Abstracts and titles

Aarts, Bas (University College London)

Categorial and functional fusions in English

Baydimirova, Anna

Russian passive morphology: a fuzzy category

0. Introduction. In most studies passive is considered as one of the most complex issues in Russian, and in this sense, as some linguists claim, it can be compared only with aspect. The complexity of passive is evident in the empirical data that defy description via strict rules. First I want to show some problematic data and than discuss how it can be explained via historical background of this category.

1. Passive & Aspect interaction. Russian imperfective verbs generally form a reflexive passive with post-inflectional affix (postfix) -sja ‘self’ (1), while perfective verbs form a participial be-passive by attaching a suffix –t or -n, (2). These forms express an aspectual difference: the -sja passive emphasizes a process while participial passive expresses the result: (1) Dom stroitsja. ‘The house is being built’.

(2) Dom uzhe postoiena. ‘The house has been built’.

However, this general rule is not strict. Some perfective verbs form the reflexive passive, which emphasizes the result:

(3) Ja uveren, ves’ tirazh raskupitsja za nedelju. ‘I’m sure the whole edition will be sold out in a week’.

Some imperfective verbs form the participial passive, which expresses a result state that refers to an action in the past:

(4) Pochemu vy nebrityj? ‘Why are you unshaven?’

(5) Pol ne meten. ‘The floor is not swept’.

(6) Steny davno ne krasheny. ‘The walls are not painted for a long time’.

2. Passive & Transitivity. It has long been thought that there is an inherent connection between passive and transitivity. Ability to passivize is often used as a criterion for transitivity and vice versa. According to the general rule, only transitive1 Russian verbs can passivize. However, many transitive verbs do not passivize, such as

- some verbs of action (e.g. minovat’ ‘to pass’),
- some verbs that denote mental activity (e.g. znat’ ‘to know’),
- the verbs with prefix po- that denote an action limited in time (e.g. polechit’ ‘treat for some time’, pochitat’ ‘read for a while’), etc.

At the same time, some intransitive verbs do passivize:

- some verbs that semantically imply an object but mark it not with the accusative case e.g. otomstit’ + Dat. ‘to avenge smbd’ – otomshen (participial passive)
- some intransitive verbs:

(7) Skol’ko raz bylo shozheno v kino, jezheno na katere! (often occurs in fiction) literally: ‘How many times it was gone to the theater, it was sailed in a boat!’

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1 A transitive verb in Russian is traditionally defined as a verb followed by an object in the accusative case.
(8) U nego uehano (very productive construction in the North Russian Dialects) literally: ‘He has it gone away’ which means ‘He has gone’

3. Ambiguity of passivizing suffixes. Some words that in modern Russian are adjectives have originally the same suffixes that are used to convert active verb into passive. They show semantic ambiguity.

- n-: hmelnoy chelovek – ‘a drunk man’; hmelnoye vino – ‘the wine that makes you drunk’
- m-: cel i nevredim – ‘not damaged’; vredimaya zmeya, trava (in the Pskov variety of Russian) – ‘causing damage, able to hurt you’ (about a snake or grass)

4. Passive forms turn into adjectives. It is often claimed that passive forms with stative aspectual reading should be excluded from the passive category for they express the state of the subject rather than the external cause of the state:

(9) Etot dom postroen iz kirpicha (stative) ‘The house is built of bricks’
(10) Etot dom postroen p’at’ let nazad (passive) ‘The house was built five years ago’.

It is claimed that in a clause expressing the stative aspect, the passive participle loses its verbal characteristics and turns into an adjective. However, it is often difficult to measure the extent of “stativeness”.

5. Historical background of Passive.

The morphological fuzziness of the Russian passive can be partly explained as a result of its late and not fully-completed grammaticalization. Under grammaticalization here I understand a historical process of specialization of certain linguistic elements for expressing passive. Modern passive participles come from deverbalized adjectives which originally were indifferent to any of verbal categories (aspect, transitivity, etc.). Later they entered a verbal paradigm and adopted some verbal properties.

Modern Russian shows traces of different stages of grammaticalization that the category of passive has undergone. The ambiguous adjectives like hmelnoy or nevredimyj can be considered as the remains of the early stage when the suffixes -n- and -m- were not yet specialized for passive.

The passive participles derived from intransitive verbs also used to be very common on the early stages and can be easily found in manuscripts. They gradually decreased in number as the verbal argument structure was getting more stable and the accusative case was turning to be the main marker of a direct object. Some passive participles of intransitive verbs (like otomshen) still remain in Russian as fossils of the previous epochs of its history.

Alm-Arvius, Christina (Stockholm University)

Overlaps between categories of prefabricated elements: from idioms to grammatical inflections

It is now generally recognised that there is no clear boundary between lexical and grammatical phenomena in human languages, and an overview of the characteristics of different types of prefabricated elements, or linguistic signs, in English can illustrate this. Quite generally speaking, such a construct in a language system is made up of a conventional connection between a form, or a set of forms, and a meaning.

Lexicalised items resulting from various types of word formation, including the creation of root morphemes, constitute the dominating and prototypical sub-category within the whole category of vocabulary elements, but idioms can also be considered lexical items. The difference between lexical words and idioms is that while the former have an internal morphological structure, as they consist of one or more morphemes, idioms have an internal syntactic or syntagmatic structure. All the same, it is sometimes difficult for instance to determine whether a particular combination of free morphemes should be categorised as a
compound or as an idiom, and the reason for this can be to do with the formal construction of such an element as well as with its meaning. Not surprisingly, this fuzzy boundary between the category of lexical words, and in particular its sub-category of compounds, and that of idioms is reflected in dictionaries of various kinds.

Similarly, there are no clear boundaries between some types of word formation, between some types of morphemes, or between some cases of word formation and the construction of grammatical forms of lexical items. This does not mean that there are no categorial distinctions of these kinds. They certainly seem to be empirically valid, but at the same time it is clear that the relation between categories that both differ as regards certain analytical criteria and, also, share certain characteristics will be continuous rather than discrete.

A number of analytical dimensions can thus be applied when categorising prefabricated language elements. The distinction between having an internal syntactic structure and an internal morphological structure has already been mentioned. We can also distinguish between free and bound morphemes, between lexical and grammatical morphemes, and between productive and non-productive formation processes. None of these appear to be binary, discrete oppositions. However, using these contrastive criteria, a number of categories of prefabricated elements can be identified. They will each be constructed around prototypical instances, but they will also intersect in various ways.

In this talk the defining characteristics of idioms, lexical words, grammatical words, combining forms, lexical affixes, and grammatical inflections – and their sub-categories – will be described and exemplified. The non-discreteness of categories will also be illustrated by means of examples and patterns that exhibit and merge features of more than one of them.

Berge, Sigbjørn L. (University of Agder)

The English verb suffix -s: a fuzzy grammatical marker

What exactly is the grammatical identity of the verb inflectional suffix -s in present-day English? In comparison with its Norwegian counterpart -r, which is a straightforward present tense inflection, the English -s (in standard usage) is a fuzzy grammatical marker. It is described as both a tense marker and an agreement marker of person and number. The standard view seems to be that the English -s is a cumulative exponent of present tense, singular number and 3rd person. Sometimes indicative mood is included as part of the description. This last point will account for the missing -s in those cases of present subjunctives that remain in the language. The indicative mood feature may also account for the missing -s in the modal auxiliaries, if we develop an analysis of the English modals as grammaticalized mood auxiliaries. I intend to propose an analysis of the verb suffix -s which will account for its presence as well as its absence in present subjunctives and modal auxiliaries and show how the relevant features of tense, number, person and mood can be integrated in a logically coherent representation. More specifically, the idea is that the suffix -s is a marker of indicative mood and that the modals in present-day standard English have adopted a grammatical feature [Mood: -indicative] in their lexicon representation. It will also be argued that this representation has diachronic plausibility since person agreement has been relevant only in the indicative mood since at least Old English times. The fuzziness of the verb suffix -s, it will be argued, can be ascribed to the vagueness of indicative mood, which appears to be the central feature of this grammatical marker.
Conzett, Philipp (University of Tromsø)

The nature of nominal classification: the case of grammatical gender

According to Corbett (1991:1) “[g]ender is the most puzzling of the grammatical categories”. Leiss (2000) argues that gender at earlier stages of Indo-European was a fully-fledged grammatical category with categorical content. This means that a noun at this earlier stage of language history could be inflected in gender, and that the different gender variants of one and the same lexeme stem differed in meaning in a systematic manner. Gender in modern languages is, however, most often seen as nothing more than an abstract inherent classificatory feature of nouns that triggers agreement in associated words. A position in between is the view of gender as a device of nominal classification (cf. e.g. Aikhenvald 2003, Grinevald 2000). Accordingly, the assignment of gender has received rather different treatment, ranging from arbitrary listing (e.g. Bloomfield 1933) to rule-based accounts (e.g. Corbett 1991). The intermediate position being either arbitrary nor rule-based (cf. Kilarski & Krynicki 2005).

Departing from this disperse picture, I will address the following questions in my paper: What kind of linguistic category is gender? What is the nature of gender assignment rules, and what are they meant to account for? The empirical focus will be on Indo-European, especially Germanic.

References:

Egorov, Dmitry (Kazan State University)

Transposition vs. homonymy

My talk will be devoted to phenomenon which traditionally is known among Russian linguists as transposition of verb form (cases like Včera idu po ulice i vizhu, where verb forms idu i vizhu are of Present tense while the context tells about past events). The theory of
transposition implies metaphorical use of verb form, what allows making a context more impressive. But is it possible to speak about metaphorical use of grammatical construct (when native speaker learns about their existence only during studying the language in secondary school and what is source here and what is target)? And how is it possible that form bears two contradictory meanings? It seems that the more appropriate definition for such cases can be homonymy since we have two identical forms with different meanings (idu expressing Present tense and idu expressing Past tense in certain conditions). But what is the reason for creating homonyms? It seems to be truth that in some cases of such kind the knowledge of form meaning is really significant and then we have something which looks like metaphor. In other cases it is obvious that speaker “forgets” about the paradigmatic meaning of verb form. We will see what is worthy to be taken into account when we try to find definition for this phenomenon. Also some experiment data will be introduced.

Faarlund, Jan Terje (University of Oslo)

Lexical categories as feature boundaries

Janda, Laura & Tore Nesset (University of Tromsø)

Modeling the Paradigm: Prototypes, Frequency and Relationships of Form

Although inflectional paradigms are a hallmark of our legacy from the classical grammarians of Greece and Rome, there is no agreement in contemporary linguistics about the status of paradigms. Are paradigms epiphenomenal (Halle & Marantz 1993) or a pivotal part of morphological structure (Matthews 1972)? Are paradigms unstructured lists of forms (McCarthy 2005) or structured categories (Bybee 1985)? In this paper, we show that cognitive linguistics can account for paradigms as radial categories, yielding predictions that can be tested empirically by means of statistical analysis of corpus data. We demonstrate that Russian verb paradigms display radial category structure.

Our database, which includes 20,000 examples from the Russian National Corpus (http://www.ruscorpora.ru), monitors an ongoing change whereby Russian verbs like kapat’ ‘drip’ replace the unproductive suffix /a/ with the productive /aj/, producing innovative present tense forms like kapaet ‘drips’ that compete with kaplet ‘drips’. The suffix shift change proceeds through the paradigm according to this hierarchy:

Gerund > Imperative > Non-3 present/Active Participle > 3 pl present > 3 sg present

The gerund is most prone to suffix shift, while the 3 sg present most strongly resists language change. In order to test whether the differences between the steps in the hierarchy are statistically significant we performed a logistic regression analysis that accounts for all other significant variables (root final consonant type and individual variation attached to given verbs) and confirms that this hierarchy is statistically robust.

Cognitive linguistics offers an explanatory account of the observed hierarchy in terms of three factors: frequency, conceptual prototypicality and formal relationships. Our research indicates that the first two factors go hand in hand. The forms to the right in the paradigm have higher frequency, so high frequency protects a form against change (Bybee 2001). The forms to the right are also conceptually prototypical verb forms, so prototypical forms resist regularization. An exception is the active participle. Based on frequency and prototypicality we would expect the participle to group with the gerund at the left edge of the hierarchy, but
in actual practice it behaves like finite indicative forms. We propose that this is due to its close formal relationship to the 3 pl present tense: Formal relationships override the effects of frequency and conceptual prototypes.

All the factors are accommodated straightforwardly in cognitive linguistics. Prototype effects are at the heart of radial categorization, the usage-based perspective facilitates the integration of frequency effects, and overriding formal relationships can be accounted for as extension relations and second-order schemas (Nesset 2008). Our study provides a principled account of paradigm structure in Russian verbs and lends support to cognitive linguistics as a theory of morphology.


Laura A. Janda (University of Tromsø)

“Fuzzy Conditions on Allomorphy? The Case of the Russian Semelfactive Verbs”

Allomorphy is traditionally defined in terms of all-or-nothing rules that yield categories with sharp boundaries. According to Bloomfield (1935: Chapters 10 & 13) and Matthews (1974: Chapter V), allomorphs are a group of two (or more) morphemes that have the same function, yet are in complementary distribution. Both conditions are normally interpreted as entailing absolute criteria: “the same function” thus means that the function must be identical, and “complementary distribution” requires that there be no overlap in the environments where the allomorphs are found. Russian semelfactive verbs, however, present a compelling case for allomorphy where the function is nearly (but not perfectly) identical and the distribution is strongly skewed, but does admit some overlap. Semelfactive Perfective verbs with the meaning ‘do X once’ are formed from Imperfectives in Russian either by the suffix *-nu* (as in *čixnut’ ‘sneeze once’ derived from *čixat’ ‘sneeze’) or the prefix *s* (as in *sxirit’ ‘do one clever thing’ derived from *xirit’ ‘be clever’). In an attempt to collect all attested semelfactive verbs in Russian, several dictionaries and grammars of Russian (Isačenko 1960, Švedova et al. 1980, 17 volume Academy Dictionary, Zaliznjak 1980, Zaliznjak & Šmelev 2000) were consulted, along with a native speaker (Anastasia Makarova) and the Russian National Corpus ([www.ruscorpora.ru](http://www.ruscorpora.ru)). The resulting combined database of 400 semelfactive verbs (295 suffixed in *-nu* and 105 prefixed in *s*) gives strong evidence for “fuzzy allomorphy”.

Function: Although scholars do not routinely group the two morphemes together according to function, Isačenko 1960 and Zaliznjak & Šmelev 2000 apply the same term (*odnokratnye *semelfactive*) to both *-nu* and *s* semelfactives, and Janda 2007 provides theoretical grounds for joining the two morphemes into a single category based on the overall aspectual system of Russian. However, there are slight differences in the meaning of at least some of these verbs: the *-nu* semelfactives seem more likely to select a single instance of an action done in a series (like the single sneeze), whereas the *s* semelfactives might refer instead to the only such action a person ever performs and tend to have a negative nuance. There is, however, one verb, *xvastat’ ‘boast’, that can form synonymous semelfactives with
both markers, *xvastnut’* and *sxvastat’* ‘boast once’, and there are five verbs that can combine both markers simultaneously.

Distribution: It turns out that the suffix of the Imperfective base verb is a strong determinant of which semelfactive marker is applied: some base verb suffixes select *-nu* exclusively, some select *s-* exclusively, and those that allow overlap show strong tendencies in one direction. A chi-square analysis of the data yields a value of 259.3 with 5 degrees of freedom. This is an enormous value, with the probability that this distribution could have arisen by chance (p-value) < 2.2e-16. The Cramer’s V calculation of the effect size of this distribution is 0.805, also extremely large. Though one cannot claim a perfect complementary distribution in the case of *-nu* and *s-* statistically we have a distribution that is compellingly robust.

I will present the data in more detail and argue that the case of Russian semelfactive verbs is atypical allomorphy, but allomorphy nonetheless.

Kristin Killie (University of Tromsø)

**Fuzziness in English – *ing***

In this paper I will look at the English *be + -ende* periphrasis (commonly referred to as the progressive, or more neutrally, as the ‘expanded form’) from a historical perspective. I will show that the functions of the construction have been constantly changing throughout its (written) history. In Old English (> c.1100), *be + -ende* could be used in a number of functions, which expressed either aspect/progressivity or subjectivity. Less than half of the attested uses from this period can be characterized as aspectual. By contrast, the periphrasis can be said to have one prototypical function in present-day English, viz. that of expressing progressive aspect, along with two less central functions (referred to as the ‘interpretative progressive’ and the ‘always progressive’). Such a development, I will argue, must necessarily involve a great deal of fuzziness along the way, and is difficult to reconcile with an Aristotelian view of categories.

Kuteva, Tania (Heinrich Heine University, Düsseldorf)

**Complex grammatical categories: implications for linguistic categorization**

Letnes, Ole (University of Agder)

**On epistemic modality and evidentiality**

A great deal of the current literature on evidentiality discusses the differentiation between epistemic modality and evidentiality. Most authors consider epistemic modality and evidentiality as separate phenomena, at least theoretically. According to de Haan (1999: 84), evidentiality “deals with the source of information for the speaker’s utterance”, while epistemic modality “concerns itself with the degree of commitment on the part of the speaker for his or her utterance”.

However, when concrete examples are referred to, challenges often emerge concerning the question where to draw the line between the two phenomena. Not least is the differentiation considered problematic with respect to sentences where inferential evidence is involved, cf. for example *John must be at home, the light is on*. Drawing on the suggestions made by various authors, I will seek to establish some applicable differentiation criteria. A third (and related) category, mirativity,
the „grammatical marking of unexpected information“ (DeLancey 1997: 35), will also be referred to and briefly discussed.

In my contribution, I will discuss the categories in question as they manifest themselves in some Germanic (above all Norwegian, German, English, Swedish and Dutch) as well as in some non-Germanic languages, for example indigenous American languages.

It will also be discussed to what extent one might claim that the difference between the categories is more clear-cut in languages with “real” (i.e. sufficiently grammaticalized) evidentials, as opposed to languages in which evidentiality is expressed by means of lexical elements.

The differentiation between real and unreal evidential markers in itself is, not surprisingly, rather scalar than clear-cut. In current literature on this topic, it is a much disputed question to what extent the Germanic languages possess markers which can be considered adequately grammaticalized to be regarded as evidentials.

For example, most researchers consider the German modal sollen in its quotative usage a real evidential marker, like in Peter soll krank sein (‘Peter is reportedly ill’). However, according to others, e.g. Diewald (2004), quotative sollen (like the corresponding Norwegian and Swedish skulle and Dutch moeten in its hearsay usage) does not count as a real evidential marker. In my paper, I will discuss whether it is appropriate or not to include quotative sollen/skulle in the set of real evidentials.

Literature:


Lokmane, Ilze & Andra Kalnača (University of Latvia)

Reflexive verbs in Moderen Latvian and the category of voice

Investigation of Latvian reflexive verbs proves that they function as a heterogeneous semantically and grammatically unclear group in Latvian. They do not form a pure morphologic category with a specific paradigm, nor do they fully fit into other categories of Latvian verbs (the category of voice, transitivity / intransitivity).

Reflexive verbs are considered as a part of the active voice in Modern Latvian. However, reflexive verbs can express the meanings of three voices: active voice (1), middle voice (2), and passive voice (3).

(1) Es dodos uz laukiem. (“I am going to the country.”)
Historically, reflexive verbs are the part of **active voice – middle voice** opposition. In this binary voice category non-reflexive and reflexive pairs of verbs have the same lexical meaning and different syntactic valence. The non-reflexive verb is always transitive and requires a direct object in the accusative, e.g., *ķemmēt matus* ‘to comb one’s hair’, *ģērbt bērnu* ‘to dress a child’. Reflexive verb denotes the action that results from the subject and reflects back to the same subject, thus the subject of the action is simultaneously the object of the action, e.g., *mazgāties* ‘to wash [oneself]’, *ķemmēties* ‘to comb [one’s] hair’, *ģērbties* ‘to dress [oneself]’.

Transition from **active – middle voice** paradigm to **active – passive voice** paradigm and the development of special passive voice forms in Latvian (*auxiliary verb tikt + past passive participle*, e.g., *nams tiek celts* ‘the house is being built’) have caused the change of the semantic and grammatical status of reflexive verbs. These verbs via grammaticalization and lexicalization have developed the meanings of both active and passive voice. At the same time, a significant part of reflexive verbs have still kept the old middle voice meanings.

It should be stressed also that many reflexive verbs in Latvian are impersonal (i.e., they lack the paradigm of grammatical person and can only be used in the form of the 3rd person singular). The meaning of person is neutralized in the form itself; however, there is a syntactic compensation, as far as these verbs are used together with the experiencer dative (4). Impersonal reflexive verbs expressing modal and aspectual meanings have the infinitive of a lexical verb in the distribution as well (5).

(4) *Viņiem laimējās.* (“They were lucky.”)

(5) *Mums izdevās uzvarēt.* (“We managed to win.”)

From the typological point of view, it is interesting to find both the common traits and the differences between synthetic passive forms (*s-passiv*) and reflexive verbs (*s-verb*) in Norwegian on the one hand, and reflexive verbs in Latvian on the other.

**Lyashevskaya, Olga (University of Tromsø)**

**Topological categorization of body parts in attributive and prepositional constructions**

Image schemas are known as topological structures that organize our visual experience. In terms of spatial relations, the human body serves as a CONTAINER (Lakoff 1987, Johnson 1987), and the same can be said of our head, belly and breast. On the other hand, the (sharp) nose, elbows and shoulders can be generally thought as JUTS (prominent parts), while the forehead and back are presumably regarded as VERTICAL SURFACES.

In order to reveal topological classes of body parts (BPs) in Russian, we have analyzed the use of BP nouns in prepositional, attributive, instrumental and genitive constructions, cf. *na lбу* ‘on the forehead’, *ploskij zhivot* ‘flat belly’, *xvost kol’com* ‘ring tail, lit. tail ring.INS’, *dugi brovej* ‘arcs of eyebrows’. Still, it is not clear whether it is possible to devise a classification satisfactory for all types of contexts. First, different spatial operators evoke their own categorizations, cf. *in the hand* (CONTAINER) and *on the hand* (HORISONTAL SURFACE), and recategorisation seems to be unavoidable. Second, different types of constructions (e.g. prepositional and attributive)
form the borders of categories differently, cf. *v golove ‘in the head’ and *glubokaja golova ‘deep head’.

In the paper we will discuss two possible approaches to the problem, from the point of view prototype theory, and from the positions of Construction Grammar.

Makarova, Anastasia (University of Tromsø)

**Fuzzy perfectivizing prefixes in Russian**

Russian Language is famous for having a complicated aspectual system. There are various views on aspectual system of the Russian language, but all the researchers, regardless of what theory they favour, agree that there are two main groups of verbs: Perfectives and Imperfectives.

One can distinguish between two main types of Perfectives: Natural Perfectives that are pure aspectual pairs for the Imperfective verbs, and other perfectives that not only serve a grammatical purpose of perfectivization, but also add a new semantic component to the verb (Aktionsart).

Different prefixes are associated with different types of Perfectives. The fuzzy thing about these prefixes is that one and the same prefix can serve to form different types of Perfectives not only for different verbs, but even for one and the same verb. Prefixes like za- would mean ‘begin doing something’ in za-kidat ‘start throwing’ or ‘throw something on an object so that it is covered and no longer seen’. The question then is what’s the relation between grammatical and semantic categories in such examples.

In the presentation I will show the mechanism how one prefix can change its functions depending on the stem it is used with.

Martínez, Liliana (NTNU, Norway)

**The varying interpretation of the Bulgarian verb zaobikaljam: a case for minimal lexical specification**

In this talk I present an interesting case in which the interpretation of a verb varies consistently between stasis and motion, depending on the context in which the verb appears. The question is whether for this verb a single core of semantic features can be found, accounting for the unity of all occurrences of the verb as one lexical item, and at the same time accommodating the exhibited interpretation variation.

The literature (e.g., Pustejovsky 1995) seems to converge that the interpretation of a clause is achieved combinatorially, through integrating the meaning of the verb and the various syntactic dependents (subject, direct object, oblique phrases). It has also been demonstrated (Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Weisgerber 2007, Weisgerber in press) that the meaning is not a simple sum of the semantic specifications of the components, but involves also situational context and conceptual knowledge. A case in support of this is the imperfective Bulgarian verb zaobikaljam which encodes a spatial relation where the path is conceptualized as a multitude of points distributed round a Reference Object. The verb can have the following interpretations: (1) ‘surround’ (static reading); (2) ‘surround’ (dynamic reading where the figure moves to positions around the Reference Object; (3) ‘go around/skirt’; and (4) ‘make a detour’ (not take the straightest route between two points). A corpus
study conducted by me in the Spring of 2008 showed that the interpretation of zaobikaljam varies systematically between these four possibilities, depending on the properties of the entity/entities playing the role of Figure in the motion situation.

Interpretation (1), cf. Fig. (1a), arises in case where there is a Figure consisting of multiple individuals or a Figure bigger than the Reference Object or amorphous in structure, so that it can occupy multiple points in space simultaneously in the specified configuration around the outer contour/surface of the Reference object. Interpretation (2), cf. Fig. (1b) arises when there is a Figure consisting of multiple individuals or a multipoint individual capable of autoagentive motion. Interpretations (1) and (2) always appear in a syntactic configuration where the Figure is realized as subject and the Reference Object is realized as direct object. In order to have interpretation (3), cf. Fig. (1c), the Figure must be a point object capable of autoagentive motion. This interpretation appears most often in a syntactic configuration where the Figure and Reference object are realized overtly as subject and direct object, respectively, but the Reference Object can be also left unrealized, to be inferred from the (linguistic or non-linguistic) context. Interpretation (4), cf. Fig. (1d), arises when the Figure, realized as subject, is capable of autoagentive motion, but no Reference Object is overtly specified or understood from the context.

Here I am going to discuss the variation in the interpretation of the temporal properties of the main event described by the verb. In summary, it can be said that interpretations (1) and (2) are static when the points occupied by the Figure in space are concerned (all points being occupied simultaneously, without any development in time), while interpretations (3) and (4) are dynamic (the points being occupied one after the other in a sequential manner). How is it possible to unite two so different temporal values? Do we need to have two (or more, taking into considerations that there are also other differences that need to be captured) separate lexical entries? The answer I favour is that one lexical entry will suffice, in line with the idea put forward in Dimitrova-Vulchanova (2004) that the feature values in lexical entries can be of different types: On the one hand we can have values that are fixed, e.g., that the path specified by zaobikaljam is of the type Distributed, and that it is in a specific relation with a Reference Object (or a default region if a Reference object is not specified). On the other hand, values can be specifiable, i.e. ‘open slots’ which can assume one of a predetermined set of values later, during the process of co-composition of the clause. The question is then, how can a temporal value be assigned during the co-composition process if none of the new elements combining with the verb is of a temporal nature (i.e., the different types of Figure are of the type Thing, not of the type Event)? Since zaobikaljam encodes an event, and each event has to have a temporal structure, it is reasonable to assume that in the cases such a value is missing, it has to be computed online. According Jackendoff’s (1996) theory of Structure-preserving binding, the temporal value of the Event has to be compatible both with the structure of the Figure, and the structure of the Path. Temporal structure must be chosen so that the structure of the Figure added to the situation in the process of co-composition is compatible with the aforehead fixed structure for the Path. Still, this does not solve the problem, in the cases where the Figure consists of multiple point objects capable of
autoagentive motion, interpretations (1), (2) and (3) are equally felicitous. In such cases a broader situation context and conceptual knowledge are necessary to choose the right interpretation, and a solution in lines with the proposal of Dimitrova-Vulchanova & Weisgerber (2007) and Weisgerber (in press) seems to be the right one. Thus, the case of the verb zaobikaljam can be used in support of the theory that the lexicon is built of minimal entries, with value disambiguation happening during and after the co-composition process on the basis not only on semantic information, but also on situational and conceptual knowledge.

References

Ozga, Krzysztof (Jagiellonian University)

Isomorphic and non-isomorphic units of language and a nebulous space in-between.

The concept of isomorphism has its long tradition in various branches of science, mainly in logic and mathematics. It was introduced into linguistic by Jerzy Kuryłowicz and since then it has been used in a number of ways, its extension varying in accordance with different 20th century linguistic paradigms. In this paper I attempt to provide a classification of linguistic entities according to the mathematical definition of isomorphism taking into consideration semantic syntax and communicative grammar methodology. Subsequently, I discuss the issue of subcategorization of arguments in predicate-argument structures (PAS) against their formalizations (PAE) in utterances in the light of the proposed classification.

The crucial question concerning the relation between conceptual and formal level within a language system is the question whether the correspondence between the results of an operation performed on relational concepts (connotation) and the results of an operation performed on their formal exponents depends only on the obligatoriness of elements of a particular linguistic structure or whether it may also depend on the prototypicality of argument formalizations in a given structure. The latter supposition generates a span of fuzziness between isomorphic and non-isomorphic interpretations of the relations. The presented phenomena are illustrated with selected examples of phrases from Russian, Polish and English.
Can second language acquisition (SLA) tell us something about fuzzy categories? The example of Norwegian modal adverbs

The paper discusses how results from SLA-studies might elucidate prototypicality in language, by analyzing what is easily and earlier learned, and what is acquired only on a later stage, if at all. The relationship between language transfer and prototypicality will also be discussed, taking Kellerman’s prototypicality tests into consideration. He sees non-prototypicality as an obstacle to positive transfer from the learner’s L1 (mother tongue), where the prototypic meaning of a cognate is likely to be transferred, while a non-typical, more abstract or metaphorical meaning is less likely to be transferred. For the study, the electronic language learner corpus ASK (The Norwegian Language Learner Corpus) is used. It consists of 1700 learner texts with 10 different language backgrounds and has approximately 700 000 words. It also has a control corpus with texts written by native Norwegians.

The corpus demonstrates a statistically significant difference in frequency between two different types of modal adverbs in L2 (second language) Norwegian compared to the native Norwegian control group. The group of adverbs differing is the so called “particles” (jo, nok, vel), which by some Norwegian scholars are considered to be a separate part of speech, similar to the counterparts of these words in grammars of other languages. For instance, the second most frequent Norwegian modal adverb nok is used six times more often by the control group than in the L2 group with the highest frequency. Also the other “particles” (jo and vel) are more frequent in the control group than among the learners, though indicating some interesting differences according to language background. For the other most frequent modal adverbs (kanskje, sikkert, selvfølgelig) the situation is different; here the difference is small or the frequency is more or less in the middle for the control group compared to the L2 groups, some groups showing higher frequency, but others – lower. Might this difference be due to the non-prototypicality of this subgroup of modal adverb often referred to as “particles”?

On the Interaction between the Categories of Aspect and Modality: A Case Study of the Russian Verbs MOČ’ – SMOČ’

Modal meanings can be expressed by various morphological, syntactic, and lexical categories. Thus, some means of expressing modality are grammaticalized (eg. mood\(^2\), modal affixes (Turkic languages, Greenlandic Eskimo, Dravidian languages), modal verbs), others are lexical, such as, for instance, modal adverbs and adjectives (probably, maybe, etc. [Perkins 1983:89]), modal tags (I think, I guess.), modal particles (Affective is too a word! [De Haan 2005: 47]). In Russian, modality is very much a semantic category rather than a syntactic one and is not as grammaticalized as, for instance, the English system of modal verbs. Russian modals form a diverse morphological and syntactic lot. Since the existence of modal verbs as such is not so obvious for Russian, Russian works on modality mostly considered modal

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\(^2\) “Mood is the grammaticalized expression of modality, just as, say, tense is the grammaticalized expression of time” [De Haan 2005: 38].

In this work we will propose a case study of the verbs \( \text{moč’} \) and \( \text{smoč’} \), which, basically, are the only modal verbs in Russian. Being part of the Russian verbal system, they are marked by the grammatical category of aspect: \( \text{moč’} \) is imperfective and \( \text{smoč’} \) is perfective. This peculiar Slavic feature sets forth a few questions: first, does Slavic aspect have any effect on the modal meaning, and second, does the category of Slavic aspect interact with the category of modality?

The fact that the majority of Russian verbs can be represented via two aspectual forms in some cases helps to solve lexical ambiguity of the modal. Two factors are relevant here: the aspectual type of the modal itself and of its verbal complement and the verbal class of the complement. As far as aspectual types are concerned, we can have four possibilities:

1. IMP MOD + IMP INF (both verbs are imperfective)

\[
(1) \quad \text{Ona mogla emu zvonit’}
\]

'she NOM can IMP PAST SgFem he Dat call IMP INF

'She could have called him';

2. IMP MOD + PF INF (the modal is imperfective and the complement is perfective)

\[
(2) \quad \text{Ona mogla emu pozvonit’ (no ne pozvonila)}
\]

'she NOM can IMP PAST SgFem he Dat call PF INF

'She could have called him' (but she didn’t);

3. PF MOD + IMP INF (the modal is perfective and the complement is imperfective)

\[
(3) \quad \text{Ona smogla emu zvonit’ (každyj den’)}
\]

'she NOM can PF PAST SgFem he Dat call IMP INF

'She was able to call him' (every day);

4. PF MOD + PF INF (both verbs are perfective)

\[
(4) \quad \text{Ona smogla emu pozvonit’}
\]

'she NOM can PF PAST SgFem he Dat call PF INF

'She was able to call him' (one time).

The above constructions interact with verbal classes of the complement. However, we should emphasize that Vendler’s classification of verbs, i.e. distinguishing between states, activities, accomplishments, and achievements [Vendler 1957], cannot be fully applied to Russian verbs (this fact was already explicated in some works devoted to Russian aspectology, see [Gladney 1990, Padučeva 2004]). In this study we will distinguish between three verbal classes: states, activities/accomplishments, achievements. ‘States’ usually refer to a state or a lasting process which is not supposed to have any result. Thus, usually they do not have perfective counterparts (\( \text{l’ubit’} ‘\text{love’}, \text{nenavidet’} ‘\text{hate’, } \text{znat’} ‘\text{know’} \)). ‘Activities/accomplishments’ basically introduce a group of actions that can be presented as a process which is supposed to come to a final point, i.e. resultative verbs (activities are IMP and accomplishments are PF). Quite often these are verbs that take a directive object or presuppose it (\( \text{pisat’} \text{ pis’mo} \) (IMP) ‘write a letter’ – \( \text{napisat’} \text{ pis’mo} \) (PF); \( \text{tancevat’} ‘\text{dance’ – stancevat’ ‘dance one particular dance’} \)). Finally, ‘achievements’ refer to actions which cannot be presented as processes but rather denote a set of repeated actions so that every time some kind of completion is reached (\( \text{polučat pisma} \) (IMP) ‘receive letters’ – \( \text{polučit’} \text{ pis’mo/pis’ma} ‘receive a letter/letters’ (PF)).

Relying on the data from the Russian National Corpus, we will propose an analysis of all four constructions with the three main verbal types in the present, future and past tenses. Some of
the conclusions are as follows:

- The verb *moč’* has no future tense and the verb *smoč’* no present tense. Thus, in certain contexts they are elements of one modal paradigm, i.e. in the contexts with alertic (and sometimes also deontic) meaning. It is in these contexts that *moč’* and *smoč’* are close to being an aspectual pair. Only *smoč’* has a complete tense paradigm (past – present – future) and is basically close to a lexical verb.

- In the present tense contexts, the verb *moč’* usually has an epistemic reading together with a state complement (*Ty ponimes', čto Natalija možet znat' čto-to očen' važnoe dl'a nas?* ‘Do you understand that Natalia may know something very important for us?’), and is more often used in a deontic meaning together with perfective activities/accomplishments (*Každyj četverg v dorogom zavedenii Golden Palace l'uboj želajuščij možet spet' vmeste so zvezdoj ‘Everybody who is willing may sing together with a star every Thursday, in an expensive place Golden Palace’

- Constructions 3 and 4 refer to alertic contexts only, and the main difference between them is accounted for by the difference in the semantics of the PF and IMP aspect of the complement, i.e. they either refer to something done once or to a repeated action.

- The most complicated system is offered by the past contexts where both *moč’* and *smoč’* can be used. Constructions with state compliments are limited to epistemic readings (*I nakonec, Fok mog čuvstvovat' dopolnit'nuju otvetstvennost' ot togo, čto A.D. Aleksandrov sčital seb' ego učenikom ‘And finally, Fok could have felt additional responsibility because of the fact that A.D. Alexandrov considered himself to be his pupil’*), constructions with activities/accomplishments have counterfactual reading in IMP MOD + PF INF contexts (*A ved' ja mog pozvonit' Malickomu i predupredit' ob opasnosti ešče nočju! ‘Yet, I could have called Malickij and warned him about the danger during the night!’*) and epistemic reading in IMP MOD + IMP INF contexts (*Vsegda predstavl'aju, kto zdes' mog pet' kogda-to ili sidet' v etom zale 'I always imagine who could have sung here once or could have sat in this hall’*) (see Tables 1-3).

Thus, Russian verbs *moč’* and *smoč’* are an interesting example of the correlation between lexical and modal verbs. There is still a lot to be done in order to estimate the relation between verbal and aspectual classes, on the one hand, and between modal and lexical verbs, on the other. Further analysis of the verbs *moč’* and *smoč’* can give a deeper insight into the studies on modality, aspectology and gradience.

References


Swan, Toril (University of Tromsø)

Adverbial categories
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Table 1. Past tense constructions with activities/accomplishments

1 Obikaljam forms an aspectual pair with the perfective verb which has only interpretations (3) and (4). Here I discuss only the imperfective verb, though the lack of interpretations (1) and (2) in its perfective counterpart can
be explained with a greater degree of specification of the verb’s temporal structure, thus constraining more the ‘semantic luggage’ with verb enters the clause.

Footnote: For the distinction Distributed – Directed cf. Nikanne 1990, but also Kray et al. 2001, Zwarts 2006 for the same distinction described with different terms.