

Against the notion of fake imperfectivity

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Aspect in Russian

The morphological category Aspect in Russian

- A verb form (in context) is either imperfective (IPF) or perfective (PF).
 - Identical lexical meaning can be expressed by IPF and PF verb forms.
 - Common assumption: Many verb(form)s come in **aspectual pairs**.
(at least accomplishments and achievements)

- Aspectual pairs derived by **prefixes** from **simple IPFs**:

- (1) a. ipf. *pit'* > pf. *vy-pit'* 'to drink'
 b. ipf. *risovat'* > pf. *na-risovat'* 'to draw'

- Aspectual pairs derived by **suffixes** from (mostly prefixed) PFs

→ **S(econdary) I(mperfective)s** [descriptive term; glossed as SI]

- (2) a. pf. *pro-dat'* > ipf. *pro-da-va-t'* 'to sell' (lit. through-give)
 b. pf. *ot-kryt'* > ipf. *ot-kry-va-t'* 'to dis-cover, open'
 c. pf. *dat'* > ipf. *da-va-t'* 'to give'

(Set aside: Suppletive pairs that - at least from a synchronic point of view - are not morphologically transparent; (im)perfectiva tantum; biaspectual verbs; etc.)

Common diagnostics for (I)PF forms

- Only IPF periphrastic future (3-a)
- Phase verbs only combine with IPF infinitives (3-b)
- PF present tense form does not have ongoing present semantics (3-c)

- (3)
- a. Ja budu {*pročitat' / čitat'} knigu.
 I will read.PF read.IPF book.ACC
- b. Ja načínaju {*pročitat' / čitat'} knigu.
 I start read.PF read.IPF book.ACC
- c. Ja pročitaju knigu.
 I read.PF.PRES.1SG book.ACC
 'I will read a/the book.'

(Also: clear intuitions by native speakers about (I)PF forms)

The terms (I)PF

- Labels for forms, not necessarily meanings (for now).
- IPF forms can have different readings in context:

Canonical IPF readings:

- Process/durativity (~ Progressive)
- Iterativity/habituality

Non-canonical IPF reading(s): General-factual

- Possible with typical perfective meaning
(~ bounded 'completed' events in the past)
- Notoriously difficult to account for

The (general-)factual IPF

The (general-)factual IPF

(Maslov 1959) (see Mehlig 2016, for general discussion)

- ① **Existential** (4) (from Grønn 2004) (see also Padučeva 1996)

Paraphrase: *There was/is etc. (at least) one event of this type.*

(e.g. Mehlig 2001, 2013; Mueller-Reichau 2013, 2015; Mueller-Reichau and Gehrke 2015)

- (4) Ne bylo somnenij, čto ja prežde **vstrečal** ee.
not was.NEU doubt.PL.GEN that I before met.SI her
'There is no doubt that I have met her before.'

- ② **Presuppositional/actional** (5) (example: Zaliznjak and Šmelev 2000, terms: Grønn 2004/Padučeva 1996)

Paraphrase: *The (already mentioned or contextually retrievable) event was/is etc. such and such.*

- (5) Zimnij Dvorec **stroil** Rastrelli.
winter-.ACC palace.ACC built.IPF Rastrelli
'It was Rastrelli who built the Winter Palace.'

The existential IPF

Paraphrase: *There was/is etc. (at least) one event of this type.*

(6) Ne bylo somnenij, čto ja prežde **vstrečal** ee.
 not was.NEU doubt.PL.GEN that I before met.SI her
 'There is no doubt that I have met her before.'

- **Tentative assumption:** This is a subtype of (potential) iterativity.
 - Falls out of an account of IPF for iterative events (e.g. in terms of unbounded event plurality, as in Ferreira 2005, 2016; Altshuler 2014)
- ⇒ I set aside existential IPFs for now.

Grønn (2004) about the presuppositional IPF

- (7) Sdelav^{pf} étot xod [26 – Rxc3], ja [predložil^{pf} nič'ju]_{antecedent}. [...] Navernjaka, černye deržatsja^{ipf} – naprimer, 27 Ba3 Bf8 28 Nf5 d5 29 Bb2 [...], no mne ne xotelos^{ipf} načinat^{ipf} sčetnuju igru, [poèтому]_F ja i [predlagal^{ipf} nič'ju]_{anaphora}.
 'Having played this move [26 – Rxc3], I offered a draw. [...] Black can probably hold on, for instance in the line 27 Ba3 Bf8 28 Nf5 d5 29 Bb2 [...], but I didn't want to get involved in heavy calculations, and [for this reason]_F, I offered a draw.'
 (Grønn 2004, 207)

- The verb is deaccentuated. **Focus** is on some other constituent.
 - The event given by the verb is backgrounded, its prior instantiation is presupposed.
- Presupposition as **anaphor** → bound in the discourse (7) or contextually derivable (next slide)

Grønn (2004) about the presuppositional IPF

- Presupposition as **anaphor** → contextually derivable:

(8) Dlja bol'sinstva znakomyx vaš [ot' ezd]_{(pseudo-)antecedent} stal_{PF} polnoj neožidannost'ju ... Vy [uežžali^{IPF}]_{anaphora} v Ameriku [ot čego-to, k čemu-to ili že prosto voznamerilis'_{PF} spokojno provesti_{PF} tam buduščuju starost']_F?

'For most of your friends your departure to America came as a total surprise ... Did you leave for America for a particular reason or with a certain goal, or did you simply decide to spend your retirement calmly over there?' (Grønn 2004, 207f.)

Grønn's (2004) account of presuppositional IPFs

- (9) V étoj porternoj ja [...] napisal pervoe ljubovnoe pis'mo. Pisal
 in this tavern I wrote.PF first love letter wrote.IPF
 [karandašom]_F.
 pencil.INSTR
 'In this tavern I wrote my first love letter. I wrote it with pencil.'

Grønn's analysis of the 2nd sentence of this example (ascribed to Forsyth 1970):

- (10) [VP]: $\lambda e[x|INSTRUMENT(e, x), \mathbf{pencil}(x)]_{[|write(e)]}$

- VP: Background-focus division (in the sense of Krifka 2001)
- Backgrounded material is turned into a presupposition.
 - Background/Presupposition Rule in Geurts and van der Sandt (1997)
- DRT analysis: Backgrounded material is subscripted in the DRS
- Further embedding under Aspect and Tense ...

Russian IPF semantics

What is the semantics of Russian aspect?

Long-standing issue raised by factual IPFs with 'completed' events:
Do IPF forms always express a uniform imperfective meaning?

- Common approaches to the semantics of Russian Aspect:
 - Russian Aspect as a **relation between reference/assertion time and some other temporal interval** (Klein 1995; Schoorlemmer 1995; Borik 2002, 2006; Paslawska and von Stechow 2003; Grønn 2004, 2015; Ramchand 2004)
 - 'Slavic Aspect' as **event predicate modifier** – total vs. partial events (Filip 1999, et seq.) (also Altshuler 2012, 2013, 2014, for Russian)
- **Two variants:**
 - Most common: positive definition only of PF; IPF 'unmarked' (-PF or \pm PF) (especially because of factual IPF)
 - Positive definition also of IPF

(Russian) IPF semantics: Different proposals

- Setting aside Arregui et al. (2014): Modal definition of IPF; different IPF readings come about due to different modal bases.
- Borik (2002, 2006): PF vs. -PF

$$\begin{aligned}
 (11) \quad \text{PF: } & S \cap R = \emptyset \ \& \ E \subseteq R \\
 \text{IPF: } & \neg (S \cap R = \emptyset \ \& \ E \subseteq R) \\
 & = S \cap R \neq \emptyset \ \vee \ E \not\subseteq R
 \end{aligned}$$

- Disjunction captures: ‘progressive’ or ‘present perfect’ (i.e. existential) IPF readings.
- Has nothing to say about presuppositional IPF.
- (Leaves aside habituality / iterativity)
- Grønn (2004): IPF is $e \circ t$ (building on Klein 1995)
 - + pragmatic strengthening to ‘proper’ IPF or to PF semantics
 - + role of information structure

(Russian) IPF semantics: Different proposals

- Partitive semantics with **events**: (see also Filip 1999; Tatevosov 2015)

e.g. Altshuler (2013, 2014), building on Landman (1992):

(12) $IPF \rightsquigarrow \lambda P \lambda e' \exists e \exists w [STAGE(e', e, w^*, w, P)]$
 $[[STAGE(e', e, w^*, w, P)]]^{w, g} = 1$ iff (i)-(iv) holds:

- (i) the history of $g(w)$ is the same as the history of $g(w^*)$ up to and including $\tau(g(e'))$
- (ii) $g(w)$ is a reasonable option for $g(e')$ in $g(w^*)$
- (iii) $[[P]]^{w, g} = 1$
- (iv) $g(e') \sqsubseteq g(e)$

+ pragmatic strengthening for different IPF readings (in (12-iv))

- For ongoing IPF: $g(e') \sqsubset g(e)$
- For presuppositional IPF: $g(e') = g(e)$
- Does not address existential IPFs

+ plural events for habituality (following Ferreira 2005)

(Russian) IPF semantics: Different proposals

- Grønn (2015): No uniform IPF semantics anymore
Rather: PF vs. \pm PF

$$(13) \quad \begin{aligned} \llbracket \text{PF} \rrbracket &= \lambda t \lambda e. e \subseteq t \\ \llbracket \text{IPF}_{\text{factual}} \rrbracket &= \lambda t \lambda e. e \subseteq t \quad \text{'Fake IPF'} \\ \llbracket \text{IPF}_{\text{ongoing}} \rrbracket &= \lambda t \lambda e. t \subseteq e \end{aligned}$$

- + system of (in)definite times and events
(building on Grønn and von Stechow 2010)

Differences between PF and $\text{IPF}_{\text{factual}}$: IPF appears whenever PF forms are infelicitous [**'aspectual competition'**]

- Presuppositional IPF: To avoid narrative progression
- Existential IPF: When the reference time is too large

The irrelevance of completed events

Factual IPFs are not 'fake'

- Intuition for presuppositional IPF (and for Russian aspect semantics in general): Discourse relations between events are crucial.
- With Grønn's (2004) temporal overlap, $e \circ t$?
- Rhetorical relations between e_2 and e_1 with temporal overlap, e.g. in Lascarides and Asher (1993):
 - Elaboration: α 's event is part of β 's
 - Background: The state described in β is the 'backdrop' or the circumstances under which the event in α occurred.
- ⇒ Intuitively, the presuppositional IPF involves Elaboration: α 's event is part of β 's
 - But that is more concrete than just temporal overlap ... it is a partitive semantics with events.

(I will come back to this)

(Non-)completed events are irrelevant

(Non-)completion is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for (I)PF.

- Cases where completed events are described by IPF forms:
 - Factual IPF
 - Habitual chains of foregrounded events
 - Chains of foregrounded events in the historical present
- Cases where non-completed events are described by PF forms:
 - The last event in a unique chain of foregrounded events

(see also discussion in Gehrke 2002)

Completed events do not require PF: Habituality

- (14) Ona **prixodila** ko mne každyj den', a **žadat'** ee ja **načinal** s
 she.NOM to-went.SI to me every day and wait.INF.IPF her.GEN I began.SI from
 utra. Ožidanie èto vyražalos' v tom, što ja
 morning.GEN expectation.NOM this.NOM expressed.REFL.SI in that that I
perestavljal na stole predmetry. Za desjat' minut ja **sadilsja** k
 rearranged.SI on table.PREP things.ACC within ten minutes I down-sat.SI to
 okoncu i **načinal prislušivat'sja**, ne stuknet li vetxaja kalitka.
 window.DAT and began.SI listen.INF.SI not clatters.PRES.PF PRT old.NOM gate.NOM
 'She came to me every day, and I started waiting for her from morning onwards. This
 waiting consisted in me rearranging things on the table. Within ten minutes [of her
 arrival] I sat next to the window and started listening whether the gate clatters.'
 (from *Master i Margarita*, discussed in Gehrke 2002)

- The whole passage is habitual: *každyj den'* 'every day' in first sentence
- Five foregrounded events (in boldface), out of these at least 2 completed: her coming (*prixodila*), speaker's sitting down (*sadilsja*)
- Nevertheless, these verb forms are IPF (SIs); PF would be infelicitous.

However, these are not treated as cases of 'fake' IPF.

Side note: This is different in Czech.

Translation of the original Russian example:

- (15) **Chodila** ke mně denně za poledne a já na ni
 went.INDET.IPF to me daily during midday.ACC and I on her
čekával už od rána. Čekání spočvalo v tom, že
 waited.FREQ.IPF already from morning.GEN waiting consisted.IPF in that that
 jsem **přestavoval** na stole věci. Deset minut před tím, než
 AUX1SG rearranged.SI on table.PREP things ten minutes before that when
 měla přijít, jsem se **uchýlil** k oknu a
 had.FEM(3SG).IPF come.INF.PF AUX1SG REFL proceeded.PF to window and
 napjatě **poslouchal**, kdy klapne omšelá branka.
 attentively listened.IPF when clatters.PRES.PF moss-covered.NOM gate.NOM
 'She came to me daily during midday and I used to wait for her from morning
 onwards. The waiting consisted in me rearranging things on the table. Ten
 minutes before she was supposed to come I proceeded to the window and
 attentively listened to when the moss-covered gate clatters.'

(see Gehrke 2002)

(Russian) PF does not require completed events

- Chains of foregrounded unique events require PF verb forms for reference time movement (in the sense of Kamp and Reyle 1993). (see also Borik 2002, 2006)
- This is also true for the last event in the chain, even if this event is not necessarily completed:

(16) Ona **vstala** i {**zapela** / ***pela** / ***zapevala**}.
 she got-up.PF and ZA-sang.PF sang.IPF ZA-sang.IPF
 'She got up and sang / started singing.'

(again, Czech would be different Gehrke 2002)

⇒ Event (non-)completion is not (necessarily) decisive for the choice of (I)PF and should therefore not play the central role in semantic accounts of (I)PF.

Against 'fake' IPF

- Slavistic traditional linguistics: Factual IPF also with 'incomplete' events: **non-resultative factual IPF**
(e.g. Glovinskaja 1981; Padučeva 1996)
 - These are usually ignored in the formal literature, because the more extraordinary situation seems to be where a (presumably) single 'completed' event is referred to with an IPF form.
 - However, they still constitute a different IPF 'reading' than process or habituality.
- ⇒ Calling factual IPFs 'fake IPFs' and giving them the same semantics as PF is missing the point.

A case study:
Russian IPF PPPs
(with Olga Borik, UNED, Madrid)



Back to presuppositional IPF

- Past passive participles (PPPs) are resultative and are therefore regularly derived from PF verbs.
 - Corpus study by Borik and Gehrke (2018)
 - Some occurrences of IPF
 - Hypothesis: IPF PPPs always involve factual meanings
- Semantic account of the VP with a presuppositional IPF in (17)
(building on Grønn 2004)
- (17) a. Stroeno bylo èto vse [ploxo, xromo, ŝčeljasto]_F.
built.IPF was this all badly lamely with-holes
'It was all built badly, lamely, with holes.'
- b. $[[VP]] =$
 $\lambda e[[\mathbf{bad}(e) \wedge \mathbf{lame}(e) \wedge \mathbf{with-holes}(e)]]_{[x|\mathbf{build}(e) \wedge \mathbf{THEME}(e,x)]}$
- No account of the further derivation, in particular of the semantics of aspect and tense (I will come back to this)

Our arguments for presuppositional IPF PPPs

1 Background-focus marking

- **Focus** on quasi-obligatory modifiers; e.g. (18), (19)
 - Often **marked word order**; e.g. (18-a) & many previous ex.s, e.g. (19)
 - Unmarked word order: BE +PPP; marked: PPP + BE + Mod.
- ⇒ The event, denoted by the PPP, is part of the background.

- (18) a. **Stroeno** bylo èto vse [ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto]_F.
 built.IPF was that all badly lamely with-holes
- b. Zapiski byli pisany [ne dlja pečati]_F [... no ...]
 notes were written.IPF not for print but

- (19) a. **Pisano** èto bylo Dostoevskim [v 1871 godu]_F [...]
 written.IPF that was Dostoevskij.INSTR in 1871 year.PREP
- b. **Kryt** byl dom [solomoj]_F [...]
 covered.IPF was house hay.INSTR

Our arguments for presuppositional IPF PPPs

② Inference of a completed event survives under **negation**.

- (20) Stroeno (**ne**) bylo èto vse ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto.
 built.IPF not was that all badly lamely with-holes
 ~> All that was / has been built.
- (21) Zapiski (**ne**) byli pisany ne dlja pečati [... no ...]
 notes not were written.IPF not for print but
 ~> The notes were / have been written.

Our arguments for presuppositional IPF PPPs

- ③ **Anaphoricity**: The anaphoric possibilities in IPF passives are parallel to anaphoric possibilities of definite descriptions.
- Pick up previously introduced discourse referents
 - With identical lexical material (only difference in Aspect)
 - ~ *A girl entered the room. ... The girl ...*
 - With lexically related material: hyponymy/hyperonymy
 - ~ *A blonde girl/Petra entered the room. ... The girl ...*
 - With lexically related material: nominalisation (if nominalisations introduce discourse referents)
 - Anaphoricity via associative contextual relations, parallel to bridging (in the sense of Clark and Haviland 1977)
 - Created objects
 - (In)direct speech
 - (Nominalisations if they do not introduce discourse referents, and we need to reconstruct them instead)

More on anaphoricity

- Anaphoric to a previously introduced perfective (PF) event, e.g. by hyponymy:

(22) Ěto – ne ja **sdelal**, ěto – **vedeno** bylo moeju rukoj!
 this not I did.PF this led.IPF was my.INSTR hand.INSTR
 ‘Not I did this, this was orchestrated by my hand!’

- Anaphoric to an event introduced by a deverbal noun:

(23) Ćto kasaetjsa **platy** deneg, to **plaćeny** byli naličnymi
 what concerns payment.GEN money.GEN so paid.IPF were in-cash
 šest' tysjač rublej [...]
 six thousand Rubles
 ‘What concerns the payment: 6000 Rubles were paid in cash.’

More on anaphoricity: ~ Bridging?

- Anaphoric via a **created object**:

(24) **Pis'ma** ego **pisany** byli černo i kruglo [...]
 letters his written.IPF were black and round
 'His letters were written in black and round letters.'

Idea: Created objects presuppose the event that created them.

- This enables the resolution or the accommodation of the presupposition.
 - Created objects have independently been shown to enable event coercion, e.g. *She finished her hamburger.*
 (e.g. Pustejovsky 1995; Egg 2003; Asher 2011)
- A similar mechanism that enables event coercion with these objects could also resolves the anaphoric link.

More on anaphoricity: ~ Bridging?

- Anaphoric via (in)direct speech:

(25) **Kak i govoreno** bylo **zaranee**, Vasil'ev [...]

 how and said.IPF was earlier Vasil'ev

Idea: (In)direct speech presupposes a speech event.

- High frequency of speech act verbs among those that express the presuppositional IPF, also with active presuppositional IPF (see also discussion in Grønn 2004)

Presuppositional IPF PPPs are real IPFs

Let's try with partitive semantics for IPF

- (26) Čto kasaetjsa **platy** deneg, to **plačeny** byli naličnymi šest' tysjač rublej [...]
 'What concerns the payment: 6000 Rubles were paid in cash.'

$$[e_1, e_2, t, n, x | \text{payment}(e_1), \text{pay}(e_2), e_2 = e_1, \\ \text{THEME}(e_2, x), \mathbf{6.000R}(x), \text{in-cash}(e_2), t \subseteq \tau(e_2), t < n]$$

- *plata* 'payment': Event nominal, introduces the event e_1
- Event described by the IPF PPP: e_2 , a definite description that is anaphorically related to e_1 : $e_2 = e_1$
- New information (in focus) about e_2 (and therefore about e_1):
Theme of e_2 : 6.000 Rubles; in cash
- IPF: $t \subseteq \tau(e_2)$
- Past tense: $t < n(\text{ow})$

Potential problem of this analysis:

- We lose the strong sense that overall the payment event e_1 (and thereby also e_2) was 'completed' (~ PF semantics?)
[maybe not a problem with finite PF form?]

Let's try with partitive semantics for IPF

With reconstruction of PF semantics for the nominalisation: $\tau(e_1) \subseteq t_1$:

$$(27) \quad [e_1, e_2, t_1, t_2, n, x | \text{payment}(e_1), \text{pay}(e_2), \text{THEME}(e_2, x), \\ \mathbf{6.000R}(x), \mathbf{in-cash}(e_2), e_2 = e_1, \tau(e_1) \subseteq t_1, t_2 \subseteq \tau(e_2), t_2 < n]$$

- **New problems:**
 - Nominalisations are non-finite, so t_1 is not related to n ...
 - ... and how are t_1 and t_2 related?

General questions concerning nominalisations

- Do we want to associate them with temporal traces?
 - Maybe at most complex event nominals
- Which aspect semantics?
 - Intuitively here PF semantics.
 - But Russian nominalisations do not come in aspectual pairs, so why associate them with (I)PF semantics to begin with?

Let's try with a finite PF antecedent

- (28) a. **Zaplatili.** **Plačeny** byli naličnymi šest' tysjač rubej [...]
 paid.3PL.PF paid.IPF were in-cash six thousand Rubles
 'They paid. It was paid 6.000 Rubles in cash.'
- b. $[e_1, e_2, t_1, t_2, n, x | \text{pay}(e_1), \tau(e_1) \subseteq t_1, t_1 < n, \text{pay}(e_2), \text{THEME}(e_2, x),$
6.000R(x), in-cash(e_2), e_2 = e_1, t_2 \subseteq \tau(e_2), t_2 < n]

- Probable objection of proponents of the 'fake' IPF analysis: IPF semantics for e_2 does not capture that the paying event was completed.

BUT: Event completion information is already given in the first sentence about e_1 .

- Since e_2 equals e_1 the actual event of paying remains completed.
 - t_2 is part of the run time of $e_2 \rightarrow$ it is part of the run time of e_1 .
 - By transitivity, t_2 is then also part of the bigger reference time t_1 .
- \rightarrow The second sentence zooms in on a narrower reference time for which an assertion is made, and this is what is captured by the IPF semantics.

Conclusion

Conclusion

- Taking the discourse / rhetorical structure into account, the presuppositional IPF turns out to be a 'true' IPF: it elaborates on a part of a previously introduced event.
 - The notion of 'complete' events is misleading:
 - We are not concerned with actual events being (non-)completed, but with the way we describe the event (with aspectual forms).
 - There are numerous mismatches between (I)PF forms and (in)complete events.
- ⇒ Calling factual IPFs 'fake IPFs' and giving them the same semantics as PF is missing the point.

Against the notion of fake imperfectivity

Spasibo! Eskerrik asko!

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