

On Perfective States in Polish

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Abstract

The topic of the talk will be the aspectual classification of perfective stative verbs in Polish. Slavic makes use of a quite productive mechanism of prefixation to derive perfective verb forms. However, the status of prefixes is still debatable in relating their contribution either to lexical aspect (e.g. Slabakova 2005) or grammatical aspect (e.g. Borik, (2002), Smith (1991)).

- (1) Janek *wy*-pracował premię.
Janek work-*Perf* incentive
'Janek has earned an incentive'
- (2) Janek *po*-pracował w biurze i wcześniej wyszedł do domu.
Janek work-*Perf* in office and earlier went-*Perf* to home
'Janek worked in the office for a while and left home earlier'
- (3) Zosia *po*-szła na spacer do parku.
Zosia go-*Perf* on walk to park
'Zosia went for a walk into the park'

Looking at the examples above, both camps seem to have good arguments for their views, as in (1) the prefix clearly affects the lexical aspect of the verb and in (2) only its temporal frame. However, the fact that single prefixes can get more than one classification, as in (2) and (3) is problematic for such a strong division. Because of that we are going to relate to accounts that provide a unified treatment of prefixes (e.g., Braginsky (2008), Kagan (2016)) and the compositional nature of the prefix-verb structure. Most of the literature is on prefixation of dynamic verbs (i.e. activities, achievements, accomplishments) but the area of stative verbs is much less defined.

- (4) Janek *po*-znał swoją nową dziewczynę w szkole.
Janek know-*Perf* his new girlfriend in school
'Janek got to know his new girlfriend at school'

We are going to look into this type of verbs, as in (4) for example, with the belief that the investigation of perfective states sheds additional light on the debate on prefixation in Polish and Slavic in more general. We will show that perfective stative verbs require a different treatment from perfective dynamic verbs. However, the distribution of prefixes in their domain is predictable once we investigate it from the perspective of their event structure properties. This account points to an analysis involving no predicate complexity, in contrast to Rothmayr (2009). In relation to the above issues we are going to address the following topics:

- Prefix types
- Syncretism of form
- Compositional interpretation of prefixed verbs
- The limited distribution of prefix types
- The correlation between lexical aspectual type and prefix classification

- The aspectual classification of perfective states
- The event structure of perfective states

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