The Morphosyntax of Slavic Aspect: P Clitics, Spanning, and the Superset Principle

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Introducing Slavic Aspect

- In Slavic languages, most verbs are either **perfective** or **imperfective**
  - Perfective ⇛ quantised / bounded
  - Imperfective ⇛ homogenous / unbounded (incl. atelic, progressive, iterative, habitual, generic, stative)

- Standard aspectual diagnostics (cf. Borik 2006)
  - only imperfectives occur in the complement of phase verbs (e.g. *begin*, *finish*)
  - only imperfectives derive present active participles
  - passives of perfectives and imperfectives select different auxiliaries in Polish
The Morphology of Slavic Aspect

- Most **bare stems** are **imperfective** (1a, 2a)
- Most **prefixed stems** are **perfective** (1b, 2b)

(1)  
- a. **bud-owa-ć**
  build-TH-INF
  ‘to build’
- b. **roz-bud-owa-ć**
  apart-build-TH-INF
  ‘to expand by building’

(2)  
- a. **rob-i-ć**
  make-TH-INF
  ‘to make’
- b. **za-rob-i-ć**
  behind-make-TH-INF
  ‘to earn’

- N.B. All examples in this talk are from Polish
The Morphology of Slavic Aspect

- Stems **suffixed with AJ/YWA** are **imperfective** (3a, 4a)
- AJ/YWA does not attach to bare stems (3b, 4b)

(3) a. **roz-bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć**
   apart-build-TH-SI-INF
   ‘to expand by building’

   b. ***bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć**
   build-TH-SI-INF

(4) a. **za-rab-i-a(j)-ć**
   behind-make-TH-SI-INF
   ‘to earn’

   b. ***rab-i-a(j)-ć**
   behind-make-TH-SI-INF

- The forms in (3a)/(4a) are known as **secondary imperfectives (SI)**
The Morphology of Slavic Aspect

(5) a. bud-owa-ćʰ
    build-TH-INF
    ‘to build’

b. roz-bud-owa-ćʰ
    apart-build-TH-INF
    ‘to expand by building’

c. roz-bud-ow(a)-ywa-ćʰ
    apart-build-TH-SI-INF
    ‘to expand by building’

d. *bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć
    build-TH-SI-INF
    *BARE SECONDARY IMPERFECTIVE
The Aims of this Talk

- What determines the distribution of AJ/YWA?
  A. the SI suffix selects for **resultativity**
  B. the SI suffix selects for **perfectivity**
  C. the SI suffix appears on **prefixed** verbs

- Options A-B entail that AJ/YWA is the spell-out of some aspectual operator, projected in the syntax and interpreted at LF
- Option C entails that the appearance of AJ/YWA is morphophonological in nature, with no impact on syntax or semantics
What determines the distribution of AJ/YWA?
A. the SI suffix selects for **resultativity**
B. the SI suffix selects for **perfectivity**
C. the SI suffix appears on **prefixed** verbs

**Roadmap**
- **Part I**: present arguments against A-B
- **Part II**: implement option C in a syntactic model of word formation
A. The SI suffix selects for resultativity?

- The hypothesis that the SI suffix selects for a result subevent is formulated in Ramchand (2008) and Tatevosov (2015, ms.) on the basis of Russian data.

(6) \( \text{YVA is an Eventiser} \)
\[ \| \text{YVA} \| = \lambda R. \lambda e. \exists s[R(e)(s)] \]

- On this view, the SI suffix is a semantic operator which ‘extracts’ the activity part from an event predicate consisting of activity and result components.

(7) a. \textit{Activity} \newline
\text{maszer-owa-(*ywa)-ćl} \newline
\text{march-TH-SI-INF} \newline
‘to march’

b. \textit{Activity + Result} \newline
\text{w-maszer-ow(a)-ywa-ćl} \newline
\text{in-march-TH-SI-INF} \newline
‘to march in’
A. The SI suffix selects for resultativity?

- This analysis predicts that **bare stems denote simple activities**
  - *bare stem + AJ/YWA ⇒ bare stems lack a result component

- However, there are many bare imperfectives in Polish which pass the standard tests for resultativity, but which cannot be suffixed with AJ/YWA

(8) **Bare Imperfectives with a Result Component**

a. prostować ‘to straighten’, niszczyć ‘to destroy’, wiązać ‘to tie’, budzić ‘to wake up’, psuć ‘to break’, ginąć ‘to perish’, łapać ‘to catch’, gromadzić ‘to gather’

A. The SI suffix selects for resultativity?

- Restitutive modification (von Stechow 1996)

(9) Kiedy jakiś żołnierz zasypiał, kapitan \{ znowu / z powrotem \} go budz-i-ł.

When some soldier fell asleep captain again with return him wake-TH-PST

‘Whenever a soldier fell asleep, the captain woke him up again.’

- Result-oriented durative adverbials (Piñón 1999)

(10) Adam łącz-y te kabelki na dwie minuty, żeby uruchomić maszynę.

Adam connect-TH these cables for two minutes to switch on machine

‘Adam is connecting these cables for two minutes in order to switch on the machine.’
B. The SI suffix selects for perfectivity?

- The suggestion that SI is a higher aspectual operator has been made in Borer (2005), Jabłońska (2008) and Caha & Ziková (2016), among many others.
- On this view, prefixes perfectivise the clause (11b), while the SI suffix is an imperfectivising operator projecting on top of the [PFV] layer (11c).

(11)  
a.  [ (IPFV) [ stem ] ]  Bare Imperfective
b.  [ PFV [ pfx + stem ] ]  Prefixed Perfective
c.  [ IPFV_{SI} [ PFV [ pfx + stem ] ] ]  Secondary Imperfective

⇒AJ/YWA
B. The SI suffix selects for perfectivity?

- By assumption, the structures in (11) are built in the syntax, not in the lexicon.
- This means that the [PFV] feature in (11c) is sent to LF for interpretation.
- Since (11a) and (11c) contain different sets of aspectual projections, we predict syntactic and/or semantic contrasts between bare and secondary imperfectives.

\[
(11) \begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad [ \text{IPFV} \ [ \text{stem} \ ] ] \quad \text{Bare Imperfective} \\
\text{b.} & \quad [ \text{PFV} \ [ \text{pfx + stem} \ ] ] \quad \text{Prefixed Perfective} \\
\text{c.} & \quad [ \text{IPFV}_{SI} \ [ \text{PFV} \ [ \text{pfx + stem} \ ] ] ] \quad \Rightarrow \text{AJ/YWA} \quad \text{Secondary Imperfective}
\end{align*}
\]
B. The SI suffix selects for perfectivity?

- However, this prediction is not borne out!
- Bare and secondary imperfectives pattern together in all aspectual diagnostics
- There is no evidence for [PFV] embedded inside secondary imperfectives (11c)

(11) a. \[ (IPFV) [ stem ] ]  Bare Imperfective
b. \[ PFV [ pfx + stem ] ]  Prefixed Perfective
c. \[ IPFV_{SI} PFV [ pfx + stem ] ]  Secondary Imperfective
⇒AJ/YWA
B. The SI suffix selects for perfectivity?

- For example, secondary imperfectives have only one reading under negation, just like bare imperfectives (12a) and unlike prefixed perfectives (12b)

(12)  

    Mark NEG build-TH-PST apart-build-TH-SI-PST never garage  
    i. ✓ Mark has never attempted to build / extend a garage.  
    ii. ✓ Mark has attempted to build / extend a garage but he never finished.

    Mark NEG apart-build-TH-PST never garage  
    i. ✓ Mark has never attempted to extend a garage.  
    ii. ✓ Mark has attempted to extend a garage but he never finished.
C. The SI suffix appears on prefixed verbs!

- The distribution of AJ/YWA cannot be captured at the level of syntax/semantics.

\[ (13) \quad \text{SI suffixation is a PF phenomenon} \]
AJ/YWA is the realisation of imperfective aspect in the context of a VP-internal prefix.

- A similar claim is made in Schoorlemmer (1995), but she formulates her analysis in the framework of Parallel Morphology (Borer 1988).

- In what follows, I implement (13) in a purely syntactic model of word formation.
Word Formation is Syntactic

- I adopt two assumptions common to Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993, Embick 2010) and Nanosyntax (Caha 2009, Starke 2010)

- **Syntactic Hierarchical Structure All the Way Down**
  - Syntax is the only generative engine of grammar
  - Elements within syntax and within morphology enter into the same types of constituent structures

- **Late Insertion**
  - Syntax is devoid of phonological information
  - Lexical items are inserted into syntactic structures after spell-out
Theme Vowels as Verbalisers

- In Distributed Morphology, roots enter syntax without a category
- Categorisation is achieved by the functional heads $v$, $n$ and $a$

- Slavic theme vowels are exponents of the verbalising head $v$
Theme Vowels as Verbalisers

- They appear in verbs and deverbal formations but not in simple nouns:

(14) a. kos-i-ćł
    mow-TH-INF
    ‘to mow’

b. kos-a
    mow-FEM.NOM
    ‘a scythe’

- They participate in argument structure alternations:

(15) a. gas-i-ćł
    extinguish-TH-INF
    ‘to put out’ (causative)

b. gas-ną-ćł
    extinguish-TH-INF
    ‘to go out’ (unaccusative)
The Syntax of Slavic Aspect

- Slavic prefixes belong to the prepositional category (Gehrke 2008)
- Theme vowels are verbalisers (Svenonius 2004a, Biskup 2009)
- I abstract away from the position of Voice and verbal arguments
Prefixes and Asp

- **Question 1**: How do prefixes license [PFV]?
- **Question 2**: How do prefixes condition the realisation of [IPFV] as AJ/YWA?

prefixes license perfective aspect

prefixes condition the realisation of [IPFV]
Proposal: Slavic Prefixes are Clitics

- I assume that $v$ and $p$ are phase heads
- The merger of $v$ triggers the spell-out of all phases embedded in its complement
- The spell-out of $p$ fails because $p$ is a clitic which must adjoin to a host
- In order to prevent the derivation from crashing, $p$ evacuates to the phase edge
- N.B. The hypothesis that categorial heads are phases is an integral part of DM (cf. Marantz 2007, Newell 2008, Embick 2010)
Proposal: Slavic Prefixes are Clitics

- **Slavic prefixes are min/max constituents in terms of Bare Phrase Structure** (Chomsky 1994)

- Hence, the movement of \( p_{min/max} \) to \( vP \) is an instance of phrasal movement

- At the same time, \( p_{min/max} \) may function as a head in its derived position

- I propose that \( p_{min/max} \) counts as an intervening head for the purposes of spanning insertion (Svenonius 2012)
Spanning

- Lexical items are inserted into spans (=contiguous sequences of heads) (Abels & Muriungi 2008, Svenonius 2012, Merchant 2015)

- This tree comprises the following spans:
  - $\langle F_1 \rangle, \langle F_2 \rangle, \langle F_3 \rangle$
  - $\langle F_1, F_2 \rangle, \langle F_2, F_3 \rangle$
  - $\langle F_1, F_2, F_3 \rangle$

- Specifiers don’t count...
  - ...except for min/max specifiers!
Other Principles

- **Superset Principle** (cf. Caha 2009)
  A lexical item of the form \( \text{Exp} \leftrightarrow S \) is insertable into any subspan of \( S \)

- **Exhaustive Lexicalisation** (Fábregas 2007)
  Every syntactic feature must be lexicalised

- **Minimise Exponence** (adapted from Siddiqi 2006, 2009)
  Use as few morphemes as possible to lexicalise all syntactic features
The Morphosyntax of Slavic Aspect

Lexical items:
- **theme** ⇔ ⟨v, IPFV⟩
- **SI** ⇔ ⟨IPFV⟩
- **prefix** ⇔ ⟨p, PFV⟩

Proposal
- theme vowels and prefixes are specified for aspectual features
- \( p^{\text{min/max}} \) counts as an intervening head for the purposes of spanning
Bare Imperfectives

(16) a. bud-owa-ć
   build-TH-INF

b. *bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć
   build-TH-SI-INF

- (16a) wins by Minimise Exponence
Secondary Imperfectives

(17)  **roz-bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć**

apart-build-TH-SI-INF

- \(\langle v, \text{IPFV}\rangle\) is not a span in this tree
- the theme shrinks to \(\langle v\rangle\) in accordance with the Superset Principle
- the SI suffix is inserted into \(\langle \text{IPFV}\rangle\) to satisfy Exhaustive Lexicalisation
Prefixed Perfectives

(18) roz-bud-owa-ć^p
apart-build-TH-INF

- ⟨p, PFV⟩ is a span in this tree
- prefixes license [PFV] simply by lexicalising this feature, thus satisfying Exhaustive Lexicalisation
Recap

(19) a. bud-ow(a)-ć́
build-TH-INF

b. roz-bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć́
apart-build-TH-SI-INF

c. roz-bud-owa-ć́
apart-build-TH-INF

\[\text{theme} \Leftrightarrow \langle v, \text{IPFV} \rangle\]
\[\text{SI} \Leftrightarrow \langle \text{IPFV} \rangle\]
\[\text{prefix} \Leftrightarrow \langle p, \text{PFV} \rangle\]
Extension to Semelfactives

- Semelfactive verbs are derived by means of the suffix NĄ
- They pattern as perfective in the standard aspectual diagnostics

\[(20)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{kop-a-ć}^1 & \text{b. } & \text{kop-ną-ć}^p \\
& \text{kick-TH-INF} & & \text{kick-SML-INF} \\
& \text{‘to kick’} & & \text{‘to kick once’}
\end{align*}
\]

- Crucially, the semelfactive suffix NĄ is in complementary distribution with theme vowels (21a) and with AJ/YWA (21b)

\[(21)\]
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{*kop-a-ną-ć} & \text{b. } & \text{*kop-n(ą)-ywa-ć} \\
& \text{kick-TH-SML-INF} & & \text{kick-SML-INF-INF}
\end{align*}
\]
**Extension to Semelfactives**

(22) a. \( \text{kop-}n\dot{a}\dot{c}^{\text{P}} \)
- kick-SML-INF
  - ‘to kick once’

b. \( *\text{kop-}a\text{-}n\dot{a}\dot{c} \)
- kick-TH-SML-INF

- **Lexical item**
  - \( \text{N}\dot{a} \leftrightarrow (\text{v}, \text{SML}) \)

- (22a) wins by Minimise Exponence
Extension to Semelfactives

(23) a. kop-a-ć
    kick-TH-INF
    ‘to kick’

b. *kop-n(a)-ywa-ć
    kick-SML-SI-INF

• (23a) wins by Minimise Exponence
The SI suffix does not select for resultativity or perfectivity

Instead, it is inserted into [IPFV] in the context of an internal prefix

Slavic prefixes are $p_{\text{min}/\text{max}}$ clitics which adjoin to the edge of the vP phase

$p_{\text{min}/\text{max}}$ counts as an intervening head for the purposes of spanning insertion

A combination of the Superset Principle, Minimise Exponence and Exhaustive Lexicalisation suffice to derive all and only the attested stems
References


• Bošković, Ž. (2005). On the locality of left branch extraction and the structure of NP. *Studia Linguistica* 59(1).


References