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Summary of a series of papers “Suffixal imperfectivization as an inflection mechanism of Russian verb Aspect formation”

There is a crosscutting theme in the proposed series of papers. It is the characterization of the category of Russian verb Aspect in the framework of the well-known typology of grammatical categories: inflectional vs. classifying. This is a very important question for the grammatical theory and for the typologically oriented aspectology.

The paper (Gorbova 2014) investigates the secondary imperfectivization of the Russian verb in some of its unconventional (=non-standard) uses, employing three data source types: linguistic experimenting, the Russian National Corpus and two Internet search systems, Google and Yandex. In this connection some problems relating to the (biimperfectival) aspectual triplex, as well as the more general issue of the appropriateness of an inflectional or derivational interpretation of the nature of Russian verb aspect are discussed. The arguments in favor of the inflectional nature of the Russian verb aspect are these: the occurrence of “unconventional” secondary imperfectives of the *razbuzhivat'* type in speech and a concept of a formant perfectivator for aspectual pairs still retaining prefixes, such as *lgat' ~ solgat'* ‘to lie’.

The article (Gorbova 2015) discusses the relevance of the verb classifier hypothesis and the multiple prefixation theory with the tertiary imperfectivization constraint for the theory of Russian aspect. An alternative view on the structure of the grammatical aspectual domain in Russian is offered on the basis of these assertions, as well as diachronic corpus research of secondary imperfectivization and a discussion of aspectual-semantic (actional) properties of primary and secondary imperfectives. The structure is viewed as composed of two parallel mechanisms: derivational prefixal perfectivization and inflectional suffixal (secondary) imperfectivization.

The paper (Gorbova 2017) deals with some “sore points” of Russian aspectology recently formulated by Victor Khrakovskij, especially with the problem of characterization of the Russian aspect as classifying vs. inflectional category and the regularity of suffixed imperfectivization. In addition, an alternative treatment of verbal aspect in Russian as an interaction of several distinct categories (a set of aspectual quasigramemes) is discussed.

This series of papers poses a challenging research problem: to study the suffixal imperfectivization of prefixed perfective Russian verbs (*podpisat'* – ^{OK}*podpisyvat'*, *napisat'* – [?]*napisyvat'*) in modern Russian using not only dictionary data but also other sources such as the Russian National Corpus and Russian Internet (via search engines Yandex and Google). This problem is relevant for Linguistics and has scientific novelty. The relevance of such study follows from the theoretical significance of the missing now data on the regularity of suffixal imperfectivization realized in Russian spoken language against the background of the discussion about the theoretical model of Russian verb Aspect, i.e. whether it should be considered an inflectional or a derivational (classifying) category. The scientific novelty is due to the fact that now the Russian linguistic does have no data on the real prevalence of this process. A large-scale study of suffixal imperfectivization, the object of which must be all the Russian prefixed (with one prefix) verbs, will fill this gap both in the description of Aspect formation and in the theoretical modeling of the Russian verb Aspect.