

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

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As is well known, the secondary imperfective suffix YWA attaches to prefixed stems (1d) to the exclusion of bare ones (1b). The question is: *What determines this distribution?* I assume that all word formation is syntactic, and that theme vowels realise the verbalising functional head *v* (Svenonius 2004a, Biskup 2019). All examples in this abstract are from Polish.

- (1) a. bud-owa-∅-ć^I b. *bud-ow(a)-ywa-ć c. roz-bud-owa-∅-ć^P d. roz-bud-ow-ywa-ć^I
build-*v*-Asp-INF build-*v*-YWA-INF apart-build-*v*-Asp-INF apart-build-*v*-YWA-INF

At first glance, the distribution of YWA could be sensitive to: i) resultativity, ii) telicity, or iii) prefixation. According to (i)-(ii), YWA is some kind of semantic operator, which maps resultative/telic stems to imperfective aspect. According to (iii), the alternation between ∅ in bare imperfectives (1a) and YWA in secondary imperfectives (1d) is morphophonological in nature. I first provide arguments against (i)-(ii), then present an analysis consistent with (iii).

Starting with (i), the idea that YWA ‘selects for’ result states is found in Ramchand (2008) and Tatevosov (2015). The problem with this view is that many bare imperfectives pass the standard tests for resultativity while rejecting suffixation with YWA. Consider the habitual construction in (2), which admits the restitutive modifier *z powrotem* and a result-oriented durative adverbial. I conclude that bare imperfectives may introduce result states in iterative, generic and habitual contexts, and that YWA does not track the presence of results in the syntax and/or semantics.

- (2) Kiedy żołnierze zasypiali^I, kapitan {z powrotem} ich budził^I {na kilka minut }.
When soldiers fell asleep, captain back again them wake for several minutes
‘Whenever the soldiers fell asleep, the captain would wake them up {again / for a few minutes}.’

The same logic militates against the idea that YWA attaches only to telic predicates (ii) (*pace* Bohnemeyer & Swift 2004). Examples like (3) show that bare imperfectives may denote telic predicates in the scope of an imperfective operator. Yet they cannot be suffixed with YWA.

- (3) Tomek zwykle prasuje^I *(tę koszulę) w niecałe dziesięć minut.
Tomek usually irons this shirt in almost ten minutes
‘Tomek usually irons *(this shirt) in less than ten minutes.’

In this work, I propose that YWA is a special exponent of imperfective aspect, whose insertion into Asp[IPFV] is contingent on the presence of a prefix (iii). Specifically, I adopt a framework in which lexical items compete for insertion into syntactic structures after spellout, in accordance with the main tenets of Distributed Morphology and Nanosyntax. I further assume that the input to lexical insertion is along the lines of (4), with Asp encoding the binary opposition between [PFV] and [IPFV] (Schoorlemmer 1995) and lexical prefixes introducing a prepositional small clause in the complement of the root (Svenonius 2004b, Gehrke 2008).

- (4) [VoiceP DP_{EXT} [Voice' Voice [AspP (I)PFV [_vP P_{clitic} [_vP *v* [_√P √ [PP DP_{FIGURE} [P' P_{clitic} PRO_{GROUND}]

Slavic prefixes are analysed as prepositional clitics, which adjoin to *v*P in the syntax. Unlike Svenonius (2004b), who argues that prefixes raise to AspP to perfectivise the clause, I propose that prefix movement is driven by PF-interpretable features. The motivation for this comes from prepositions, which cliticise to APs in Left-Branch Extraction (5) (Borsley & Jaworska 1988, Bošković 2005). Crucially, P + *wh*-phrase do not form a constituent prior to cliticisation.

- (5) Do którego Maria poszła do którego kina?
to which.GEN Mary went to which.GEN cinema.GEN

Since prefixes and prepositions are both P elements, I conclude that prefixes should also be analysed as clitics. This means that the base-merged P in (4) needs a host to lean on. On the plausible assumption that roots are incapable of hosting a clitic (because they do not correspond to a minimal word in the syntax/prosody), *vP* is the closest landing site available to the prefix. Alternatively, *v* is a phase head, in which case the clitic evacuates to the edge of the phase because it cannot spell out in its original position (Marantz 2001, Newell 2008, Embick 2010). The *vP*-adjoined position of prefixes in (4) allows us to explain the distribution of YWA in (1) in terms of hierarchical intervention. To make this analysis explicit, I adopt a model of lexical insertion which makes use of spanning (6) (Abels & Muriungi 2008, Svenonius 2012, Merchant 2015) and the superset principle (7) (Caha 2009, Wyngaerd 2018).

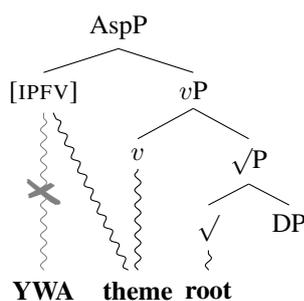
- (6) Lexical items are inserted into *spans* (i.e. contiguous sequences of heads)
 (7) A lexical item of the form Exp(onent) \Leftrightarrow S(span) is insertable into any subspan of S

According to the lexical entries in (8), Slavic prefixes license perfectivity by spelling out the feature [PFV]. Conversely, bare stems are imperfective because nothing lexicalises [PFV] in the absence of a prefix, violating the requirement of Exhaustive Lexicalisation (Fábregas 2007).

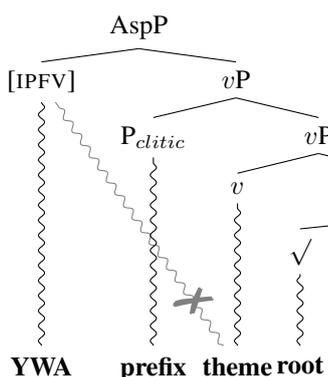
- (8) a. **prefix** \Leftrightarrow \langle PFV, P \rangle b. **theme** \Leftrightarrow \langle IPFV, *v* \rangle c. **YWA** \Leftrightarrow \langle IPFV \rangle

In the case of bare imperfectives, the process of lexical insertion looks as in (A), with theme vowels spanning both [IPFV] and *v*. While YWA is also eligible for insertion into [IPFV], forms like **bud-ow-ywa-ć* are ruled out by the economy principle Minimise Exponence: *use as few morphemes as possible* (Siddiqi 2009). Compare this with the structure of secondary imperfectives in (B), where the *vP*-adjoined prefix intervenes between [IPFV] and *v* hierarchically. If spans are defined as contiguous sequences of heads, then \langle IPFV, *v* \rangle is no longer a span in this tree. This brings about the insertion of YWA into [IPFV] and the shrinking of the theme vowel to \langle *v* \rangle in accordance with the superset principle. The prefix also shrinks to \langle P \rangle in the absence of [PFV] in this structure, but it lexicalises the entire span \langle PFV, P \rangle in perfective clauses (C).

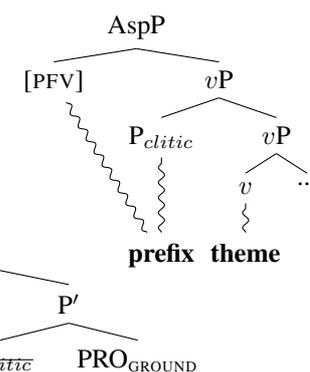
A. Bare Imperfectives



B. Secondary Imperfectives



C. Prefixed Perfectives



The present analysis can be extended to semelfactives like *kop-na-ć^P* ‘to give a kick’, which come out as perfective in the standard aspectual diagnostics. I propose that *-na* \Leftrightarrow \langle PFV_{semel}, *v* \rangle in (9a). Crucially, YWA never attaches to semelfactive stems, cf. **kop-n-ywa-ć* (see also Markman 2008). I derive this from Minimise Exponence: the bare imperfective form *kop-a-ć¹* contains fewer morphemes while also lexicalising *v* and [IPFV], as illustrated in (9b) vs. (9c).

- (9) a. $\underbrace{[\text{PFV}_{\text{semel}} [v \ \checkmark]]}_{\text{NA}} \quad \underbrace{[\checkmark]}_{\text{root}}$ b. * $\underbrace{[\text{IPFV} [v \ \checkmark]]}_{\text{YWA}} \quad \underbrace{[v \ \checkmark]}_{\text{NA}} \quad \underbrace{[\checkmark]}_{\text{root}}$ c. $\underbrace{[\text{IPFV} [v \ \checkmark]]}_{\text{theme}} \quad \underbrace{[\checkmark]}_{\text{root}}$

Abels, K. & P. Muriungi (2008). The focus particle in Kĩtharaka: syntax and semantics. *Lingua* 118. **Borsley, D. & E. Jaworska (1988).** A note on prepositions and case marking in Polish. *LI* 19(4). **Bošković, Ž. (2005).** On the locality of left branch extraction and the structure of NP. *Studia Linguistica* 59(1). **Caha, P. (2009).** *The Nanosyntax of Case*. Ph.D. dissertation. **Siddiqi, D. (2009).** *Syntax Within the Word*. John Benjamins. **Svenonius, P. (2004a).** Slavic prefixes and morphology. *Nordlyd*, 32(2). **Svenonius, P. (2004b).** Slavic prefixes inside and outside VP. *Nordlyd*, 32(2). **Svenonius, P. (2012).** Spanning. Ms. **Ramchand, G. (2008).** Perfectivity as aspectual definiteness: time and the event in Russian. *Lingua* 118(11). **Marantz, A. (2007).** *Phases and words*. **Markman, V. (2008.)** On Slavic semelfactives and secondary imperfectives: implications for the split 'AspP'. *UPenn Working Papers in Linguistics* 14(1). **Newell, H. (2008).** *Aspects of the morphology and phonology of phases*.