



Verbal Aspect and the Referential Status of Verbal Predicates: On Aspect Usage in Russian Who-Questions

Author(s): Hans Robert Mehlig

Source: *Journal of Slavic Linguistics*, Vol. 9, No. 1 (winter—spring 2001), pp. 99–125

Published by: Slavica Publishers

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/24599626>

Accessed: 26-10-2016 17:52 UTC

JSTOR is a not-for-profit service that helps scholars, researchers, and students discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content in a trusted digital archive. We use information technology and tools to increase productivity and facilitate new forms of scholarship. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of the Terms & Conditions of Use, available at <http://about.jstor.org/terms>



Slavica Publishers is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *Journal of Slavic Linguistics*

Verbal Aspect and the Referential Status of Verbal Predicates: On Aspect Usage in Russian *Who*-Questions

Hans Robert Mehlig

Abstract. Verbal predicates denoting situations which are located not simultaneously but retrospectively in time with respect to an absolute or relative “present” allow two fundamentally different interpretations: an actual one and a non-actual one. Each of the two possible interpretations is based on a different conceptual level. In the actual interpretation, a predicate refers to one or more concrete situations occupying a well-defined place in time and space; in the non-actual interpretation the predicate refers to the “type” of situation and thus to situations that are potentially locatable in time, but not related concretely on the time axis. This distinction between actuality and non-actuality—between reference to one or more “tokens” of a situation and reference to the type of the situation—is of primary importance for the category of aspect in Russian. Verbal predicates referring to actual situations can be presented from different perspectives by means of different aspectual forms—they allow a situation to be presented from an internal or an external perspective. In contrast, predicates interpreted non-actually involve a neutralization of the aspect opposition. In the latter case, only the imperfective aspect is acceptable and has no aspectual function, but functions merely as the aspectual genus proximum. This article shows that the distinction between actual and non-actual reference—between token- and type-reference—is also relevant for aspect usage in *Who*-questions.

0. Introduction

All analyses of aspect usage in *Who*-questions (a very insightful survey of which is to be found in Israeli 1996) agree that aspect usage is determined not only by the semantics of the verbal situation itself, but also by communicative and textual factors. Forsyth (1970: 88) explains the relevance of textual factors for the choice of aspect in *Who*-questions through a comparison of the following examples:

- (1) Kto **podavil**^p vse vosstanija rabočix? Ja!
'Who **suppressed** all the workers' uprisings? I [did]!'
- (2) Kto **podavljaj**ⁱ vosstanie rabočix? Vy? Ja!
'Who **suppressed** the uprising? You? I [did]!'

These questions are asked by one and the same speaker at different places in the text. Both cases involve a situation that has previously been mentioned in the discourse and is therefore already known to the hearer.

Journal of Slavic Linguistics 9(1): 99–125, 2001.

Forsyth considers such aspectual variation to be motivated by text semantics: the impf aspect is used to link the question to the previously mentioned situation, and the purpose of the impf question is merely to determine the identity of the agent. In contrast, the pf version of the same question serves to reintroduce the situation, which is already known to the hearer, into the text structure; thus, in referential semantic terms the pf aspect has a reidentifying function. A similar view is held by Rassudova ([1968] 1982: 55–62), who devotes an entire chapter to aspectual usage in past-tense *Who*-questions. She also points out that the impf aspect is used primarily when it is already clear from the communicative context or from the preceding discourse that the situation in question has reached its inherent limit. In contrast, the pf aspect has an informative function and is used in *Who*-questions largely when the situation in question is introduced into the discourse for the first time. A similar suggestion is made by Hamburger (1986: 173), who comments on the oft-cited example *Kto šilp/šil' ètot kostjum?* 'Who sewed that suit?' as follows: "In Russian the pf aspect is used to express the 'new' predicate, whereas the impf aspect usually expresses the 'known' predicate." It is beyond doubt that if a situation has been introduced in the preceding discourse in the pf aspect, subsequent, coreferential mention of the situation is very often coded impf in questions as well as in declarative sentences and commands. Leinonen (1982: 190) speaks in this case of a "thematic" use of impf verbs; I have termed this use of the impf "anaphoric": The impf aspect refers to a situation originally introduced into the discourse by a pf verb in the capacity of a "proform". The corresponding utterance in the impf aspect is then interpreted as a reference to a situation that has reached its internal limit (Mehlig 1976).

However, a *Who*-question in the impf aspect can also serve to introduce a situation into the discourse for the first time. This has been observed by Glovinskaja (1982: 122). Contrary to accepted opinion, she sees the text-semantic difference between the pf and impf aspects in *Who*-questions precisely in the fact that a pf *Who*-question refers to an old (known) situation, whereas an impf *Who*-question refers to a new (unknown) situation. She demonstrates this on the basis of the following *Who*-question:

- (3) Kto čital'/pročel' "Kapitanskuju dočku"?
 'Who read "The Captain's Daughter"?'

Glovinskaja suggests that the difference between the two aspects can be understood in terms of the distinction between theme and rheme. In her view, the impf question is interpreted entirely as a rheme, because with the impf the situation as a whole is inquired about, as shown by the possible paraphrase *Est' kto-nibud', kto čital "Kapitanskuju dočku"?* 'Is there anyone who has read "The Captain's Daughter"?'; cf. (3a).

(3) a. [Kto čitalⁱ "Kapitanskiju dočku"?]rheme

In contrast, in the corresponding pf question, it is already known to the discourse participants that the story was supposed to be read. Accordingly, in the pf question only the pronoun functions as the rheme, and the verb phrase itself functions as the theme of the utterance:

(3) b. [Kto]rheme [pročel^p "Kapitanskiju dočku"?]theme

Thus, Glovinskaja's view is diametrically opposed to that of Forsyth and Rassoduva: i.e., according to her impf *Who*-questions express new information, whereas pf *Who*-questions express old information.

In the following discussion, I will show that the differing interpretations of the aspects in *Who*-questions are dependent on the referential status of a given predicate in the discourse context. In this respect, I assume that referential status is not only a feature of noun phrases, but also of verbal predicates. In this respect, the distinction between **actual** and **non-actual reference** is of primary importance for aspect in Russian. Parallel to noun phrases, verbal predicates can on the one hand refer to "definite", i.e. particular entities occupying a well-defined place in space and time. In terms of referential semantics, such predicates refer to one or more **tokens** of the verbal situation in question. On the other hand, verbal predicates can also have "indefinite" reference—namely, when they refer to situations that have no particular location in space and time. In this latter case they refer to a **type**, i.e. they refer to the situation in question as a kind (Zemach 1975). In the case of spatial as well as temporal entities, reference to a type presupposes that the linguistic expression involved can refer to several entities of the same category. As for temporal entities, this means that non-actuality, i.e. type reference, is only possible if the situation in question can be repeated (Mehlig 1979: 159; Kolde 1989: 44; Šatunovskij 1996: 324). Verbal predicates referring to unique events that cannot be repeated, i.e., historical events such as *V 49 g. n. è. Cezar' perešel Rubikon* 'In 49 AD Caesar crossed the Rubicon', only allow the actual interpretation.

1. Actual and Non-Actual Verbal Predicates and Aspect

First, the connection between actual and non-actual reference and aspect will be explained on the basis of an example which serves to inquire about, confirm or deny the existence of a given verbal situation, and thus has an **existential-verification function**. A predicate in the impf aspect such as *Vy uže delaliⁱ remont v kvartire?* (literally: 'You already did renovation[s] in [an/the] apartment?') can, on the one hand, denote an actual situation. The actual interpretation of this question occurs when it refers to a situa-

tion that the speaker assumes is already known to the hearer, for example when the question refers to repairs that the hearer had planned or which were mentioned in the preceding discourse, as shown in (4a).

- (4) a. —Vy uže **delali**ⁱ↑ *remont v kvartire, kak vy namerevalis*?
 —Da, uže *delali*ⁱ. *Ves' parket prišlos' zanovo pereselit*'.
 ““Did you already **do** the renovation in the apartment, as you intended?”
 “Yes, we did. We had to relay the entire parquet.””

In this actual reading of the question, we have an instance of the so-called aspectual competition, as the question could also contain a pf verb:

- (4) b. —Vy uže **sdelali**^p↑ *remont v kvartire, kak vy namerevalis*?
 —Da, uže *sdelali*^p. *Teper' vse v porjadke*.
 ““Did you already **do** the renovation in the apartment, as you intended?”
 “Yes, we did. Everything's okay now.””

In the context of an actual situation, the category of aspect functions to present the same situation from different perspectives. The impf aspect presents the situation from an internal perspective, whereby the process of the situation becomes the focus of the discourse. Thus, in the impf version the question concerns the way the situation in question proceeded and not its result. The potential limiting endpoint inherent in the verbal situation is excluded from view, ignored. On the other hand, the pf version gives an external perspective on the situation, including its inherent limit. In contrast to the impf version, the pf question asks whether the inherent limit was reached, and thus whether the result was achieved. In the actual interpretation, both the impf and the pf versions of the question refer to a unique, “definite” situation, which the speaker assumes is known to the hearer. Thus, in a language with an article system such as English or German, the corresponding verbal noun must be definite in a paraphrase of the question:

- (4) c. Did **the** apartment-renovation take place already?
 Hat **die** Wohnungsrenovierung schon stattgefunden?

However, questions such as *Vy uže delali*ⁱ↑ *remont v kvartire*? also allows a non-actual interpretation. This would occur, for example, if the speaker were asking whether the apartment had ever been renovated before. Unlike the actual interpretation, in which *uže* ‘already’ refers to the time of the expected situation and communicates that the expected situa-

tion took place earlier than expected, in the non-actual interpretation *uže* does not have a temporal function, but rather an “additive” one (Schopf 1984: 140; Boguslavskij 1996: 291). In this case, the question asks whether a situation of the type in question took place at least once in some time frame disjoint from the moment of utterance:

- (5) a. —Vy uže **delali**ⁱ remont v kvartire?
 —Da uže delaliⁱ. Daže dva raza.
 “‘Did you already **do** a renovation in the apartment?’”
 “‘Yes, we did. Twice even.’”

In this second interpretation, the question in the impf aspect does not refer to a unique situation that the speaker assumes the listener knows about and can identify, but rather refers generally to the kind or type of situation denoted by the verb. Therefore, in an article language such as English or German the corresponding verbal noun must be indefinite in an existential-sentence paraphrase of the question:

- (5) b. Has **an** apartment-renovation already taken place?
 Hat schon **eine** Wohnungsrenovierung stattgefunden?

As in the non-actual interpretation the question does not refer to a situation which is unique in the situational context, but to the type (kind) of the situation denoted by the verb, the answer *Da, uže delali* ‘Yes, we did’ is unclear as to whether the situation already took place on one or more occasions. All that is communicated is that a renovation of the apartment has taken place on at least one occasion. In contrast to the actual interpretation, the question in its non-actual interpretation cannot be switched to the pf aspect, because the use of a pf verb would entail a change in the referential level and the question would refer to an actual situation. Accordingly, the question would no longer refer to the type of the denoted situation, but rather to a renovation of the apartment that was expected to occur in the fact structure of the discourse. That is to say, in the non-actual interpretation the aspect opposition is neutralized. The impf aspect does not express an internal perspective, but merely functions as the *genus proximum* of the category of aspect.

The possibility of assigning verbal predicates either an actual or a non-actual interpretation can also be dependent on the referential status of the arguments participating in the situation. If in the above example the noun phrase *kvartira* refers not to a specific apartment, i.e. not to a spatially and temporally locatable specimen (a “token”) of the denoted spatial entity, but generally to the type, the concept “apartment” (which is often characterized as the non-referential use of a noun phrase, cf., Givon 1990: 795), and so the point of the question is to ask whether the hearer has ever ren-

ovated any apartment at all, then the de-actualization of the noun phrase *kvartira* entails the de-actualization of the corresponding situation:

- (6) —Vy uže **delali**ⁱ↑ kogda-nibud' remont v kvartire?
 —Da, uže delali. Kogda my žili ešče v Moskve.
 ““Have you ever **done** a renovation in an apartment?”
 “Yes, we have. When we still lived in Moscow.””

Again, in the non-actual interpretation of the question, which is conditioned by the de-actualization of the noun phrase *kvartira*, it turns out that the aspect opposition is neutralized. Unlike in the actual interpretation, here the impf is the only possibility.

In the following sections I attempt to show that this distinction between the actual and non-actual interpretations of verbal predicates also determines aspect choice in *Who*-questions. But before I begin this discussion it is necessary to introduce one more referential-semantic distinction in verbal predicates which is relevant for the category of so-called partial questions: specific and non-specific reference.

2. *Who*-Questions and Specific/Non-Specific Reference

Partial questions, and likewise questions which are introduced by the interrogative pronoun *kto* ‘who’, can have either specific or non-specific reference independently of their actual or non-actual interpretation. **Specific** reference occurs when the situation, the agent of which is the focus of the question, has already been introduced into the discourse as a fact (i.e., in its past, present or future existence). **Non-specific** reference occurs when the preceding discourse context leaves it open as to whether an instance of the situation in question has been realized. A question in the pf aspect such as *Kto kupil' novyj učebnik?* ‘Who bought the new textbook?’ allows both interpretations. The specific interpretation occurs if the question refers to a copy of the textbook which is present in the situational context. In this case, the situation expressed by the verbal predicate must necessarily have taken place, as in the following example:

- (7) a. *Kto kupil' novyj učebnik, kotoryj zdes' ležit?*
 ‘Who **bought** the new textbook that is lying here?’

In this specific interpretation, the question in (7a), inasmuch as there is referential identity between the noun phrase *novyj učebnik* and its pronominal expression in the subsequent answer, cannot be answered negatively in the pf aspect, because an answer in the pf with sentential negation would deny the occurrence of the situation. This contradicts the specific interpretation of the question. Therefore, a coherent discourse including

the question in its specific interpretation can only result if a negated answer in the pf aspect does not contain sentential negation but constituent negation, and thus makes a statement not about the occurrence of the situation but about the description of the situation:

- (7) b. —Kto **kupil** novyj učebnik, kotoryj zdes' ležit? Ty?
 —Ja ego ne kupil, a v biblioteke vzial.
 "Who **bought** the new textbook that is lying here? You?"
 "I didn't buy it, I borrowed it from the library."

The answer with constituent negation does not deny the existence of the situation in question, but asserts that the relation holding between its two arguments has not been accurately described. Constituent negation has an identifying function, and corresponds therefore to a paraphrase in which the negative particle must occur before the description of the situation in question and the *be*-verb *byt'* also agrees with the deverbal noun: *Byla ne pokupka učebnika* 'What happened was not a buying of the textbook'.

The question *Kto kupil novyj učebnik?* also allows a non-specific interpretation. This occurs, for example, when the question refers to more than one situation and in the discourse context it is completely unclear whether one of the situations in question has taken place. For example, such a non-specific interpretation would occur when a class is asked this question by a teacher who assigned the students to buy a certain textbook in order to determine whether any of the expected purchases took place:

- (8) a. [Vsem nado bylo kupit' novyj učebnik.] Kto iz vas uže **kupil** novyj učebnik?
 '[Everyone was required to buy a new textbook.] Who of you already **bought** the new textbook?'

In this non-specific interpretation, the question actually consists of two interrogative components and may be paraphrased in the following way:

- (8) b. Proizošla li uže xotja by odna iz ožidaemyx pokupok novogo učebnika, i, esli da, to kto ee osuščestvil?
 'Did at least one of the expected purchases of the new textbook occur, and if so, who did it?'

In this non-specific interpretation, the noun phrase *novyj učebnik* does not refer to a particular copy of the textbook which is present in the discourse context, but rather distributively to several copies of the textbook in question. In contrast to the specific interpretation of the question, in this non-specific interpretation of the question, sentential negation is possible

in an answer in the pf aspect. This is because it is not clear whether any of the expected book purchases have taken place. The sentential negation communicates that none of the purchases have taken place:

- (8) c. —Kto uže **kupil** novyj učebnik?
 —Poka nikto ego ne kupil.
 “Who already **bought** the new textbook?”
 “No one has bought it yet.”

The paraphrase corresponding to the sentential negation in (8c) is an impersonal existential sentence: *Poka nikakoj pokupki novogo učebnika ne bylo* ‘So far there has been no purchase of the new textbook’. The negative particle must precede the existential verb in the nominal paraphrase, because the existence of the situation in question is negated.

3. Aspect Usage in Specific *Who*-Questions that Refer to Actual Situations

Who-questions can refer to actual, i.e., concrete, spatially and temporally locatable situations, which have already been established as past, present, or future facts in the discourse context. The existence of the situation may be established exophorically (i.e., it may follow from the situational context) or endophorically (i.e., in the preceding discourse). The verbal predicate refers specifically if it refers to a concrete situation, the result of which is present (“on hand”) at the moment of speech. Examples of *Who*-questions with specific reference are given in (9):

- (9) a. —Kto **uložil** vešči v čemodan?
 —Ja.
 —Spasibo.
 “Who **put** the things in the suitcase?”
 “I did.”
 “Thanks.”
- b. —Kto **ukladyval** vešči v čemodan?
 —Ja.
 —A ty ne zabył položit’ podarki?
 “Who **put** the things in the suitcase?”
 “I did.”
 “You didn’t forget to pack the gifts, did you?”

In these examples the existence of the situation is established exophorically. The *Who*-question refers to a situation that has produced a result which is present at the moment of speech. In the nominal paraphrases of

the questions in (9a–b), the specific interpretation is indicated by the phrase *imevšaja mesto situacija* ‘situation that has taken place’ as in (9c).

- (9) c. Kto osuščestvil^p/osuščestvljalⁱ imevšuju mesto situaciju “uklad-
yvanie veščej v čemodan”?
‘Who realized the situation that has taken place “putting things
into the suitcase”?’

In this specific interpretation, the question cannot be answered negatively if the answer is in the pf aspect and contains sentential negation, as shown in (9d).

- (9) d. — Kto **uložil**^p vešč*i* v čemodan?
—*Nikto ix **ne uložil**^p.
“Who **put** the things into the suitcase?”
“No one **put** them in.”

This answer, inasmuch as there is referential identity between *vešč*i** in the question and the pronoun in the answer, would produce an incoherent discourse, as sentential negation in a pf answer denies the realization of the situation in question, which contradicts the factual existence of the situation as established by the context.

As the previous examples show, *Who*-questions that refer to actual situations which have reached their inherent limits and have the status of facts at the moment of speech allow both aspects. In the presence of a packed suitcase, the identity of the agent may be asked about in the pf as well as in the impf. If the pf is used, the situation is viewed from an external perspective. The speaker assumes a viewpoint which is outside the action, which allows him to present the situation as a whole and thus in its totality. On the other hand, the use of the impf aspect serves to view a situation located retrospectively in time from an internal perspective; the speaker assumes a viewpoint which excludes the boundaries of the situation from view. The speaker chooses this internal perspective whenever his attention is not focused on the attainment of the situation’s inherent limit, i.e., the presence of its result, but when he desires information about the agent which involves the process of the situation in question—in other words, whenever his attention is focused on some aspect of the development of the situation. In (9b) the question is asked in the impf aspect because *during* the completion of the action, a second situation (the packing of the gifts) possibly did not occur.

Likewise, in the presence of an addressed envelope a question about the identity of the agent can be either pf or impf:

- (10) a. Kto **napisal**^p adres na konverte? Ja xotel dat' drugoj konvert.
 'Who **wrote** the address on the envelope? I wanted to give [them] another envelope [for this].'
- b. Kto **pisal**ⁱ adres na konverte? Zabyli napisat' indeks./Pereputali nomer doma.
 'Who **wrote** the address on the envelope? They forgot to write the zip code./They got the wrong building number.'

In these examples, the pf expresses the external perspective—the situation is presented in its totality, including its inherent limit. The impf, on the other hand, narrows the focus onto the process of the writing event; the predicate refers “to the action and abstracts away from the result” (Šatunovskij 1996: 332). This “flashback to the process” occurs because the speaker assumes that the agent can give information about events that could have taken place during the writing event, such as forgetting the zip code or putting the wrong house number, etc. The thematicization of the process itself in such examples may be characterized, as Chaput (1990: 93) has done, in terms of “event reconstruction”, as the impf aspect serves “to focus on the specifics of the process involved.”

As it is the function of these impf *Who*-questions to clarify the occurrence of other situations that took place *during* the completion of the situation in question, they must always be followed by further discourse. As Israeli (1998) points out, a sequence of dialogue such as (11) is felt to be incomplete.

- (11) —Kto **ukladyval**ⁱ vešči v čemodan?
 —Ja.
 “Who **put** the things in the suitcase?”
 “I did.”

Impf *Who*-questions which refer to actual situations function to initiate a discourse and thus (as is to be expected as far as the impf aspect with actual meaning is concerned) have a backgrounding function. In this respect, consider also the following examples, which likewise refer to actual situations located retrospectively in time and in which the impf aspect is used because there are other situations relevant to the overall discourse context which took place during the completion of the situation in question:

- (12) Kto **bral**ⁱ knigi v biblioteke? Slovare zabyli vzjat'.
 'Who **checked out** [took] these books from the library? They forgot to get the dictionaries.'

- (13) Kto **zapiral**ⁱ dver'? Zamok sloman.
'Who **locked** the door? The lock is broken.'
- (14) Kto **čital**ⁱ ètu knigu? V knige ostalis' kakie-to zapiski.
'Who has been reading this book? Some note slips have been left in it.'
- (15) Kto **vydaval**ⁱ vos'moj tom Gor'kogo? Zabyli zapisat', kto vzjal.
'Who **gave out** the eighth volume of Gor'kij? They forgot to record who checked it out.'
- (16) Kto **otdaval**ⁱ moj kostjum v ximčistku? U menja v karmane ležali dokumenty. Kuda ix deli?
'Who **sent** my suit to the dry-cleaners? I had some papers in the pocket. Where did they put them?'

The use of the past tense locates the situations in the past, i.e., retrospectively from the moment of utterance. These situations, which in objective reality have occurred in their totality (including their inherent limits), are presented by means of the category of aspect from differing perspectives. The *impf* aspect excludes the inherent limit from view, and focuses on the process of the situation. The possibility of a choice in aspect, as illustrated in the examples discussed above, is often referred to as aspectual competition or even aspectual synonymy. In my view, this is in fact a case of the aspectual opposition in its purest form. A situation located not simultaneously but retrospectively in time relative to the moment of utterance (or another point in time) is presented from different perspectives. By choosing the *pf* aspect, the speaker assumes a perspective external to the situation in question, which allows him to view the situation in its totality. The situation is thereby presented as bounded in time, finished (and inasmuch as the predicate involved is transformative, i.e., a goal-orientated verb which produces a change of state) as absolutely or relatively completed. In contrast, if the speaker chooses the *impf* aspect, he assumes a perspective that is internal to the situation. The situation is thereby presented as open-ended, without reference to its completion, as potentially unbounded or unfinished; the endpoint inherent in the verbal situation is excluded from view. Cf. in this regard, Heger (1963), Smith ([1991] 1997), Leiss (1992, 2000), and also Michaelis (1998).

This distinction between the internal and external perspectives expressed by the category of aspect involves a transfer of originally spatial conceptualizations to the domain of time. Someone who is inside a building cannot perceive its outer boundaries, cannot apprehend it as a whole, in its totality. A building can only be apprehended as a whole when the

viewer is outside the building. In this sense, the aspect category reveals itself as a deictic category, just like tense, as Fuchs (1991), Leiss (1992: 46) and especially Heger (1963: 23) have emphasized. Whereas tense locates a situation in time relative to an absolute or relative “now”, “time before” or “time after”, the aspect category locates the speaker’s perspective either inside or outside the situation in question, with the result that he has differing views of it. The so-called concrete-processual or actual-durative meaning of the *impf* aspect occurring in temporally simultaneous localization of a given situation, is essentially only a special case of the use of the *impf* to signal the internal perspective, i.e., a use in which the external perspective is completely impossible in reference to a single situation—in other words, a case when the *impf* aspect is required. This is the case whenever an absolute or relative viewpoint time is indicated in the situational or discourse context, and is included in the situation (an “internal event frame” according to Chung and Timberlake 1985: 219 and Padučeva 1996: 164) and the situation in question occurs temporally simultaneous to the viewpoint time.

In the literature it has been pointed out repeatedly that the possibility of presenting situations located retrospectively in time from the internal perspective is subject to several limitations which follow from the semantics of the predicate. Thus, Padučeva (1996: 51; cf. also Israeli 1998) observes that this use of the *impf* aspect is precluded if the situation in question is a momentary event, i.e., a “pure achievement” in Vendler’s (1967: 103) terminology. This makes quite a bit of sense, because the internal perspective presupposes that the situation has extension in time, a condition which momentary predicates do not fulfill. This is why the *impf* questions in exx. (17–19) cannot refer to actual situations.

- (17) *Kto **terjal**ⁱ svoj pasport?
‘Who **lost** their passport?’
- (18) *Kto **vyigryval**ⁱ ètu figuru? [vo vremja igry]
‘Who **took** that piece?’ [during a game]
- (19) *Kto **zabyval**ⁱ šarf, kotoryj zdes’ ležit?
‘Who **forgot** the scarf which is lying here?’

Such questions allow only a non-actual interpretation. They can refer only to the type of situation, an interpretation occurring in (20), for example:

- (20) Kto uže kogda-nibud’ **terjal**ⁱ svoj pasport? Vy znaete kuda obraščat’sja v takom slučae?
‘Who has ever **lost** his passport? Do you know where to go when that happens?’

As “internal deixis” presupposes extension in time, accidental, unintentional situations cannot be presented from the internal perspective in cases of actual reference and retrospective temporal localization. Thus, in the following examples, if they refer to a unique, actual situation, the pf aspect is the only possibility.

- (21) *Kto **vybrasyval**ⁱ pis'mo, ktoroe my včera polučili ot brata?
‘Who **threw out** the letter that we received from our brother yesterday?’
- (22) *Kto **zaražal**ⁱ tebe ètoj bolezn'ju?
‘Who **infected** you with this illness?’
- (23) *Kto **rasstraival**ⁱ skripku?
‘Who **put** the violin **out of tune**?’

In contrast, controllable situations, which can be interrupted and continued, always have temporal extension and thus allow foregrounding of the process of the situation.

- (24) Kto **polučal**ⁱ den'gi, kotorye ležat zdes'? Počemu net kvitancii?
‘Who **received** the money lying here? Why is there no receipt?’
- (25) Kto budet **sostavljat**ⁱ plan èkskursij? Ne zabud'te vključit' èkskursiju v Peterhof.
‘Who **will compile** the excursion schedule? Don't forget to include the excursion to Peterhof.’

Therefore, if a question such as that in (26) refers to an actual, retrospectively located situation, the situation in question must be construed as intentional and thus controllable by the agent, i.e., (26) can only ask about an intentionally broken bottle.

- (26) Kto **razbival** ètu butylku?
‘Who **broke** that bottle?’

Padučeva (1996: 48) speaks in such cases of the “actional” use of the impf aspect; Leinonen (1982: 190), following Lyons (1977: 491), speaks of an “operative schema” that must lie at the basis of the situation in question, whenever in cases of retrospective location in time the internal perspective is supposed to be possible.

Controllable situations that have reached their inherent limits, inasmuch as they are conceptualized as actual, generally can be expressed by

both aspects in *Who*-questions. The pf presents the situation in question including its inherent limit; the impf, on the other hand, abstracts away from the result and focuses on the process. Thus, a question such as *Kto stroil ètot dom?* 'Who built this house?' inquires about those who participated in the actual construction of the house, the architect for instance (this was pointed out as early as Mazon 1914: 220), or also, as Israeli (1996: 33) suggests, about the construction workers who worked at the site. In contrast, the pf aspect inquires about the owner or the financier, i.e., agents who as a rule do not work on the construction of the house itself. However, the impf aspect is of course not impossible in the case of the owner or financier, especially, when their active participation in the construction work is to be focused on. In an entirely parallel fashion, the pf aspect in (27) inquires about the author:

- (27) Kto **napisal**^p/**pisal**ⁱ ètot roman?
'Who **wrote** this novel?'

The impf aspect, on the other hand, refers to the process of the writing and can only be used in order to clarify events that took place *during* the writing of a given novel. This interpretation would be possible for example (27) if the question were asked in the publishing house with reference to a manuscript, where it must be clarified whether the revisions in the text are the work of the author or who served as the model for the characters, i.e., whenever the question does not refer to the situation including its inherent limit, but to the process of the writing. As the following example from V. S. Grossman's novel *Žizn' i sud'ba* shows, this interpretation is also in principle possible for the oft-discussed example *Kto napisal/pisal «Vojnu i mir»?* 'Who wrote *War and Peace*?', in which case the use of the impf aspect again foregrounds the process of writing:

- (28) — Vot Lev Tolstoj **napisal**^p «Vojnu i mir». Sto let ljudi čitajut i ešče sto let čitat' budut. A počemu? Sam učastvoval, sam voeval, vot on i znaet, pro kogo nado pisat'. — Pozvol'te, tovarišč general, — skazal Krymov. Tolstoj v Otečestvennoj vojne ne učastvoval. — To est' kak èto ne «učastvoval»? — sprosil general. Da očen' prosto — progovoril Krymov, — Tolstoj ved' ne rodilsja, kogda šla vojna s Napoleonom. — Ne rodilsja? — peresprosil Gur'ev. — Kak èto tak ne rodilsja. Kto že za nego **pisal**ⁱ, esli ne rodilsja?

“So Leo Tolstoj **wrote** *War and Peace*. People have been reading it for a hundred years and will read it for a hundred more. And why? He took part in it himself, fought in the war himself, so he knew who to write about.” “With your permission, general,” Krymov said. “Tolstoj did not participate in the War for the Homeland.” “What do you mean he didn't ‘participate’?” the general asked. “Very simple,”

Krymov started explaining. "Tolstoj hadn't even been born yet when the war with Napoleon was going on." "He hadn't been born yet?" Gur'ev broke in. "How couldn't he have been born yet? Who **did the writing** for him then if he hadn't been born yet?"

All the examples discussed above involve actual situations which are locatable in space and time, and in this sense also concrete situations. In this respect, the usual term for this use of the *impf* aspect, "general-factual", is misleading, because these predicates do not refer to generalized situations, but to very concrete, unique situations which are presented from the internal perspective. In these examples, the *impf* aspect foregrounds the process of the situation in question and thus instantiates its canonical aspectual function. It conceptually locates the speaker within the situation. The situation in question is presented from the internal perspective, and its outer boundaries are excluded from view. As the examples show, this internal perspective is possible both with unique, non-repeatable situations and with repeatable situations. Even unique, non-repeatable situations, such as the writing of a certain novel, or writing the address on a specific envelope, can be presented from the internal perspective. The issue of the repeatability of the situation is irrelevant for the use of the *impf* to present a situation from the internal perspective. For further context-specific applications of the opposition between the internal and external perspectives in *Who*-questions, see the detailed analysis in Israeli (1996: 32–46). However, in contrast to Israeli, I do not consider the distinction between creativity verbs and non-creativity verbs to be relevant. A *Who*-question such as (29) contains an existential causative; the question refers to a situation that results in the creation of an object.

- (29) Kto **sšil**^p/šilⁱ ètot kostjum?
'Who **sewed** this suit?'

The *impf* version abstracts away from the result, and focuses on the process of the situation. But the interpretation of internal perspective is also available in the *impf* aspect when the object is only affected by the verb and exists independently of it, as in the previously cited example (16), repeated here as example (30):

- (30) Kto **otdaval**ⁱ moj kostjum v ximčistku? U menja v karmane ležali dokumenty. Kuda ix deli?
'Who **sent** my suit to the dry-cleaners? I had some papers in the pocket. Where did they put them?'

In the actual interpretation, the non-existential causative in (30) likewise refers to the process/performance of the situation in question, analogous

to (29): the goal is to inquire about situations that took place *during* the process of sending the suit to the cleaners. And in both cases the question in the *impf* aspect functions to initiate a discourse. These questions provide the background for other situations that occurred in connection to the situation in question.

4. Aspect Usage in Non-Specific *Who*-Questions Which Refer to Actual Situations

In the preceding sections, the analysis has been limited to cases of a single situation. However, *Who*-questions can also refer to multiple actual situations. For example, this is the case when a teacher in a classroom asks *Kto uže kupilP novyj učebnik?* 'Who bought the new textbook?', with the aim of finding out who has already bought the textbook following a previous recommendation. In such a context, the noun phrase *novyj učebnik* 'new textbook' no longer refers to a specific copy of the textbook (i.e., a token) which is present in the speech situation, but distributively to several different copies of the same book.

Who-questions that refer to multiple situations allow both a specific and a non-specific interpretation. Non-specific reference occurs when the speaker does not yet know whether any of the expected purchases have taken place. In this situation, the speaker will as a rule ask the question in the form of a yes-no question: *Kto-nibud' iz vas uže kupilP novyj učebnik?* 'Have any of you already bought the new textbook?' However, he can ask a *Who*-question if he is working on the assumption that at least one of the books was bought:

- (31) a. [Vsem nado bylo kupit' novyj učebnik]
 Kto uže **kupilP** novyj učebnik?
 '[Everyone was supposed to buy the new textbook]
 Who has already bought the new textbook?'

In this non-specific interpretation, the question is in fact a double one, which can be paraphrased in the following manner:

- b. Proizošla xotja by odna iz ožidaemyx pokupok novogo učebnika, i, esli da, to kto ee osuščestvil?
 'Did at least one of the expected purchases of the new textbook occur, and if so, who did it?'

Who-questions that refer non-specifically to multiple-actual situations (i.e., situations locatable in space and time) are as a rule *pf* if the predicate involved is transformative, i.e. a goal-oriented verb which produces a change of state. This makes sense, as such questions usually have perfect

meaning. A question such as *Kto uže kupil^p novyj učebnik?* usually serves to ask which of the expected purchases have taken place, i.e., to clarify who already has the book in his possession. However, in a fashion completely parallel to the case of specific reference, the *impf* aspect can be used in this case of non-specific reference as well. In particular, the *impf* can be used whenever the speaker is interested in some detail(s) that were relevant during the completion of the situation in question. This function is present in the following example:

- (32) *Kto uže **pokupal**ⁱ novyj učebnik? Vy obratili vnimanie na to, kak uprostilas' procedura oformlenija pokupki?/V magazine est' ešče mnogo èkzempljarov ètogo učebnika?*

'Who has already **bought** the new textbook? Did you notice that the purchase process has gotten easier?/ Are there still a lot of copies in the store?'

In (32) the *impf* again has its canonical aspectual function—the situation is presented from the internal perspective. The inherent limit is irrelevant and excluded from view, because the agent is expected to provide information about things that took place *during* the situation in question, *while* the book was being bought. The process is thereby foregrounded again. Because in the case of non-specific reference in such questions no information is given about the attainment of the inherent limit, the question in the *impf* aspect leaves it unclear whether the situation reached completion or not. In general, any possible resultative interpretations of the *impf* aspect in utterances with actual reference are only implicit in the discourse or situative context. Lacking any knowledge of the context, one cannot decide, based on the internal perspective of a situation, whether it reached completion or not.

5. Aspect Usage in *Who*-Questions Which Refer to Non-Actual Situations

Verbal predicates can refer not only to actual situations, which are locatable in space and time, but also to non-actual situations. These are not located at a single point of the time axis refer not to one or more concrete instantiations (tokens) of the situation, but to its type. *Who*-questions also allow both interpretations. A question such as (33a) can be interpreted either as actual or non-actual:

- (33) a. *Kto **zapolnjal**ⁱ ètu anketu?*
'Who **filled** out this form?'

The actual interpretation occurs when *anketa* refers to a form present in the speech situation which has been filled out, i.e., whenever it refers to a concrete token. In this case, the verbal predicate must also necessarily refer to an actual situation, because one and the same form cannot be filled out more than once (if one discounts the somewhat exotic situation in which entries are erased). In the actual interpretation of (33a) the impf aspect has its canonical aspectual function. It foregrounds the process of filling out the form and focuses on events that took place while it was being filled out. This internal perspective could be motivated if the form were dirtied while being filled out, if it were filled out incompletely, or if erroneous information was entered, cf. (33b):

- (33) b. Kto **zapolnjal** ètu anketu? Dva punkta propustili.
 ‘Who **filled** out this form? They left out two items.’

But this question can also receive a non-actual interpretation. This occurs when the goal of the question is to find someone who knows how to fill out a particular type of form:

- (33) c. Kto **zapolnjal** ètu anketu i znaet, kak èto delaetsja?
 ‘Who **filled** out this form and knows how this is done?’

In the non-actual interpretation, *anketa* no longer refers to a particular form which is present in the speech situation, but to the kind of form, its type as represented in the particular copy of the form. If *anketa* is interpreted as a reference to the type, then the verbal predicate is thereby also de-actualized and no longer refers to a concrete situation locatable in space and time, i.e., to a token, but to the type (kind) of the situation in question. Thus, the verbal noun in an existential paraphrase of this non-actual question in an article language such as English or German must be indefinite:

- (33) d. By whom was there a filling out of this form?
 Durch wen war **ein** Ausfüllen dieses Formulars?

In Russian, the non-actual interpretation can be made clearer in the existential paraphrase by introducing the verbal noun with the demonstrative pronoun *takoj* ‘such’ in its cataphoric use:

- (33) e. Kto uže osuščestvljal xotja by raz *takuju* situaciju, kak
 “zapolnenie ètoj ankety”?
 ‘Who has already at least once realized such a situation as “filling out this form”?’

In this non-actual interpretation as well, analogous to the actual interpretation, a specific and a non-specific interpretation are distinguishable depending on the extent of the hearer's knowledge. If it is clear from the context that the non-actual situation in question has already been realized at least once and the question thus has specific reference, it allows the insertion of the phrase *imevšaja mesto situacija* 'situation which has taken place', which indicates that the situation in question has already taken place at least once:

- (33) f. Kto uže osuščestvljal *takuju xotja by raz imevšuju mesto situaciju*, kak "zapolnenie ètoj ankety"?'
 'Who has already realized a such situation, which has taken place at least once, as "filling out this form"?''

In the non-specific interpretation, however, it is not clear whether the situation in question has already taken place. This non-specific interpretation corresponds to a twofold question:

- (33) g. Byla li *xotja by raz kogda-nibud' takaja situacija*, kak "zapolnenie ètoj ankety", i, esli da, to kto ee osuščestvljal?
 'Was there ever at all at least one such situation as "filling out this form", and if so, who realized it?'

Regardless of whether the question is interpreted specifically or non-specifically, in this non-actual interpretation the impf aspect is the only possible choice. This means that in this case, the impf aspect does not function to present the internal view of the situation, but functions only as the *genus proximum* of the aspect category. As in this non-actual interpretation the impf aspect does not signal the internal perspective, the use of the impf does not presuppose that the situation in question has duration in time. This in turn means that if a verbal predicate in the impf aspect refers to a situation that precludes the internal perspective, it must necessarily refer to a non-actual situation. This is shown in example (20) above, repeated here as (34):

- (34) Kto uže kogda-nibud' *terjal'* svoj pasport? Vy znaete kuda obraščat'sja v takom slučae?
 'Who has already **lost** his passport once? Do you know where to go when that happens?'

The predicate *terjat' pasport* denotes as a rule an accidental, non-volitional situation. Therefore, the internal perspective and hence an actual interpretation of the impf aspect is impossible. Example (34) can only be in-

terpreted as non-actual, i.e. in the impf aspect the predicate can not refer to a particular event, but only to the type of the situation in question.

Verbal predicates which are interpreted as non-actual and thus do not refer to a particular event (“token”) but to the type of the situation are subject to another restriction: reference to type—independently of whether spatial or temporal entities are at issue—is only possible if the linguistic expression refers to more than one entity. Thus, a verbal predicate can only be interpreted as non-actual if it denotes a quantifiable situation, i.e. one that can be repeated. It is precisely for this reason that questions such as *Kto tonul?* ‘Who drowned?’ and *Kto umiral?* ‘Who died?’ in the non-actual interpretation can only refer to a situation that failed to reach its endpoint, as observed by Padučeva (1996: 44). Compare the following examples:

- (35) *Kto iz vas uže kogda-nibud’ tonul?* *Kakie čuvstva vy ispytyvali v èto vremja?* [Kto naxodilsja v *takoj* situaciji, kak “tonut”“?] ‘Who of you has ever **been drowning**? What feelings did you experience at the time?’ [Who was in such a situation as drowning?]
- (36) *Kto uže umiral?* [U kogo uže byl *takoj* opyt, kak “umiranje”“?] ‘Who has already **been dying**?’ [Who has already had the experience of being in the process of dying?]

In our world, death is an unrepeatable event. Situations such as drowning or dying are thus repeatable for one and the same agent only if they have not led to death.

Who-questions that refer to actual situations are, as we have seen, not subject to the repeatability condition. The internal perspective is also possible for predicates that refer to a unique, unrepeatable situation, as shown in example (24), repeated here as (37):

- (37) *Kto polučal’ den’gi, kotorye ležat zdes’? Počemu net kvitancii?* ‘Who **received** the money lying here? Why is there no receipt?’

Thus, it becomes clear why the question about the discoverer of America can only be asked in the pf:

- (38) *Kto otkryl’ Ameriku?* ‘Who **discovered** America?’

Columbus’ discovery of America is a unique, unrepeatable event in our world. Thus, the non-actual interpretation of the question is precluded; it can only be interpreted as actual. And as we have seen further, in the case

of a unique, actual situation which is located retrospectively in time, the impf aspect is only possible if the situation in question allows a processual construal, if it is based on an operative schema in Lyons' terms. This condition is not fulfilled by this predicate. The discovery of America is an accidental, non-volitional situation, a "pure achievement" in terms of Vendler (1967: 103), which cannot denote a process in its development. When referring to momentary situations that are unique and actual, the impf aspect can only denote a "pseudoprocess" (Apresjan 1995: 230), i.e., the preliminary stages that precede the change of state (Smith [1991]1997: 325). However, this internal perspective is possible only if the situation in question is located not retrospectively, but simultaneously with an absolute or relative "present" given in the context, a condition that is fulfilled in the oft-cited example from Dostoevskij's *Idiot*:

- (39) O bud'te uvereny, što Kolumb byl ščastliv ne togda, kogda otkryl Ameriku, a kogda **otkryval'** ee.
 'O, rest assured that Columbus wasn't happy when he had discovered America, but when he **was working to discover [discovering]** it.'

In this example, the situation in question is located simultaneously to the point in time denoted by the demonstrative adverb *togda* 'then'. In contrast, the situation expressed in *Kto otkryl' Ameriku?* is located not simultaneously but retrospectively in time, i.e., relative to the moment of speech. In this case, an internal perspective on the action would only be possible if the situation involved a process, a condition that this predicate does not fulfill.

Further, the second possible interpretation of an impf verb in (38), i.e., reference to a non-actual situation (reference to the type), is excluded because Columbus' discovery of America is a unique, unrepeatable event which cannot be quantified. As we have seen, the possibility of quantification is a necessary precondition for a non-actual interpretation of the impf aspect. If, in contrast to (38), a non-actual interpretation and thus a reference to the type of situation is possible in (40), then this is possible because America can be discovered on more than one occasion, even if Columbus cannot discover it more than once, e.g. by the Vikings.

- (40) Kto **otkryval'** Ameriku do Kolumba?
 'Who **discovered** America before Columbus?'

With the choice of the impf aspect, the discovery of America is conceptualized as non-actual and thus as repeatable, and if the question in (40) is answered as in (41), then the predicate does not refer to *the* discovery of America, but to *one* of its discoveries:

- (41) —Kto **otkryval**ⁱ Ameriku do Kolumba?
 —Nu, ee ešče vikingi **otkryvali**ⁱ.
 “Who **discovered** America before Columbus?”
 “Well, the Vikings [were one of the ones who] **discovered** it.”

Who-questions that refer to non-actual situations can be used to initiate discourse, like *Who*-questions that refer to actual situations, in cases when the question is asked in order to acquire further information—for example, about experiences that the listener made while engaged in the situation in question (cf. in this regard exx. (35–36)). However, this non-actual interpretation of the impf can occur with “real” questions. As shown in (41), the identification of additional possible discoverers of America results in a complete discourse.

6. Conclusion

I would like to sum up this analysis with an interpretation of the examples cited from Forsyth and Glovinskaja in the introduction. Examples (1–2), repeated here as (42), cited from Forsyth, are cases of actual reference; the verbal predicates refer to verbal tokens whose existence has been established in the preceding discourse.

- (42) a. Kto **podavil**^p vse vosstanija rabočix? Ja!
 ‘Who **supressed** all the workers’ uprisings? I [did]!’
 b. Kto **podavljal**ⁱ vosstanije rabočix? Vy? Ja!
 Who **supressed** the uprising? You? I [did]!’

A non-actual interpretation of these examples is impossible, because one and the same uprising cannot be successfully put down more than once. Therefore, in (42b) the impf has its canonical aspectual function: it focuses on the process of the situation in question (the performance of the action), and is chosen in order to assess the performance of that situation. The pf on the other hand focuses not on the activity of the agent, but on the result of that activity.

In both the pf and impf versions, the question in (42a–b) has specific reference. It refers to a situation whose existence, including its inherent limit, has been established in the preceding discourse and is thus known to the listener. Such a factually established and identifiable situation is presented from different perspectives by the category of aspect. If the impf aspect is interpreted as resultative in this context, this is only because the previous discourse provides information that the inherent limit of the sit-

uation was reached—the impf aspect itself does not contain this information.

In contrast, Glovinskaja's example in (3), repeated here as (43), refers to multiple situations whose existence is only assumed in the discourse context.

- (43) a. Kto čitalⁱ/pročel^p "Kapitanskuju dočku"?
 'Who read "The Captain's Daughter"?'

This question has non-specific reference and thus unlike the previous examples can also be answered with sentential negation, which is impossible in the case of specific reference (cf. Forsyth's examples), because the existence of the situation in question as established in the preceding discourse would be contradicted.

- (43) b. — Kto čitalⁱ/pročel^p "Kapitanskuju dočku"?
 — Nikto ee ne čitalⁱ/pročel^p.
 "'Who read 'The Captain's Daughter'?"
 "No one read it."

With the choice of the pf aspect the question in (43a) refers to multiple verbal tokens, to several actual situations, i.e., situations that the speaker assumes the listener can identify and place in his/her referential schema. (Israeli 1996: 15 speaks in this case of a "contractual relationship" between the speaker and the listener.) The situations in question are known to the hearer. In contrast to Forsyth's examples, the situations in question have been introduced in the discourse context not in their factual existence but in their potential existence. Thus, this is a case of non-specific definiteness, (as opposed to the specific definiteness present in Forsyth's examples). As we have seen, this non-specific interpretation of *Who*-questions corresponds to a twofold question. For (43a) it would read as in (43c):

- (43) c. Byla li xotja by odna iz ožidaemyx situacij "čtenie 'Kapitanskoj dočki'", i, esli da, to kto ee osuščestvil?
 'Was there at least one of the expected situations "reading 'The Captain's Daughter'", and if so, who realized it?'

As the question in the pf aspect refers to situations that the speaker assumes the listeners already know about, i.e., hypothetical situations which have already been established in the discourse context, a paraphrase of the question in a language with an article system such as English or German must contain a definite article. The pf version of (43a) assumes that at least

one of the expected situations has occurred and asks who realized them in case the assumption is correct.

In contrast, the use of the impf aspect indicates non-actuality. The question does not refer to one or more particular instances of the verbal situation, situations that in the context are expected to have taken place and are thus identifiable, but generally to the type or kind of verbal situation. The point of the question is to clarify who has ever read "The Captain's Daughter" at some time. Thus, Glovinskaja paraphrased this non-actual reading of the impf question as in (43d):

- (43) d. Est' li kto-nibud', kto čital "Kapitanskiju dočku"?
'Is there anyone who has read "The Captain's Daughter"?''

Analogous to its pf counterpart, the impf question can also be paraphrased with a twofold question as in (43e).

- (43) e. Byla li xotja by raz kogda-nibud' *takaja* situacija, kak "čtenie 'Kapitanskoj dočki'", i, esli da, to kto ee osuščestvjal?
'Was there ever at all at least one such situation as "reading "The Captain's Daughter"', and if so, who realized it?'

Since the first component of the question does not refer to one or more tokens, i.e., actual situations that have been established as potential entities in the context, but refers to the kind or type of the situation in question, these situations are not known to the listener. Accordingly, the verbal noun in a paraphrase of the question in a language with an article system such as English or German must be introduced by the indefinite article. The pf version asks whether *one of the* expected situations has occurred, whereas the impf version asks whether *a* situation of the type in question has occurred. The pf and impf differ with regard to the referential status of the respective verbal predicates in the discourse context. The pf signals non-specific definiteness, and the impf aspect non-specific indefiniteness.

Thus it is clear that Forsyth's and Glovinskaja's examples represent two completely different functions of the aspect opposition. In Forsyth's examples, both the pf and impf versions of the question refer to an actual situation; both are cases of specific definiteness. Both questions refer to a token that has been established as a fact in the preceding discourse and is thus known to the listener. The aspect opposition serves to present this actual situation, which is known to the hearer, from differing perspectives. In this case the impf aspect has its canonical function: it focuses on the process and excludes the result from view.

On the other hand, in Glovinskaja's example the impf verb refers to a non-actual situation, to the type of the situation in question. The pf and impf versions of the question differ according to their referential status.

The pf version refers to a token, whereas the impf version refers to the type of the situation in question. In this non-actual interpretation, the impf aspect functions merely as the *genus proximum* of the aspect opposition and can be correctly termed “general-factual”, as the predicate refers to the kind of the situation in question and thus to a situation that has no particular location in space and time. In this “general-factual” function of the impf aspect, the Russian aspectual opposition is neutralized and no distinction between the internal and external perspective is possible. The aspect opposition is thus reduced to the contrast between pf = actuality vs. impf = non-actuality.

Aspect use in *Who*-questions is a very clear example of how the functions of aspect in Russian are hierarchically arranged. Situations that are conceptualized as non-actual do not allow aspect to distinguish between the internal and external perspectives. These canonical functions of the aspects are only possible if the situations in question are conceptualized as actual, i.e., when the corresponding verbal predicates, in terms of referential semantics, refer not to the type of situation but to one or more tokens.

References

- Apresjan, Jurij D. ([1988] 1995) “Glagoly momental'nogo dejstvija i performativy v ruskom jazyke”. *Izbrannye trudy*, vol. 2: 219–241. Moscow: Škola “Jazyki ruskoj kul'tury”.
- Boguslavskij, Igor' M. (1996) *Sfera dejstvija leksičeskix edinic*. Moscow: Škola “Jazyki ruskoj kul'tury”.
- Chaput, Patricia. (1990) “Temporal and semantic factors affecting Russian aspect choice in questions”. Nils B. Thelin, ed. *Verbal aspect in discourse*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 283–306.
- Chung, Sandra and Alan Timberlake. (1985) “Tense, aspect and mood”. T. Sopen, ed. *Language typology and syntactic description*, vol. III: *Grammatical categories and the lexicon*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 202–258.
- Forsyth, James. (1970) *A grammar of aspect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Fuchs, A. (1991) “Deixis, relevance and tense/aspect”. J. Gvozdanović et al., eds. *The function of tense in texts*. Amsterdam: Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, 99–123.
- Givon, Talmy. (1990) *Syntax: A functional-typological introduction*. Vol. II. Amsterdam: Benjamins.
- Glovinskaja, Marija Ja. (1982) *Semantičeskie tipy vidovyx protivopostavlenij ruskogo glagola*. Moscow: Nauka.

- Hamburger, H. (1986) "Multifunctionality in aspectual determination". A. Barentsen, B. Groen and R. Sprenger, eds. *Dutch studies in Russian linguistics*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 145–80.
- Heger, Klaus. (1963) *Die Bezeichnung temporal-deiktischer Begriffskategorien im französischen und spanischen Konjugationssystem*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Israeli, Alina. (1996) "Discourse analysis of Russian aspect: Accent on creativity". *Journal of Slavic linguistics* 4 (1): 8–49.
- . (1998) "Speakers' Attitudes, Goals and Aspectual Choices in WH-Questions". *Le Langage et l'Homme* 33 (1):55-77.
- Kolde, G. (1989) *Der Artikel in deutschen Sachverhaltsnominalen*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Leinonen, Marja. (1982) *Russian aspect, "temporal'naja lokalizacija", and definiteness/indefiniteness*. Helsinki: Nuevostoliitointituutin vuosikirja, 27.
- Leiss, Elisabeth. (1992) *Die Verbalkategorien des Deutschen: Ein Beitrag zur Theorie der sprachlichen Kategorisierung*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- . (2000) *Artikel und Aspekt. Die grammatischen Muster von Definitheit*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Lyons, John. (1977) *Semantics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Maslov, Jurij S. (1984) *Očerki po aspektologii*. Saint Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta.
- Mazon, André. (1914) *Emplois des aspects du verbe russe*. Paris: Librairie Champion.
- Mehlig, Hans Robert. (1976) "Der imperfektive Aspekt als Proform". *Proceedings of the Fourth international congress of applied linguistics*. Stuttgart: Hochschulverlag, 177–86.
- . (1979) "Überlegungen zur Funktion und Determinierung der Aspekte im Russischen". J. Raecke, C. Sappok, eds. *Slavistische Linguistik 1978*. Munich: Kubon & Sagner, 151–69.
- . (1989) "Thema-Rhema-Gliederung und Verbalaspekt: Zum Aspektgebrauch in russischen Fragesätzen". W. Girke, ed. *Slavistische Linguistik 1988*. Munich: Kubon & Sagner, 147-196.
- Michaelis, Laura. (1998) *Aspectual Grammar and Past-Time Reference*. London: Routledge.
- Padučeva, Elena V. (1993) "O tak nazывaemoj konkurencii soveršennogo i nesoveršennogo vida v russkom jazyke". *Wiener Slavistischer Almanach* 31: 259–73.
- . (1996) *Semantičeskie issledovanie*. Moscow: Škola "Jazyki russkoj kul'tury".
- Rassudova, Ol'ga P. (1968/1982) *Upotreblenie vidov v russkom jazyke*. Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta.
- Schopf, Alfred. (1984) *Das Verzeiungssystem des Englischen und seine Textfunktionen*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.

- Šatunovskij, Il'ja B. (1996) *Semantika predloženiya i nereferentnye slova*. Moscow: Škola "Jazyki russoj kul'tury".
- Smith, Carlotta. ([1991]1997) *The Parameter of Aspect*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Vendler, Zeno. (1967) *Linguistics in philosophy*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Zemach, Eddy. (1975) "On the adequacy of a type ontology". *Synthese* 31: 509–15.

Hans Robert Mehlig
Institut für Slavistik
Christian-Albrechts-Universität
Kiel, Germany
Mehlig@slav.uni-kiel.de

Received: 30 May 2001

Revised: 7 Nov 2001