

The role of presupposition and information structure in Russian imperfective passives

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① Russian past passives participles (PPPs)

Regularly derived from perfective (PF) verbs:

INFINITIVE	LONG FORM PPP	SHORT FORM PPP
<i>sdelat'</i> 'make.PF'	<i>sdelannyj</i> 'made.PF'	<i>sdelan</i> 'made.PF'
<i>rasserdit'</i> 'make-angry.PF'	<i>rasseržennyj</i> 'made-angry.PF'	<i>rasseržen</i> 'made-angry.PF'
<i>zakryt'</i> 'close.PF'	<i>zakrytyj</i> 'closed.PF'	<i>zakryt</i> 'closed.PF'

However, imperfective (IPF) PPPs can be found as well:

INFINITIVE	LONG FORM PPP	SHORT FORM PPP
<i>delat'</i> 'make.IPF'	<i>delannyj</i> 'made.IPF'	<i>delan</i> 'made.IPF'
<i>slyšat'</i> 'hear.IPF'	<i>slyšannyj</i> 'heard.IPF'	<i>slyšan</i> 'heard.IPF'
<i>krasit'</i> 'paint.IPF'	<i>krašennyj</i> 'painted.IPF'	<i>krašen</i> 'painted.IPF'

NB₁ A note on terminology:

- We reserve the terms (I)PF for morphological forms of a given verb.
- We study IPF forms used in contexts that might semantically be called perfective (e.g. completed bounded events in the past, see below).

NB₂ The Russian IPF can have various meanings in different contexts:

- Canonical, exclusively IPF: process, habituality, (iterativity; sometimes PF possible)
- Non-canonical, 'aspectual competition': general-factual (sheer fact that event took place)

② Received view: Aspectual restrictions on Russian passives

- (1) a. Storož {**otkryval** / **otkryl**} vorota. **ACTIVE: both IPF & PF**
watchman.NOM opened.IPF / opened.PF gates.ACC
'The watchman opened (was opening) a/the gate.'
- b. Vorota {**otkryvalis**' / ***otkrylis**'} storožem. **REFLEXIVE PASSIVE: IPF**
gates.NOM opened.IPF.RFL / opened.PF.RFL watchman.INSTR
'The gate was (being) opened by a/the watchman.'
- c. Vorota **byli** {***otkryvany** / **otkryty**} storožem. **PERIPHRASTIC PASSIVE: PF**
gates.NOM were opened.IPF.PRT / opened.PF.PRT watchman.INSTR
'The gate was opened by a/the watchman.'

→ Main views on IPF PPPs in the literature:

- IPF PPPs are **rare/idiomatic/frozen** forms that functions like **adjectives** (Academy Grammar: Švedova 1980, Schoorlemmer 1995)
- IPF PPPs are **ignored** (Babby & Brecht 1975, Paslawska & von Stechow 2003)
- A **more refined view in Knjazev (2007)**: IPF PPPs exist but are (somehow) **restricted in use**, in comparison to more 'regular' PF PPPs.

③ Data, research questions & answers

The data

- Russian National Corpus (RNC) (ruscorpora.ru)
- IPF PPPs directly preceding or following a form of *byt'* 'be' (BE)
- Manual exclusion of biaspectual forms (tagged as IPF), long form PPPs (do not occur in periphrastic passives), errors in tagging → No quantitative analysis

Our questions

Q1 Are IPF PPPs limited to **idiomatic** expressions / are they genuine **adjectives**? ⇒ No.

Q2 In what kind of **contexts** do non-idiomatic IPF PPPs occur?

⇒ In both **stative/adjectival** and **eventive/verbal passives**

⇒ Never occur with a process ('progressive') reading

⇒ Predominantly in contexts which **presuppose a completed event** (normally referred to by PF) and focus on some other aspect of this event.

→ **obligatory modifiers, special information structure**

Q3 What would be a general **semantic characterization** of (this group of) IPF PPPs?

⇒ **Presuppositional factive IPF PPPs**

Q1: Are all IPF PPPs idiomatic/adjectival? ⇒ No.

Regular, productive, repeated forms with compositional meaning:

- (2) 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 (haircut.IPF), kormlen (fed.IPF), nesen (carried.IPF), govoren (said.IPF), prošen (asked.IPF), zvan (called.IPF), kusan (bitten.IPF), kryt (covered.IPF), venčan (married.IPF), njuxan (smelled.IPF), etc.
- (3) V silu delikatnosti situaciji gosti **zvany** byli s osobym razborom.
in power delicacy.GEN situation.GEN guests called.IPF were with particular selection
'Due to a delicate situation the guests were invited upon careful selection.'
- (4) Bylo **pito**, bylo **edeno**, byli slezy prolity.
was drunk.NEUTR.IPF was eaten.NEUTR.IPF were tears poured.PF
'(Things) were drunk, (things) were eaten, tears were shed.'

⇒ Conclusion: **There are IPF PPPs whose semantics is built compositionally.**

Productive IPF PPPs: No idiomatic/special meanings, compared to the base verbs

NB No contemporary secondary imperfectives (only archaic ones).

Q2: IPF PPPs in regular passives: What kinds of contexts?

In **stative/adjectival passives** (extent reading, state-related modifiers):

- (5) a. [...] ne skazal, čto vagon-to naš učebnikami **gružen** byl?
not said.PF that waggon-PTL our textbooks.INSTR loaded.IPF was
'Did he not tell us that our waggon was loaded with textbooks?'
- b. Dver' kvartiry byla **krašena** svetlo-koričnejvoj kraskoj [...]
door apartment.GEN was painted.IPF light-brown.INSTR paint.INSTR
'The apartment door was painted in a light-brown color.'

In **eventive/verbal passives** (e.g. temporal event modifiers, referential *by*-phrases, other event-related modifiers):

- (6) a. **Pisano** éto bylo Dostoevskim v 1871 godu [...]
written.IPF that was Dostoevskij.INSTR in 1871 year
'That was written by Dostoevskij in 1871.'
- b. Znamenitij pokojnik **nesen** byl do mogily na rukax [...]
Famous deceased.NOM carried.IPF was until grave on arms
'The famous deceased was carried in arms until the grave.'

Which IPF contexts?

- None** in **progressive IPF** contexts. (corroborating the claim in Knjazev 2007)
- Some under negation, repetition, habituality (not in this paper).
- The most frequent type: **Presuppositional factives**

Background: Presuppositional factive IPFs (Grønn 2004)

(Padučeva's 1996 actional IPF; a subtype of the general-factual IPF – term goes back to Maslov 1959, cf. Mehlig 2016 for recent discussion)

- (7) a. V étoj porternoj ja napisal pervoe ljubovnoe pis'mo. **Pisal** [karandašom]_F.
in this tavern I wrote.PF first love letter wrote.IPF pencil.INSTR
- b. [VP]: $\lambda e[x|INSTRUMENT(e, x), pencil(x)]_I [write(e)]$
- c. [AspectP]: $\lambda t[x|INSTRUMENT(e, x), pencil(x)]_{[e|write(e), eot]}$

- Background-focus** division at the VP level (7b): writing event (background) & with pencil (focus)
- Backgrounded material is argued to be presupposed: The subscripted part introduces presupposed information into the DRS. (building on van der Sandt 1992)
- Underspecified meaning of the IPF: $e \circ t$ (building on Klein 1995)
- Presuppositions** are treated as **anaphora**: bound to an antecedent (e.g. PF *napisal* in the first sentence in (7a)), or justified by the input context (see there for examples).

Q3: The semantics of IPF PPPs

- (8) a. **Stroeno** bylo éto ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto.
built.IPF was that badly lamely with.holes
- b. [VP]: $\lambda e[[bad(e) \wedge lame(e) \wedge with-holes(e)]_I [build(e)]]$

Our arguments for the presuppositional factive analysis:

- Intentional **focus** is not on the verb but on some other element in the sentence (9).

- The completion of an event is backgrounded and presupposed.
- In focus: obligatory modifier(s) specifying the manner, quality, purpose or other aspect of the event.
- IPF shifts the focus on another aspect of the event, expressed by the obligatory modifier, instead of the culmination of the event itself.

- Often marked **word order**: PPP before BE, modifier after BE

- Existence of **PF variants with fuzzy meaning difference** (10) ~ active factive IPF vs. PF (general view)

- The presuppositional part of the sentence meaning is not affected by **negation** (11).

→ If the positive sentence implies event completion, the negated sentence does so too.

→ What is negated is manner, not really the existence of the event itself and/or its completion.

[though: this might also just be constituent negation, in which case this might not be a good diagnostics for presupposition]

- Future task: Check the contexts in which IPF PPPs appear to ensure that the **presupposed events** are **bound or justified** by the input context; e.g. (12).

- (9) **Pisano** éto bylo [Dostoevskim [v 1871 godu]]_F [...]
written.IPF that was Dostoevskij.INSTR in 1871 year
- (10) a. [...] ne skazal, čto vagon-to naš učebnikami (**za/na**)**gružen** byl?
not said.PF that waggon-PTL our textbooks.INSTR (PF)loaded.IPF was
- b. (**Na**)**pisano** éto bylo Dostoevskim v 1871 godu [...]
(PF)written.IPF that was Dostoevskij.INSTR in 1871 year

- (11) **Stroeno** éto **ne** bylo ploxo, xromo, ščeljasto.
built.IPF that not was badly lamely with.holes

- (12) a. **Pis'ma** ego **pisany** byli černo i kruglo [...]
letters his written.IPF were black and round
- b. Čto kasaetja **platy** deneg, to **plačeny** byli naličnymi šest' tysjač rublej [...]
what concerns payment.GEN money.GEN then paid.IPF were in cash six thousand roubles
'As for the payment, six thousand roubles were paid in cash ...'