



The prominent verbs in interactions of aspect, tense and mood in Russian

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Introduction

- What is a grammatical profile?
 - Relative frequency distribution of the inflected forms of a word in a corpus
 - Take verb X and find out how many times it appears in various forms in a corpus and calculate percentages
 - For example, the mean distribution of imperfective verbs in the Russian National Corpus is:

• non-past	42%
• past	30%
• infinitive	15%
• imperative	2%
• gerund	5%
• participles	6%



Introduction

- Insights into Russian aspect
 - Are aspectual pairs formed only by suffixation (Isačenko) or by both suffixation and prefixation (traditional view)?
 - Which verbs characterize various TAM intersections?
 - For example, which verbs are used most in a given TAM combination, such as perfective imperative or imperfective non-past?



Study 1

Study 2

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Aspect Study 1: prefixes & suffixes

- Study 1 involves only aspectual “partners”
 - **p-partners:** *delat'*-*sdelat'* ‘do’ (Natural Perfectives)
 - **s-partners:** *peredelat'*-*peredelyvat'* ‘redo’ (Specialized Perfectives)
- Study 1 excludes
 - habituais (*govarivat'* ‘talk (habitually)’)
 - semelfactives (*čixnut'* ‘sneeze (once)’)
 - stacked prefixes (*poperepisyvat'* ‘spend some time rewriting’)
 - suppletive pairs (*govorit'*-*skazat'* ‘say/tell’)



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Aspect Study 1: prefixes & suffixes

- **Traditional hypothesis**
 - both p-partners and s-partners form aspectual pairs
- **Corollary**
 - p-partners and s-partners should behave the same
- **Isačenko hypothesis**
 - only s-partners form aspectual pairs
- **Corollary**
 - p-partners and s-partners should behave differently



The corollaries can be tested empirically

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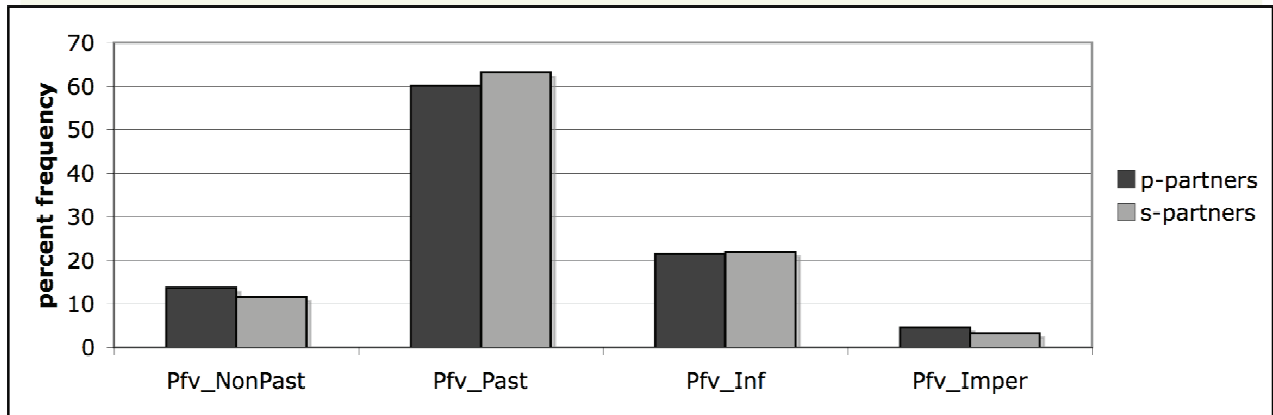
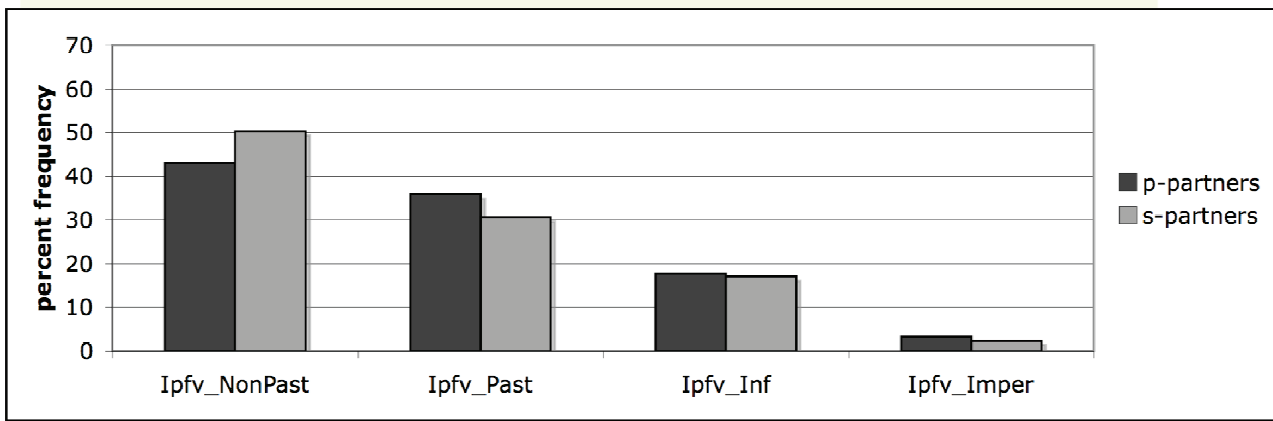
Aspect Study 1: prefixes & suffixes

- **Databases of p-partners and s-partners**
 - Based on Modern subcorpus (1950-2007; 92M words) of Russian National Corpus
 - Excludes all verbs with <100 attestations
- **p-partners: 264 pairs, over 1.6M forms**
 - Based on Exploring Emptiness database
 - Excludes verbs with multiple prefixes (*valit'-svalit'*, *povalit'* 'topple'), biaspectual verbs (*arendovat'* 'lease'), homonymy (*sxodit'* 'go someplace and back once/descend', *sžat'* 'press/harvest')
- **s-partners: 1,311 pairs, over 4.3M forms**
 - Based on Zaliznjak 1980



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Aspect Study 1: prefixes & suffixes

- Non-past dominates imperfective, past dominates perfective (Comrie 1976)
- Statistical analysis
 - Is there a difference between p- and s-partners?
 - With nearly 6M datapoints, too much statistical power
 - Chi-square suggests significant differences, but effect sizes are an order of magnitude below “small”
 - Cramer’s V 0.076 for imperfectives, 0.037 for perfectives
 - (0.1 = small, 0.3 = moderate, 0.5 = large)



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Aspect Study 1: prefixes & suffixes

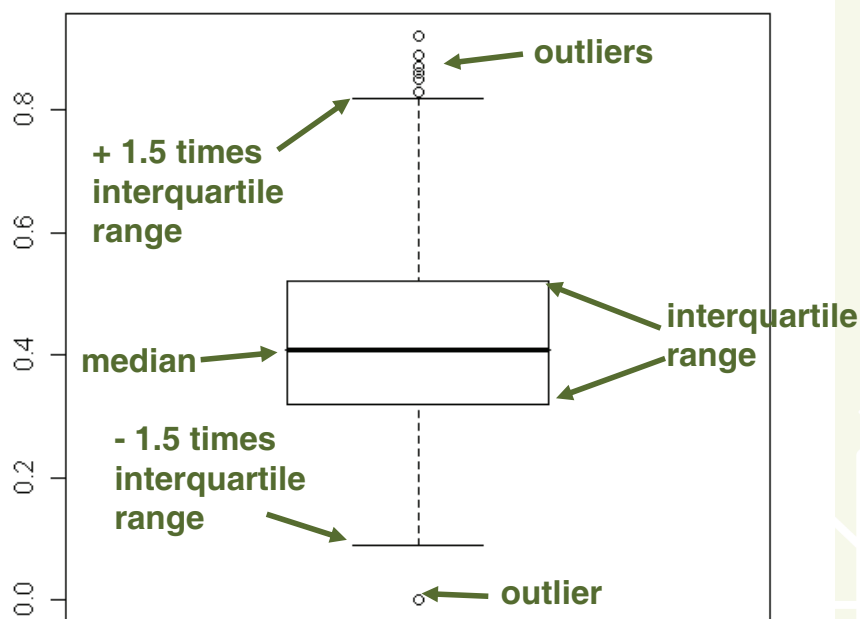
- No real difference between p-partners and s-partners
- No support for Isačenko hypothesis
- Since p-partners and s-partners behave the same, we merge data from both types in Study 2.



Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Outliers are points displaced beyond 1.5 times the interquartile range (mid 50% of a distribution)
- Outlier verbs are statistically deviant, strongly attracted to (or repulsed by) a given TAM combination
- We will look at outlier verbs for each combination of imperfective vs. perfective with imperative, non-past, infinitive, and past





Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Imperfective imperative
 - Over 200 outlier verbs
 - Scholars have claimed that imperfective imperatives are used for
 - categorical negation (Bondarko & Bulanin 1967,
 - politeness (Padučeva 1996,
 - insistence (rudeness) (Timberlake 2004)
 - Šatunovskij (2002, 2009) suggests instead that if hearer understands action is to take place, imperfective is used

Contra-diction?

Imperfective imperative

- Guest **knows what to expect**: *razdevajtes* 'take off your coat', *sadites* 'sit down', *prisoedinajtes* 'come join at the table', *zakusyvajte* 'eat chasers'
- Hearer is **hesitant**: *stupajte* 'get going', *gljadite* 'look', *zabirajte* 'take'
- Hearer has **not behaved properly**: *provalivaj* 'get out of here', *končaj* 'stop', *ne perebivaj* 'don't interrupt', *ne prikidyvajsja* 'don't pretend to be something you aren't'

 Šatunovskij

Note also negation and sg vs. pl



Imperfective imperative

- Not motivated by Šatunovskij: *vyručajte* 'help', *vyzdoravlivajte* 'get well'
- Idiomatic: *davaj(te)* 'let me': *pomogu* 'help', *rasskažu* 'tell', *pokažu* 'show', *pozvonju* 'call', *sdelaju* 'do'
- Idiomatic/culturally anchored: *proščaj(te)* 'farewell', *obogaščajsja* 'be prosperous', *proletarii vsej stran soedinajtes* 'workers of the world unite', *zapevaj* 'sing'



Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs



- Perfective imperative
 - Over 300 outlier verbs
 - Little attention in literature
 - rude
 - instructions

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Perfective imperative

- **Rude:** *otstan'(te)* 'leave me alone', *otpusti(te)s'* 'let me go', *perestan'(te)* 'stop'
- **Instructions:** *vskipjati(te)* 'bring to a boil', *sogni(te)* 'bend', *raspiši(te)s'* 'sign for', *rassmotri(te)* [grafik x] 'see [figure x]'
- **Polite expressions:** *izvini(te)* 'excuse me', *poterpi(te)* 'be patient', *predstav'te)* 'imagine'
- **Attention-directing:** *posmotri(te)* 'look', *vslušaj(te)s'* 'listen', *ponjuxaj(te)* 'sniff', *ugadaj(te)* 'guess'
- **Discourse markers:** *požaluj* 'perhaps', *razreši(te)* 'allow', *podskaži(te)* 'prompt, tell', *uvol'(te)* 'spare'
- **Religious:** *Gospodi pomiluj* 'Lord have mercy', *blagoslovi otče* 'father bless'
- **Idiomatic:** *daj* 'let me': *posmotrju* 'take a look', *poceluju* 'kiss', *pogljažu* 'take a look', *vzgljanu* 'take a look'
- **Idioms:** *xot' zalejsja/zavalis'* 'a very large amount', *ne razlej voda* 'really close friends', *čert razderi* 'to hell with it'



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Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Imperfective non-past

- 10+1 outlier verbs
- 10 gnomic constructions:
 - *diskussija vseгда javljaetsja naibolee produktivnoj formoj naučnogo obsuždenija problemy*
'discussion is always the most productive form for scholarly debate on an issue'
 - *okazyvaetsja* 'turns out to be'; *vyjasnjaetsja, čto* 'turns out that'; *čto kasaetsja X* 'as far as X is concerned' ; *storony objazujutsja* 'the parties are obliged to'; *zatrudnjajus' otvetit'* 'not sure'
- 1 verb lacks non-past: *slyxat'* 'hear'



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Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Perfective non-past: 84 outlier verbs

- **Predictions:** *prevysit* 'will exceed', *umen'sitsja* 'will decrease', *prodlitsja* 'will last', *naladitsja* 'will work out', *vyzdoroveet* 'will get well', *zatrudnit* 'will make things difficult', *razoritsja* 'will go broke', *potrebuetsja* 'will be necessary', *podoxnet* 'will die', *pridetsja* 'will be necessary', *(ne) obojdetsja (bez)* 'will (not) manage (without)'
- **Promises/Threats:** *upravitsja* 'will take care of something', *postaraetsja* 'will try', *prokljanet* 'will curse'
- **Performatives:** *osmeljus'* 'I (will) take the liberty of', *procitiruju* 'I (will) quote'
- **Idioms:** *ostal'noe priložitsja* 'the rest will come', *ot tebja ne ubudet* 'nothing is going to happen to you'
- **Residue:** *vysoxnet* 'will dry out', *poletit* 'will fly/take off'



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Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Imperfective infinitive: 12 outlier verbs
 - 1 is idiomatic: *mne plevat'* 'I don't give a damn'
 - Modal collocations with: *nado* 'have (to)', *nužno* 'need (to)', *dolžen* 'supposed (to)', *možno* 'can/is possible (to)', *nel'zja* 'not possible/not allowed (to)', *prihoditsja/pridetsja* 'is/will be necessary (to)', *sleduet* 'ought, should'
- Why imperfective modal?
 - Šmelev & Zaliznjak (2006): Imperfective used when action is controllable
 - Divjak (2009): Imperfective has generic interpretation



Imperfective infinitive

- Our data supports Divjak
 - outlier verbs include uncontrollable actions: *vvjazyvatsja* 'get mixed up in', *raspoznavat'* 'recognize, identify', and *soglasovyvat'* 'conform to, agree with'
 - outlier verbs target conformist behavior: *sobljudat'* 'observe, conform to', *peredelyvat'* 'redo', *ispravljat'* 'repair', *učityvat'* 'take into account'



Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Perfective infinitive
 - 12 outlier verbs
 - Somewhat parallel to imperfective infinitives
 - *mne naplevat* 'I don't give a damn'; modal uses for specific situations
 - Use with “tentative verbs” (Divjak 2004), *čtoby* ‘in order to’ and adverbs describing difficulty/importance of achieving X



Perfective infinitive

- **Tentative verbs:**

Poètomu my popytaemsja vospolnit' ètot probel, opirajas' na fakty i cifry privedennye v rabotax sovremennyx istorikov.

'That is why we are going to try to fill in that gap by relying on the facts and figures cited in the works of contemporary historians.'

- **čtoby 'in order to':**

Posle zanjatija možno vypit' vody, čtoby vospolnit' ee poterju.

'After working one can drink some water in order to make up for its loss.'

- **Adverbs describing difficulty/importance**

Fruktami istinnyj deficit kalija vospolnit' očen' tjaželo, praktičeski nevozmožno.

'It is very difficult, practically impossible, to make up for a real calcium deficiency by [eating] fruit.'



Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Imperfective past: 13 outlier verbs
 - **Evidentials:** *slyxal* ‘heard’ *slyl* ‘had the reputation of being’
 - **Defective paradigms** (no imperative): *prosižival* ‘sat up repeatedly’, *proxoživalsja* ‘went for strolls’, *belel* ‘showed white’, *černel* ‘showed black’, *ne unimalsja* ‘was unstoppable’, *nadvigalsja* ‘was approaching’, *mračnel* ‘showed dark, glowered’, *svešivalsja* ‘hung, dangled’, *slyxal* ‘heard’, *slyl* ‘had the reputation of being’
 - **Habituals:** *prosižival* ‘sat up repeatedly’, *proxoživalsja* ‘went for strolls’
 - **Narration of observations:** *belel* ‘showed white’, *černel* ‘showed black’, and *mračnel* ‘showed dark’, *groza nadvigalas* ‘a storm was approaching’
 - **Negation for categorical statements:** *(ne) pomyšljal* ‘(not) thought about, dreamt of’, *(ne) unimalsja* ‘there was no stopping X’
 - **Behaviors accompanying dialog:** *ščurilsja* ‘squinted’, *otščivalsja* ‘made joking replies’, *mračnel* ‘glowered’



Aspect Study 2: outlier verbs

- Perfective past
 - no outlier verbs



Conclusions

- Aspectual pairs behave similarly, regardless of whether they are formed via suffixation or prefixation
 - It may be that meanings of prefixes and verbs overlap
- Outlier verbs support some previous scholarship, but also present new insights and challenges



Conclusions

- Imperfective imperative
 - extend list of typical polite and rude expressions; added familiar uses
- Perfective imperative
 - new details on rude and neutral uses; added polite uses and use for attention-directing
- Imperfective non-past
 - gnomic reference (instead of ongoing-durative)
- Perfective non-past
 - predictions of improvements/problems, threats, promises, performatives



Conclusions

- Imperfective & Perfective infinitive
 - Mainly modal uses
 - Imperfective infinitives express generic circumstances
 - Perfective infinitives express specific situations (both circumstances and physical necessity/capacity); constructions with tentative verbs, adverbs, *čtoby* 'in order to'
- Imperfective past
 - evidentials, habituals, narration of observations

