (cf. Dąbrowska 1993, Dąbrowska & Tomasello 2008) nor irrelevance of aspect were confirmed.

**The aim of the study is to analyse the factors underlying the accusative-instrumental alternation in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century Polish, with special attention given to aspectual characteristics.** On the methodological level, the problem will be addressed adopting a profile-based approach (cf. e.g. Glynn & Robinson 2014, Gries & Divjak 2009). 800 observations relevant to the alternation will be retrieved for the most frequent lexical items from KorBa corpus of 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century Polish (Gruszczyński et al. 2008). Subsequently, the data will be annotated for a number of features – most crucially, aspectual characteristics – but also the features which have been found relevant in previous research. Finally, the obtained data set will become subject to multivariate statistical modelling using binomial mixed-effects logistic regression.

The results will facilitate an accurate placement of the impact of aspect along other factors influencing the constructional choice between the two rivalling syntactic realisations. The study is expected to indicate whether any global impact of aspect is observable and whether there were notable interactions with aspect on a lexical level. Also, the relevance of factors studied for contemporary Polish will be analysed for an earlier stage in language development, providing more insight into the evolution of the analysed constructions.

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