

# Russian imperfective past passive participles

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BCGL 11

The syntax and semantics of aspect

December 11-12, 2018

# 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.)

# The terms (I)PF

- Labels for forms, not necessarily meanings.
- 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

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

- ① **Existential** (3) (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)

- (3) 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** (4) (example: Zaliznjak and Šmelev 2000, terms: Grønn 2004/Padučeva 1996)

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

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

# Passives

# Common assumptions about 'passives'

- Common properties of 'passives':
  - Demotion of the external argument
  - Promotion of the internal argument to subject position
  - Agent / causer in (optional) *by*-phrase (usually treated as an adjunct / modifier)
- Cross-linguistically, 'passives' can be expressed by different forms:
  - Synthetic verb forms, e.g. Latin passive, Greek 'middle voice'
  - Periphrastic forms: Auxiliary\*\* + participle; e.g. English, German, Spanish, Russian, Czech, Greek\*\*
  - Reflexive forms, e.g. Spanish, Russian, Czech\*\*

## e.g. Russian: Two 'passive' constructions

### (5) Active

Storož                    **otkry(va)l**        vorota.  
 watchman.NOM opened.(I)PF gate.ACC.PL  
 'A / The watchman opened a / the gate.'

- **Periphrastic passive**: BE + past passive participles (PPP) (6-a)
- **Reflexive passive**: Active form + reflexive *-sja/-s'* (6-b)

### (6) Passive

- a. Vorota                    **byli otkryty**                    storožem.  
 gate.NOM.PL were opened.PF.PPP watchman.INSTR  
 'A / The gate was opened by a / the watchman.'
- b. Vorota                    **otkryvalis'**                    storožem.  
 gate.NOM.PL opened.SI.PL.RFL watchmann.INSTR  
 'A / The gate was opened by a / the watchman.'

(seemingly similar situation in other Slavic languages\*\*)

# Background assumptions on periphrastic 'passives'

- Different terminology; but this also implies a general difference:
  - Verbal vs. adjectival passive
    - Auxiliary + verbal participle vs. copula + adjectival participle
  - Eventive vs. stative passive
    - The participle could be verbal (or adjectival) in both cases.

e.g. German verbal 'Vorgangspassiv' (7-a) vs. adjectival 'Zustandspassiv' (7-b)

- (7) a. Die Tür **wird** geöffnet. 'The door has been opened.'  
           the door became opened
- b. Die Tür **ist** geöffnet. 'The door is open(ed).'  
           the door is opened

General assumption: The participle in the Zustandspassiv is adjectival;  
 e.g. compatibility with adjectival morphology:

- (8) Die Aufgabe {**ist**/**\*wird**} (**un-**)gelöst.  
       the task is/becomes un-solved

## German adjectival ‘Zustandspassiv’

- Restricted compatibility with event-related modification:

(9) a. Die Zeichnung ist **von einem Kind** angefertigt.  
 the drawing is by a child produced

b. Der Brief war **mit Bleistift** geschrieben.  
 the letter was with pencil written

c. Das Haar war ziemlich **schlampig** gekämmt.  
 the hair was rather sloppily combed

(10) Der Mülleimer ist {**\*von meiner Nichte** / **\*langsam** / **\*genüsslich** / **\*mit der Heugabel**} geleert.

Intended: ‘The rubbish bin is emptied by my niece / slowly / with pleasure / with the pitchfork.’

(e.g. Rapp 1996; Kratzer 2000; Anagnostopoulou 2003; Maienborn 2007)

# German adjectival 'Zustandspassiv'

- Gehrke (2011, et seq.): Adjectivisation of the participle → no instantiation of the event (no location in time and space, only conceptual information about the event type/kind)
    - No event token modification: (9) vs. (10), (11)
  - (11) a. \*Der Computer ist **vor drei Tagen** repariert.  
Intended: 'The computer is repaired three days ago.'
  - b. \*Das Kind war **im Badezimmer** gekämmt.  
Intended: 'The child was combed in the bathroom.'
- Only non-referential *by*-phrases (previous examples)  
(and other PP modifiers)

# Mini typology

- **German:** Vorgangs- vs. Zustandspassiv
  - Zustandspassiv: Adjectival participle
    - Restrictions on event-related modification
  - No reflexive passive
- **Spanish:**
  - *ser* 'be' vs. *estar* 'be.LOC' + participle
    - Similar to German → verbal vs. adjectival (Gehrke and Marco 2014)
  - In addition: reflexive passive

Q: Do we find *estar* whenever we have *werden* et vice versa?

Q: What kind of division of labour between periphrastic and reflexive passive?

# Mini typology

- **English:** No formal distinction like ‘Zustands/Vorgangspassiv’
  - Received view: BE + participle can express both passives
  - In ‘stative’ contexts similar restrictions as in German
    - adjectival (e.g. McIntyre 2013; Bruening 2014; Alexiadou et al. 2014)
  - No reflexive passive
  
- **Greek:**
  - Reflexive passive (formally: non-active morphology) → verbal
  - Two types of participles: *-menos* vs. *-tos* (+ BE)
    - Received view: stative / adjectival passive
  
- BUT:** (In some cases) no restriction on event-related modification.  
 (Anagnostopoulou 2003; Alexiadou et al. 2014, 2015)
  - More verbal structure (incl. perfect operator) in ‘adjectival’ participles  
 (similar: Berro 2017, for **Basque**)
  
- Q:** Or do we get the same ambiguity between verbal and adjectival participles?  
 If so: What is the difference between periphrastic and reflexive passive?

# Aspectual restrictions in Russian passives

- Periphrastic passive: only PF (usually) (12)
- Reflexive passive: only IPF (usually) (13)

(12) a. Vorota **byli otkryty** storozhem.  
 gate.NOM.PL were opened.PF.PPP watchman.INSTR  
 'A / The gate was opened by a / the watchman.'

b. \*Vorota **byli otkryvany** storozhem.  
 gate.NOM.PL were opened.SI.PPP watchman.INSTR

(13) a. Vorota **otkryvalis'** storozhem.  
 gate.NOM.PL opened.SI.PL.RFL watchmann.INSTR  
 'A / The gate was opened by a / the watchman.'

b. \*Vorota **otkrylis'** storozhem.  
 gate.NOM.PL opened.PF.PL.RFL watchmann.INSTR

- Exceptions to these "rules":
  - IPF PPPs: This talk (see also Knjazev 2007)
  - PF refl. pass.: e.g. Schoorlemmer (1995); Fehrman et al. (2010)

# Russian PPPs in periphrastic passives

- Different opinions:
  - Standard assumption: Only PF can be used.
    - IPF PPPs are idiomatic / frozen adjectives.
    - In analyses of passives, they are therefore not taken into account. (e.g. Babby and Brecht 1975; Švedova 1980; Schoorlemmer 1995; Paslawska and von Stechow 2003)
- e.g. Schoorlemmer (1995) spells out the following restrictions for PPPs:
  - only from PF transitive verbs
  - only from paired PF verbs (~ accomplishments, achievements)
- Knjazev (2007): Sometimes also IPF, but never with a process meaning  
This will be corroborated by our corpus study.

## Russian PF PPPs: Adjectival or verbal?

- Babby and Brecht (1975): Always adjectival
- Paslawska and von Stechow (2003), e.g. (14):
  - 'Adjectival/stative' with present tense copula (= null copula)
  - 'Verbal/eventive' with past tense forms of BE

(14) Portret (byl) narisovan karandašom.  
 portrait.NOM (was) painted.PPP pencil.INSTR  
 'The portrait is/was painted with a pencil.'

'Adjectival/stative' PPPs (with a null form of BE) allow for the **temporal localisation of the event** (contrasting, e.g., with German) (15).

(15) Ètot dom postroen v prošlom godu.  
 this.NOM house.NOM built in last.PREP year.PREP  
 compare German: ?Dieses Haus ist im letzten Jahr gebaut.

**P&vS's analysis:** 'Adjectival/stative' PPPs involve target-stativisation of VoiceP (in German etc. of VP). (cf. Kratzer 2000; Anagnostopoulou 2003)

# Russian PF PPPs: Adjectival or verbal?

- Advantage of P&vS's analysis:
  - Target state requirement captures restriction to paired verbs (~ accomplishments / achievements; cf. Schoorlemmer 1995)
- Problems of P&vS's analysis:
  - This does not capture (alleged) restriction to PF, though:
    - IPF PPPs with target states should in principle be possible (and we will see that they are, but still rather restricted)
    - No analysis of 'verbal/eventive' PPPs; where we could expect more IPF PPPs, also with a process meaning (but we will confirm Knjazev's claim and see that this is not the case)
  - More generally, event-related modifiers should never occur with **adjectival** participles (unless events are instantiated at Voice; but this is not what we assume here.)
    - The PPPs might always be stative, but they are still verbal.

## This talk: PPPs can be verbal or adjectival

- Borik (2014): No modification restrictions, with or without BE; e.g. (16) → **Verbal PPPs** exist in any tense

(16) Vorota (byli) otkryty storozhem rovno v 6  
 gate.NOM.PL (were) opened.PPP watchman.INSTR exactly in 6  
 utra na 2 časa.  
 morning.GEN on 2 hours  
 ‘The gate is/was opened by the watchmen at exactly 6 in the morning for 2 hours.’

- Conclusion: (PF) PPPs can be either verbal or adjectival.**  
 [like English] (see also Schoorlemmer 1995; Borik 2013)

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



# Borik and Gehrke (2018)

- Russian IPF PPPs
  - Received view: Should not exist
  - Corpus data: They do, but restricted to particular IPF meanings.
- Our claim: They can be **regular participles**, based on their:
  - Derivation: Transparent composition
  - Use: in unambiguously verbal periphrastic passives
- Hypothesis: Only non-canonical factual IPF meanings
- Analysis of presuppositional IPF PPPs (subtype of general-factual)  
Condition on this use:
  - The event described by the IPF PPP behaves like a definite description which has to be anaphorically linked to a contextually salient eventive discourse referent.

# The data

- Russian National Corpus (RNC) (ruscorpora.ru)
  - 109,028 documents, 22,209,999 sentences, 265,401,717 words
  - Non-disambiguated version
  - Grammatical feature: partcp,praet,pass,ipf
- IPF PPPs directly preceding or following a finite form of *byt'* 'be'
  - partcp,praet,pass,ipf distance: 1 from *byt'*: 2,632 contexts
  - *byt'* distance: 1 from partcp,praet,pass,ipf: 17,015 contexts

# Qualitative, not quantitative analysis

- The query excludes PPPs with non-finite or null forms of *byt'* 'be' (the latter: present tense), PPPs as second conjuncts etc.
- Manual exclusion of the following types of data:
  - Long form PPPs (are not used in periphrastic passives)
  - Biaspectual forms (also tagged as IPF in RNC), e.g.:
    - *obeščan* 'promised', *velen* 'ordered'
    - Verbs in *-ovat'*: *ispol'zovan* 'used', *realizovan* 'realised'
  - Tagging mistakes, e.g.:
    - *Biorndalen* (Ole Einar Bjørndalen), *Sezan* (Paul Cézanne) as PPP
    - *strašen* 'horrible.ADJ' as PPP
    - *otvečen* 'answered.PF', *pereključen* 'off-turned.PF' as IPF

# Non-compositional IPF PPPs

- Idiomatic cases: *(ne) lykom šit* lit. '(not) sewn with bast fibre', meaning 'simple-minded'
- Fixed expressions: *rožden/kreščen* 'born/baptised'
- Genuine adjectives: *viden*, lit. 'seen', meaning 'visible'

(We did not further include these cases.)

# Compositional IPF PPPs

- Regular, productive, repeated forms with transparent, predictable meaning (not idiosyncratic):

(17) *pisan* 'written.IPF', *čitan* 'read.IPF', *pit* 'drunk.IPF', *eden* 'eaten.IPF', *šit* 'sewn.IPF', *delan* 'made.IPF', *čekanen* 'minted.IPF', *bit* 'beaten.IPF', *myt* 'washed.IPF', *brit* 'shaved.IPF', *strižen* 'groomed.IPF', *kormlen* 'fed.IPF', *nesen* 'carried.IPF', *govoren* 'said.IPF', *prošen* 'asked.IPF', *zvan* 'called.IPF', *kusan* 'bit.IPF', *kryt* 'covered.IPF', *njuxan* 'smelled.IPF', etc.

First generalisations:

- Many IPF PPPs of saying verbs and incremental verbs, but not exclusively
- Compositional IPF PPPs are rare, but they cannot simply be ignored.

→ We need a compositional analysis.

## No secondary imperfectives

- Only 3 examples, not Modern Russian; e.g. Church Slavonic:

(18) V leto 7010 mesjaca avgusta v šestoe na  
 in summer 7010 month.GEN august.GEN in 6th on  
 Preobraženie Gospoda našego isusa Xrista  
 Transfiguration Lord.GEN our.GEN Jesus.GEN Christ.GEN  
 načata byst' **podpisyvana** cerkov' [...]  
 begun.PF.PPP be.3.SG.AOR signed(painted).SI church

→ No secondary imperfective PPPs in Modern Russian

(see also Knjazev 2007)

# What kind of passive?

## Why is the question important?

- Standard assumption: IPF PPPs are exceptions and to be analysed as adjectives (not as PPPs).
- One possible analysis of adjectival passives: adjectivisation in the lexicon.
  - Were we to find only adjectival IPF PPPs, we could maintain the standard assumption (together with this analysis of adjectival participles).

(However, we do assume that also adjectival PPPs should be analysed compositionally.)

## Examples of adjectival IPF PPPs

- With event kind modification:

(19) Kryt byl dom solomoj [...]  
 covered.IPF was house hay.INSTR  
 'The house was covered with hay.'

(20) [...] ne skazal, čto vagon-to naš učebnikami gružen  
 not said.PF that wagon-PTL our school-books.INSTR beladen.IPF  
 byl?  
 war  
 'Didn't he say that our wagon was loaded with school books?'

(21) My oba byli striženy nagolo [...]  
 we both were groomed bald  
 'We both had our heads shaven.'

## Examples of clearly verbal IPF PPPs

- Modification of an instantiated event:

(22) Pisano èto bylo Dostoevskim v 1871 godu [...] [  
 written.IPF that was Dostoevskij.INSTR in 1871 year.PREP  
 'This was written by Dostojevskij in 1871.'

(23) Èto [...] vedeno bylo moeju rukoj!  
 this led.IPF was my.INSTR hand.INSTR  
 'This was orchestrated by my hand!'

(24) [...] sleduja tem putem, kotorym neseno bylo v  
 following this.INSTR path.INSTR which.INSTR carried.IPF was in  
 Gefsimaniju dlja pogrebenija telo Bogomateri [...] [  
 Gethsemane for burial body mother-of-God.GEN  
 "... on the same path, on which the body of the mother of God was  
 carried to Gethsemane to be buried.'

⇒ IPF PPPs can also be verbal.

# Which IPF contexts?

- Knjazev (2007): IPF PPPs cannot have a process meaning.  
→ also not in our data
- Our hypothesis: IPF PPPs are always factual.

First indication: Exchangeability with PF PPPs

- (25) a. (Na)pisano èto bylo Dostoevskim v 1871  
(PF)written.IPF that was Dostoevskij.INSTR in 1871  
godu [...] year.PREP
- b. (Po)kryt byl dom solomoj [...] (PF)covered.IPF was house hay.INSTR
- c. My oba byli (po)striženy nagolo [...] we both were (PF)groomed.IPF bald

# Recall: The (general-)factual IPF

## 1 Existential (26)

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

(26) Ne bylo somnenij, što 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 (27)

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

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

## Existential IPF PPPs

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

- (28) Vsego nagljadelsja – i golodal, i syt byval po gorlo,  
 all.GEN saw.IPF.REFL and starved.IPF and full was.FREQ to neck  
 i bit byl, i sam bil [...] *and beaten.IPF was and myself beat.PST.IPF*  
 ‘I saw it all – I was starving, I was completely full, I was beaten, and I did the beating myself.’
- (29) Ne raz ja byl učen, molču i znaju [...] *not once I was lectured.IPF am-silent and know.1SG*  
 ‘I was lectured not just once, I keep quiet and know ...’
- (30) Za čto neodnokratno byla bita [...] *for what not once was beaten.IPF.FEM.SG*  
 ‘For which she was beaten more than once ...’

Alternative analysis in terms of habituality / non-uniqueness of events etc.; but then the existential IPF could also be subsumed under the notion of potential iterativity (*kratnost*’).

# Existential IPF PPPs

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

→ With negation: *There was/is etc. no event of this type.*

(31) [...] i ja uže ne byl zvan v gosti [...]
   
and I already not was called.IPF in guests
   
'And I was not invited anymore.'

(32) Mojka byla perepolnena nemytoj posudoj. Ne myto
   
sink was overfilled.PF unwashed.INSTR dishes.INSTR not washed.IPF
   
bylo davno.
   
was long-ago
   
'The sink was flowing over with unwashed dishes. The dishes hadn't
   
been done for a long time.'

→ We set aside existential IPF PPPs and move on to presuppositional IPF PPPs.

## Grønn (2004) about the presuppositional IPF

(see also Grønn 2015, for further theoretical assumptions)

- (33) Sdelav<sup>pf</sup> ètot xod [26 – Rxc3], ja [predložil<sup>pf</sup> nič'ju]<sub>antecedent</sub>. [...] Navernjaka, černye deržatsja<sup>ipf</sup> – naprimer, 27 Ba3 Bf8 28 Nf5 d5 29 Bb2 [...], no mne ne xotelos<sup>'ipf</sup> načinat<sup>'ipf</sup> sčetnuju igru, [poètomu]<sub>F</sub> ja i [predlagal<sup>ipf</sup> nič'ju]<sub>anaphora</sub>.  
 '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]<sub>F</sub>, 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 (33) or contextually derivable (next slide)

# Grønn (2004) about the presuppositional IPF

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

(34) Dlja bol'sinstva znakomyx vaš [ot' ezd]<sub>(pseudo-)antecedent</sub> stal<sub>PF</sub> polnoj neožidannost'ju ... Vy [uezžali<sup>IPF</sup>]<sub>anaphora</sub> v Ameriku [ot čego-to, k čemu-to ili že prosto voznamerilis'<sub>PF</sub> spokojno provesti<sub>PF</sub> tam buduščuju starost']<sub>F</sub>?

'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.)

# Our arguments for presuppositional IPF PPPs

## 1 Background-focus marking

- **Focus** on quasi-obligatory modifiers; e.g. (35), (36)
  - Often **marked word order**; e.g. (35-a) & many previous ex.s, e.g. (36)
    - Unmarked word order: BE +PPP; marked: PPP + BE + Mod.
- ⇒ The event, denoted by the PPP, is part of the background.

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

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

# Our arguments for presuppositional IPF PPPs

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

- (37) Stroeno (**ne**) bylo èto vse ploxo, xromo, ŝčeljasto.  
 built.IPF not was that all badly lamely with-holes  
 ~> All that was / has been built.
- (38) 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:

(39) Èto – ne ja **sdelal**, èto – **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:

(40) Čto kasaetjsa **platy** deneg, to **plačeny** 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**:

(41) **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:

(42)    *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)

# Analysis of presuppositional IPF PPPs

(building on Grønn 2004)

(43) Stroeno bylo èto vse [ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto]<sub>F</sub>.  
 built.IPF was this all badly lamely with-holes

- Information structure (signalled by focus and word order)  
 → Background-focus division of the VP (Krifka 2001):

(44)  $\langle \lambda e[x|\mathbf{build}(e) \wedge \text{THEME}(e, x)], \lambda e[|\mathbf{bad}(e) \wedge \mathbf{lame}(e) \wedge \mathbf{with-holes}(e)] \rangle$

- After Background/Presupposition Rule (Geurts and van der Sandt 1997):

(45)  $[[VP]] = \lambda e[|\mathbf{bad}(e) \wedge \mathbf{lame}(e) \wedge \mathbf{with-holes}(e)]_{[x|\mathbf{build}(e) \wedge \text{THEME}(e, x)]}$

- Missing: Further derivation (in particular, analysis of IPF)

# Summary of the corpus study

- There are IPF PPPs with compositional semantics in periphrastic passives (contra standard assumption).
- Hypothesis: Only factual IPF (presuppositional, existential)
- Analysis of presuppositional IPF PPPs:
  - A completed event is given in the context; it is backgrounded, part of the theme (see appendix). → like a definite description
  - In focus: new information about the event (quasi-obligatory modifier)

# Open issues (corpus study)

- Analysis of the further derivation, in particular the semantics of IPF
  - Analysis of existential IPF PPPs
  - Why do IPF PPPs occur so rarely?
    - Are factual IPFs that rare? (not our intuition)
    - Are passives that rare? (also not our intuition)
  - Why are there no secondary IPF PPPs?
    - Might make sense for presuppositional IPFs: the least marked verb form
    - But why also for existential IPF, especially if this use could be reduced to (potential) event plurality?
- Also:** Active factual IPF is possible with secondary imperfectives.
- Why no process meaning?

# Some thoughts on some open issues

Lack of process meaning

(General-)factual IPF

# Why no process meaning?

- **English and German** (verbal) passives can have a process meaning:
  - (46) a. The doors are/were being opened.
  - b. Die Türen werden/wurden gerade geöffnet.  
          the doors become/became ADV opened
- **Division of labour in Russian?** (needs to be investigated)
  - Canonical IPF meanings with reflexive passives, non-canonical IPF meanings with periphrastic passives
  - If this is correct, is there a similar tendency in other languages that have both reflexive and periphrastic passives? (Spanish, Greek ...)
- **What about Czech?** (... a whole different research project; see appendix)
  - No aspectual restrictions with either 'passives' (also other differences in aspect usage; e.g. Gehrke 2002)
  - Radek Šimík, p.c.: Czech IPF PPPs can have a process meaning.
  - Czech reflexive 'passive' might not be a true passive: no *by*-phrases (cf. Fehrmann et al. 2010; Schäfer 2016)

# What do we do with (general-)factual IPF?

Long-standing issue: 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

$$(47) \quad \begin{aligned} \text{PF: } S \cap R = \emptyset \ \& \ E \subseteq R \\ \text{IPF: } \neg (S \cap R = \emptyset \ \& \ E \subseteq R) \\ &= S \cap R \neq \emptyset \vee E \not\subseteq R \end{aligned}$$

- 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**:

e.g. Filip (1999), building on Krifka (1989, 1992):

$$(48) \quad \text{PROG/IPF} = \lambda P \lambda e' \exists e [P(e) \wedge e' \subseteq e]$$

e.g. Altshuler (2013, 2014), building on Landman (1992):  
(similar in Tatevosov 2015)

$$(49) \quad \text{IPF} \rightsquigarrow \lambda P \lambda e' \exists e \exists w [\text{STAGE}(e', e, w^*, w, P)]$$

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

- (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)  $g(e') \subseteq g(e)$

- + pragmatic strengthening for different IPF readings
- + plural events for habituality (following Ferreira 2005)

# (Russian) IPF semantics: Different proposals

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

$$(50) \quad \begin{aligned} \llbracket \text{PF} \rrbracket &= \lambda t \lambda e. e \subseteq t \\ \llbracket \text{IPF}_{\text{factual}} \rrbracket &= \lambda t \lambda e. e \subseteq t \quad \text{'Fake IPF'} \\ \llbracket \text{IPF}_{\text{ongoing}} \rrbracket &= \lambda t \lambda e. t \subseteq e \end{aligned}$$

- + 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

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

# Rhetorical relations

- 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:  $\alpha$ 's event is part of  $\beta$ 's
  - Background: The state described in  $\beta$  is the 'backdrop' or the circumstances under which the event in  $\alpha$  occurred.
- ⇒ Intuitively, presuppositional IPF involves Elaboration:  $\alpha$ 's event is part of  $\beta$ 's
  - But that is more concrete than just temporal overlap ... it is a partitive semantics with events.

# A little exercise

## Let's try with partitive semantics over times

- (51) 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 over times

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

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

- 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?

## More general issues raised by this little exercise

- 1 Do we want the partitive IPF semantics to operate on **times** or on **events**?
- 2 The **notion of 'complete' events** (the alleged difficulty with factual IPF) is misleading, especially when we are concerned with event descriptions and not with actual events (being completed or not).

# Conclusion

## A stream of consciousness 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.

e.g. **PF in discourse**: obligatory in unique chains of events (narrative progression); even when the event is not 'complete' (e.g. in *He got up and sang*, in the sense of 'started singing')

# A stream of consciousness conclusion

Contexts with obligatory IPF, despite there being 'complete' events:

- (Unbounded) iterativity, habituality
  - Formal approaches often set these aside (e.g. Borik, Grønning), but a full account of IPF should spell out why PF is not possible in these contexts (unless a repetition is portrayed as a single event with a specified bounded internal structure, e.g. *cough three times*).
  - Brief comment in Altshuler: Russian IPF also for plural events (vs. English PROG only for singular events), but nothing is said about why PF is not possible with plural events.
- Historical present
  - incompatibility between present tense semantics and PF
  - [PF present tense forms have future (or sometimes modal) meanings]
  - (see Pancheva, yesterday)

# A stream of consciousness conclusion

- **Existential IPF**: Could just be a consequence of the ban on PF with potentially iterative events
    - Not always in competition with PF; contexts with existential IPF where PF would be ungrammatical, e.g. with non-specific temporal adverbials *kogda-nibud* 'when(ever)'
  - Slavistic traditional linguistics: Factual IPF also with 'incomplete' events (**non-resultative factual IPF**, e.g. Glovinskaja 1981).
    - 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 might be missing the point.

# Russian imperfective past passive participles

Bedankt! Merci!

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## Appendix: More on Backgrounding

Different explanations:

- **Presupposition** (as anaphor) (Geurts and van der Sandt 1997; Grønn 2004)
- **Givenness** (e.g. Krifka 2007)
- **Theme** (e.g. Vallduví 2016)

# Krifka (2007)

- **Givenness:** The expression is in the immediate 'common ground' (CG).
  - Anaphoric expressions (incl. personal pronouns, demonstratives, definite article) signal that the referent is given.
  - Reduction of the prosodic realisation of expressions that are given in the immediate context:  
Omission, deaccentuation, non-canonical word order

⇒ A large part of our IPF PPPs:  
deaccentuation, marked word order

# Vallduví (2016)

- A **theme** elaborates on the maximal 'question under discussion' (QUD) in context C; locus of discourse progression.
    - Typical example: Short answers
- (53)     - What are we having for dinner?  
          - MUTTONBIRD.
- The theme is the *replica* of the max-QUD (without elaborating fragments).
    - Main task: To prepare the context for an update
    - A theme is obligatory in contexts, in which the utterance elaborates a non-max-QUD (that is already part of the QUD set).
    - Utterances with a theme: Parallel to a definite description that specifies a non-local antecedent.
- ⇒ **Events in presuppositional IPF PPPs are like definite descriptions.**
- They signal under which file card / discourse referent the new information (focus, theme) should be stored.

## E.g. context of our examples

- (54) Poslednej stupenju roskoši byl “ljuks”, gde razmesčali generalov i voobsče bol’šoe načal’stvo. Zdes’ byli fikusy, po verxnej kromke sten - zolotoj baget i pri každom nomere vanna. Vpročem, v letnie mesjacy voda šla redko, a kogda šla, to so svistom i soveršenno ržavaja, tak čto raznica meždu derevjannoj, kamennoj i “ljuksom” skazyvalas’ bol’še ne v byte, a v počete. Stroeno bylo èto vse ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto.

‘The last level of luxury was the “lux”, where generals and other big bosses were lodged. There were ficuses, on the upper edge of the walls - golden molding, and each room had its own bathroom. However, in the summer months there was often no water, and when there was, it came with a whistling noise and was absolutely rusty, so that the difference between a wooden (room), a stone (room) and a “lux” was not so much in the level of comfort, but in the honor. All that was built badly, lamely, with holes.’

## E.g. context of our examples

- (55) The last level of luxury was the “lux”, where generals and other big bosses were lodged. There were fuses, on the upper edge of the walls - golden molding, and there was a bath in each room. However, in the summer months there was often no water, and when there was, it came with a whistling noise and was absolutely rusty, so that the difference between a wooden (room), a stone (room) and a “lux” was not so much in the level of comfort, but in the honor.

*Stroeno bylo éto vse ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto.* ‘All that was built badly, lamely, with holes.’

- Max-QUD: *What was the hotel like?*
  - Sub-QUD: Guests? Quality of the rooms? Decoration? Equipment? etc.
  - Sub-QUD that our example answers: *How was it built?*

The building event is not immediately relevant but the manner in which it was built (expressed by a modifier).

→ *The building event is part of the theme.*

# Research project: Cross-Slavic variation in passives

# Research project

## Cross-Slavic comparison of passives

- Comparison Russian-Czech (later: further Slavic languages)
    - Differences in aspect usage (point of departure)
    - Further differences in passives (e.g. event-related modification)
  - Different passive constructions and types, more generally
    - Periphrastic passive (with PPP) vs. 'reflexive' passive
    - Verbal vs. adjectival passive
    - Eventive vs. stative passive
- Additional comparison with non-Slavic languages

FORM  
MEANING

### ⇒ Informs us on

- Passive theory
- Formal treatment of cross-Slavic differences in aspect usage

# Aspect semantics vs. pragmatics

- Often (more or less implicit) assumption:  
Uniform aspect semantics in Slavic languages
- Parallel corpus studies (e.g. Dübbers 2015):  
No one-to-one correspondence in aspect usage

Q: Are these differences semantic or pragmatic?

Q: Which other factors play a role?

# Differences in aspect usage

e.g. Dickey (2000): Differences in 10 Slavic languages

- Contexts: habituality, general-factual, historic present, instructions and commentaries, IPF in chains of events, ingressivity, deverbal nouns

Dickey's analysis: West-east isogloss

- East: Prototype Russian (also: Belorussian, Ukrainian, Bulgarian)
  - PF: Temporal definiteness
  - IPF: Qualitative temporal indefiniteness
- West: Prototype Czech (also: Sorbian, Slovak, Slovenian)
  - PF: Totality
  - IPF: Quantitative temporal indefiniteness
- Peripheral types:
  - Polish (closer to the Western type)
  - Serbo-Croatian [BCMS] (closer to the Eastern type)

(see also Dickey 2015, 2018; Fortuin and Kamphuis 2015, 2018)

# Russian vs. Czech

- Theses particularly about this:
  - **Eckert (1984)**: Single vs. multiple events, motion events, spoken vs. written, present, general-factual, negation, imperative (PhD)
  - **Stunová (1993)**: Multiple events, chains of events (PhD)
  - **Gehrke (2002)**: Single vs. habitual events, general-factual (MA)
  - **Dübbers (2015)**: Multiple events, general-factual (PhD)

	<i>Russian</i>	<i>Czech</i>
Single events in chains of events	PF	IPF, PF
Multiple / habitual events	IPF	IPF, PF; frequentatives

- **Findings in Gehrke (2002)**
  - Single events: Differences only with particular verb classes
    - States/activities: Czech IPF vs. Russian PF
    - Accomplishments/achievements: both PF
  - Multiple events / habituality:
    - Marked on the verb form in Russian only (IPF)
    - Aspect usage in Czech more or less like with single events

# Cross-Slavic differences in aspect usage

- Further contexts and literature:
  - Ingressivity (Ivančev 1961; Berger 2013)
  - Imperative (Dokulil 1948; Benacchio 2010; Alvestad 2014; von Waldenfels 2014)
  - Negation (Dickey and Kresnin 2009; von Waldenfels 2014)
  - Present tense (Bondarko 1958, 1959; Křížková 1955, 1958; Širokova 1963; Petrušina 1978, 1983, 1998, 2000; Fortuin and Kamphuis 2015)
  - Motion events (Eckert 1991)

# Desiderata

- **Formal account of the differences** (so far only Alvestad 2014, for imperatives)
    - **Q:** Can we have the same semantic formalisation of (I)PF in both (all) Slavic languages, or are the differences semantic in nature (e.g. Dickey's proposal)? → **Semantics vs. pragmatics**
  - **Research project:** Closer inspection of **passives** (and possible comparison with nominalisations)
    - Also other, not aspectual differences
    - Comparison with non-Slavic languages that are well documented and analysed
- To inform us on the formal description of the differences more generally

# Passive: Czech vs. Russian

- **Russian:** Aspectual restrictions in the passive
    - Periphrastic passive: mostly PF  
(with 'exceptions'; but no process meaning for IPF PPPs)
    - Reflexive passive: maybe only IPF  
(descriptive generalisation; would have to be explored in more detail)
  - **Czech:** No such aspectual restrictions (as far as we know)
    - Both 'passives' with both aspects
    - All IPF meanings possible (again, this would have to be explored)
- Q: What are the differences between reflexive and periphrastic passive?
- Q: Which IPF meanings do we find in both languages and in both passives?

## Further differences with reflexive passives

- Differences in reflexive constructions (but no discussion of aspect)
  - Fehrmann et al. (2010): Formal analysis
  - von Waldenfels (2014): Corpus study

e.g. *by*-phrases possible in RU but not in CZ (from Fehrmann et al.):

- (56) RU Dom stroitsja (plotnikami).  
 house.NOM builds.IPF.RFL carpenter.INSTR.PL  
 'The house was built by carpenters.'
- CZ Šaty se právě šijí (\*babičkou).  
 dress.NOM.PL RFL just-now sew.3PL.PRES granny.INSTR  
 'The dress is just now being sewn (\*by granny).'

- Q: What is the reflexive passive (RU vs. CZ)? A verbal passive in RU, but something else in CZ? (see also Schäfer 2016)
- Q: How does the reflexive passive relate to other reflexive constructions?
- Q: What kind of passive is the periphrastic passive (RU vs. CZ)?
- Q: What kind of *by*-phrases do we get (RU vs. CZ)?

# Czech vs. Russian: Nominalisations

- Similar: **Nominalisations**, e.g. (57) (from Dickey 2000)

(57) e.g. 'realisation, execution'

CZ	pf. INF provést > NOM provedení	(cp. PPP proveden)
	ipf. INF provádět > NOM provádění	(cp. PPP prováděn)
RU	pf. INF osuščestvit' > NOM osuščestvlenie	(cp. PPP osuščestvlen)
	ipf. INF osuščestvljat' > NOM *osuščestvljanie	(cp. PPP *osuščestvljan)

(also: morphological connection to PPPs)

	<i>Russian</i>	<i>Czech</i>
PPP	(almost only) PF	IPF, PF
Reflexive passive	(almost only) IPF	IPF, PF
Nominalisations in <i>-nie/-ní</i> und <i>-tie/-tí</i>	'aspectually neutral' (according to Dickey)	IPF, PF

**Q:** What is the role of finiteness?

# Summary of the research questions

- ① Differences in aspect usage: Semantic or pragmatic?
  - Can we work with one formalisation for both (all) Slavic languages, or are the aspects principally different?
  - Which other factors play a role?
- ② What is the difference between the periphrastic and the reflexive passive?
  - Why is there an aspectual division of labour in Russian?
  - Why can the Russian IPF periphrastic passive not express a process meaning?
  - Why is Czech different in both points?
  - Investigation: Which IPF meanings can we find in both types of passives in both languages?
- ③ What is the difference between the Russian and the Czech passives?
  - What kind of passive is the reflexive passive (RU vs. CZ)?
  - What kind of passives is the periphrastic passive (RU vs. CZ)?
  - What kind of *by*-phrases do we find (RU vs. CZ)?

# Summary of the research questions

- 4 What is the relationship between reflexive passives and other reflexive constructions?
- 5 Periphrastic passive and Tense:
  - What is the difference between  $BE_{PRES}$  and  $BE_{PAST}$  (RU)?
  - What about Czech?
- 6 What is the role of finiteness in the usage of aspect?
- 7 Further Q: What about other participles?
  - Periphrastic passive: Short form past passive participles (PPP)

Additional participles:

- Long form PPP (always adjectival)
- 3 more: Past active, present active, present passive
- Adverbial participles ('converbs') (synchr. only in RU)
- Past tense: 'I-participle' with (CZ) or without (RU) auxiliary BE (diachr. perfect participle)

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