"Semelfactive" *-nǫ-* and the Western Aspect Gestalt*

Stephen M. Dickey

Abstract. This article presents a discussion of differences between the Slavic languages regarding the historical productivity of *-nǫ-* as an aspectual suffix. It is shown that a class of prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets has been more productive in a group of western languages (primarily Czech, Slovak, Upper Sorbian) and that this productivity declines in the languages farther to the east, reaching a minimum in Russian and Bulgarian. Further, differences are shown regarding the function of *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizing suffix in some Common Slavic unprefixed pf verbs. These differences are then discussed, with no claims to an exhaustive analysis.

1. Introduction

Most descriptions of aspectual derivation in the Slavic languages have focused on derivational patterns which are more or less shared by all the Slavic languages, or have tacitly assumed that there are no significant differences between the individual languages. However, it is becoming increasingly clear that aspectual and procedural (i.e., Aktionsart) derivation vary in important if subtle ways from language to language (cf., e.g., Anan′eva 1998; Dickey 2000, chap. 7; Petruxina 2000). In what follows I will discuss some patterns of verbal derivation involving "semelfactive" *-nǫ-*, which seem to characterize a western group of Slavic languages (primarily USor, Cz, Slk, and to a lesser extent Sln, Pol and Cro/Ser[1]) in contrast to an eastern group (Ru, Uk, Br and Bg). Though this discussion focuses mainly on patterns of derivation evident in dictionaries of the contemporary languages, the goal is ultimately to point out the significance of the data for an analysis of the historical development of Slavic aspect. On

* I would like to thank Norbert Nübler for providing valuable advice and feedback on some morphological issues during the writing of this paper, as well as Marc Greenberg, Marta Greenberg, Tomaš Sámek, and Igor Žagar. Naturally, they are not responsible for any shortcomings in the analysis presented here.

[1] The following abbreviations are used in this article:

Bg	Bulgarian	Ru	Russian
Br	Belarusian	Ser	Serbian
Cro	Croatian	Slk	Slovak
Cz	Czech	Sln	Slovene
Mac	Macedonian	Uk	Ukrainian
Pol	Polish	USor	Upper Sorbian

the basis of the comparative data, it is suggested that from a relatively early period the morphological and especially semantic nature of "semelfactive" *-nǫ-* has been different in the individual Slavic languages, without yet making strong claims as to the precise nature of the difference.

The background to the remarks below is the east-west aspectual division described and analyzed in Dickey (2000). This analysis of Slavic aspect (termed hereafter the **east-west aspect theory**) divides the Slavic languages into a western group (Cz, Sk, USor, Sln), an eastern group (Ru, Br, Uk, Bg) and two transitional zones (Pol in the north, and Ser and Cro in the south). Space limitations preclude a description of aspectual usage in the respective groups; the division of Slavic into an eastern and a western aspectual type is based on well-known data involving several kinds of aspectual usage/patterning, such as aspectual usage in habitual contexts and the historical present, as well as differences involving the impf general-factual and verbal nouns, among others. For abundant discussion of these differences, the interested reader is referred to Stunová (1993), Dickey (2000) and Petruxina (2000), as well as the references cited in these works. As for the meanings of the aspects in the different groups, Dickey (2000) argues that meaning of the pf aspect in the western group is the commonly accepted notion of **totality**—a situation viewed as a complete whole. The meaning of the pf aspect in the eastern group is **temporal definiteness**, a notion which cannot be elaborated here; suffice it to say that this concept can be defined in pretheoretical terms and in terms of its practical effect on aspect usage as "sequentiality" (this has been suggested as the meaning of the Ru pf in several studies, cf., e.g., Galton 1976, Barentsen 1985 and Stunová 1991).

Given the overall east-west difference in Slavic aspect established in Dickey (2000), the issue that naturally arises is how that division came about, and what the relationship is between the development of the east-west aspectual division and the development of Slavic aspect as such. One way of investigating these problems is to examine the derivational models attested in contemporary dictionaries, which give us some insight into what has been going on regarding aspectual derivation in the individual languages in recent centuries. The answers to these two historical questions are at worst now beyond reach, or at best highly complex, involving several factors. To address them all adequately lies far beyond my purpose here, which is merely to discuss some interesting data concerning semelfactive *-nǫ-*, attempt to organize it in a preliminary fashion and present some ideas that deserve further investigation.

2. A Pattern of Verbal Derivation in Cz, Slk, USor, Pol, and Sln

Let us begin by considering some patterns of derivation in Slavic verbs. All Slavic languages attest descendants of Common Slavic (aspectual?[2]) pairs consisting of an unprefixed impf verb suffixed in *-a-* and an unprefixed pf verb suffixed in *-nǫ-*,[3] cf., e.g., Ru *dergat'*^{i}—*dernut'*^{p} (← **derg-nut'*), Cz *trhat*^{i}—*trhnout*^{p} 'pull, tug'. What frequently escapes the attention of even aspect specialists is that prefixed verbs derived from these pairs behave differently in the individual Slavic languages. Section 2.1 sets up the basic contrast on the basis of Cz and Ru data, and section 2.2 briefly discusses the other Slavic languages.

2.1. Czech vs. Russian

In Cz, the derivational process is transparent: adding *od-* to *trhat*^{i} and *trhnout*^{p} yields *odtrhat*^{p} and *odtrhnout*^{p} respectively, both 'tear off'. Both of these verbs are perfective. They differ only in that the former is a kind of distributive, occurring with plural objects, e.g., *odtrhat*^{p} *listy/knoflíky* 'tear off the pages/buttons' (or expressing distributivity of the tugging subevents in time, i.e., 'tear off after a few tugs'),[4] whereas the latter is a "semelfactive", denoting a single action with a single object, e.g., *odtrhnout*^{p} *list z kalendaře/prkno z podlahy* 'tear a page off a calendar/pull a board off a floor'. These verbs are aspectually paired with the impf *odtrhávat*^{i}/*odtrhovat*^{i}. Importantly, Cz informants consider both *odtrhat*^{p} and *odtrhnout*^{p} to be a part of contemporary Cz and stylistically unmarked. In Ru, on the other hand, the contemporary standard language does not preserve such verbal pairs on a regular basis. Contemporary dictionaries such as the SRJa list only the pair *otdernut'*^{p}—*otdergivat'*^{i}; the pair can refer either to a "momentary" action (*rezkim dviženiem otvodit' nazad* 'move away with an abrupt motion') or one not specifically singular or sudden (*dergaja, otdeljat', otryvat'* 'remove, tear off by tugging'). Only in the Academy Dictionary does one find *otdergat'*^{p} in a separate entry marked as *razgovornyj*, defined with the latter meaning *dergaja, otdelit', otorvat'* 'remove, tear off by tugging'.

The opinions of Ru aspectologists differ as to whether Ru prefixed pf verbs suffixed in *-nu-* such as *otdernut'* 'draw aside/back', have "semelfac-

---

[2] I leave this issue open for the time being, as it is not entirely clear whether and in which languages such pairs are or were aspectual "pairs".

[3] Here and hereafter *-nǫ-* collectively represents its reflexes in the individual Slavic languages.

[4] Note that this sense of the term *distributive* is not to be confused with other traditionally established senses of the term, such as the well-known class of distributive verbs prefixed in *po-* in Slavic.

tive" meaning. Isačenko (1962: 401–2) argues that prefixation results in the loss of the semelfactive meaning of the source verb, with the result that the prefixed verb is simply "perfective". On the other hand, Avilova (1976: 161) claims that such prefixed *-nu-* verbs have "a nuance of semelfactivity". Israeli (personal communication) comes down on Isačenko's side in this respect—she considers such prefixed verbs in *-nu-* to be simply perfective. Silina (1982: 259) observes that some Ru dialects retain a higher number of pf doublets expressing this distinction than the standard literary language. It is also noteworthy that the SSRJa does not list pf verbs of the type *otdergat'*, but only the correlates in *-nu-*.

Consider some other verbs in Ru: the pair *vytjanut*^{p}*—vytjagivat*^{i} means 'pull out', whereas *vytjagat'* has become lexically removed from the pair, meaning 'extract through a lawsuit'. To the best of my knowledge, the only pf doublet that one finds outside the Academy Dictionary is *vydergat*^{p}, 'pull out [multiple objects]', which is morphologically correlated to *vydernut*^{p}*—vydergivat*^{i} 'pull out'. As for these last two verbs, Cz derives the triplets in both cases. The SSJČ gives *vytáhnout*^{p}*/vytahat*^{p}*—vytahovat*^{i} and *vytrhnout*^{p}*/vytrhat*^{p}*—vytrhávat*^{i}. Kopečný (1962: 107) observes that *vytrhat*^{p} is distributive with respect to *vytrhnout*^{p}. On p. 66, he notes that such distributives cannot be used to express actions performed on a single object; thus, one cannot say *roztrhali ho vejpůl* 'they broke it in two', but only *roztrhli* (the past tense of *roztrhnout*^{p}).

For the reasons given above, it is my impression that using the largest dictionaries as the sole basis of comparison can in fact lead one astray to a certain degree. As has been pointed out, such perfective doublets are *attested* in the Ru Academy Dictionary, but that does mean they are used with any frequency at all. In contrast, Cz dictionaries, even contemporary pocket dictionaries such as *Langenscheidts Taschenwörterbuch*, give the Cz pf doublets consistently.[5] Moreover, such pf doublets in Cz (and other western languages) make a strange impression on the Russian aspectologists I have consulted with. In this regard, Bondarko (1963: 30) observes that such doublets are the result of Cz having "developed a broad group of perfective verbs in *-nou-* (*the abundance of prefixed verbs with this suffix is noticeable, in particular, in a comparison with Russian*)" [Emphasis mine—SMD]. Two good examples of such *-nou-* verbs occurring in doublets that do not exist in Ru are *odříznout*^{p} (*/odřezat*^{p}*—odřezávat*^{i}) 'cut off' (cf. Ru *otrézat*^{p}*—otrezát*^{i}) and *načrtnout*^{p} (*/načrtat*^{p}*—načrtávat*^{i}) 'sketch, outline' (cf. Ru *načertit*^{p}[6]).

[5] In a recent research stay in Prague after the completion of this article, examinations of newspapers such as *Dnes* and *Blesk* confirmed the systematic use of such doublets in the contemporary language.

[6] An archaic variant is *načertat'*^{p}.

Kopečný (1962) and others have described the semantic distinction in distributivity between such Cz pf doublets (i.e., multiple vs. single objects) in scattered remarks. The most thorough discussion of this phenomenon is to be found in Vey (1948), which describes various manifestations of the distributivity distinction in Cz verbs (including distinctions in both aspects). Vey (1948: 118–19) observes that prefixation of *a*-stem iteratives and *n*-stem semelfactives in Cz regularly produces the perfective doublets discussed above, e.g., *bodat*^{i}—*bodnout*^{p} 'prick' + *pro-* yields *probodat*^{p}/ *probodnout*^{p} (—*probodovat*^{i}) 'puncture'. Interestingly, Vey points out that Cz has other unprefixed iterative—semelfactive pairs in which the semelfactive is *not* suffixed in *-nout*, e.g. *hazet*^{i}—*hodit*^{p} 'throw', and that prefixation produces the same kind of perfective doublets: *odhazet*^{p}/ *odhodit*^{p} (—*odhazovat*^{i}) 'cast away'. The former means 'cast away [several objects]', e.g., *odhazet hromadu uhlí* 'cast away a pile of coal'; the latter means 'cast away [a single object]', e.g., *odhodit kámen z cesty* 'cast a rock from the road'. Another example is *odskákat*^{p}/*odskočit*^{p}—*odskakovat*^{i} 'jump away', derived from *skákat*^{i}—*skočit*^{p} 'jump'; *odskákat*^{p} denotes a sequence of several jumps, e.g., *veverka odskákala*^{p} 'the squirrel hopped away', whereas *odskočit*^{p} denotes a single jump, e.g., *odskočit*^{p} *za strom* 'jump [away] behind a tree' The fact that other iterative—semelfactive pairs produce such perfective distributive/semelfactive doublets is another good indication that this is a systemic feature of Cz.

Further evidence of the difference between Cz and Ru with regard to such pf doublets are those prefixed with *za-* in Cz, discussed by Nübler and Karlík (1999). The verbs that form the basis for such pf doublets are (mostly intransitive) atelic activity verbs occurring in the same kind of iterative—semelfactive pairs, e.g., *mávat*^{i}—*mávnout*^{p} 'wave'. Prefixation with *za-* yields *zamávat*^{p}/*zamávnout*^{p}.[7] Other examples are *zakřičet*^{p}/*zakřik-nout*^{p} (← *křičet*^{i}—*křiknout*^{p} 'shout') and *zadýchat*^{p}/*zadýchnout*^{p} (← *dýchat*^{i}—*dýchnout*^{p} 'breathe'). The difference in meaning between such perfective doublets is not one of distributivity, but rather of duration/iterativity. Unlike Ru ingressive *za-*, Cz *za-* expresses (sudden) ingressivity plus a limited duration (cf. Dickey 2000, Petruxina 2000). Thus, a verb such as *zamávat* means 'start waving and give a few waves'. In contrast, a verb such as *zamávnout* means 'start waving and wave very briefly' (cf. Nübler and Karlík 1999: 218–19). Notably, no Ru dictionary, not even the Academy Dictionary, attests any such Ru pf doublets prefixed with *za-*. These Cz pf

[7] Nübler and Karlík (1999) make the case that synchronically the direction of derivation is in fact *mávat* → *zamávat* → *zamávnout*. The issue is not entirely clear, and if Nübler and Karlík's synchronic hypothesis is correct, it is possible that the diachronic source was nevertheless prefixation of the iterative—semelfactive pair. As the precise path of derivation is not immediately relevant for establishing the distinction in prefixed verbs under discussion, the issue will not be pursued here.

doublets prefixed in *za-*, which are completely unattested in Ru or any other eastern language, may be considered a prime example of the differing patterns of derivation in the two languages.

2.2. Other Slavic Languages

Let us consider Slk first. Dictionaries generally give the same doublets that exist in Cz, e.g. *odškrabat'*^{p}*/odškrabnút'*^{p}*—odškrabovat'*^{i} 'scrape off'. Peciar (1971: 224–25) mentions such aspectual alternations in prefixed verbs, involving stems such as *-škrtnút'*^{p}*/-škrtat'*^{p}*—-škrtávat'*^{i} 'cancel'. An example is *vyškrtnút'*^{p}*/vyškrtat'*^{p}*—vyškrtávat'*^{i} 'strike out/delete'. However, Slk has slightly fewer such pf doublets than Cz, cf. *odtrhnút'*^{p}*—odtŕhat'*^{i}*/odtŕhávat'*^{i} 'tear off', where the *a*-stem became impf. As otherwise Slk seems to correspond closely to Cz (note also that Slk has doublets prefixed in *za-* as well, cf., e.g., *zakričat'*^{p}*/zakríknut'*^{p} 'shout', *zamavat'*^{p}*/zamávnut'*^{p} 'wave'), no further comment is required for this discussion.

USor is quite interesting. Judging from the number of prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets given in dictionaries such as Jakubaš (1954), USor appears to derive even more such doublets than Cz. Ermakova (1973: 202) discusses them from a morphological point of view, giving examples such as *dočerpać*^{p}*/dočerpnyć*^{p} (*—dočerpować*^{i}) 'scoop out', *podřemać*^{p}*/podřemnyć*^{p} 'doze', and *nadpisać*^{p}*/nadpisnyć*^{p} (*—nadpisować*^{i}) 'add by writing'.[8] As for the semantics of such pf doublets, Fasske and Michalk (1981) characterize the verbs in *-nyć* as expressing **decursivity** (*Dekursitivität*; 96–100), i.e., as expressing "processes that occur continually [and] uninterrupted", a notion which includes semelfactivity as a specific instantiation (195). Thus, a verb like *dočerpnyć* means primarily 'scoop out [in one motion]', whereas *dočerpać* means 'scoop out [in several motions/several objects]'. Though I have found no detailed discussion of such doublets in USor complete with contrasting examples, all indications indicate that the semantic distinction between such verbs is the same kind of distributivity distinction that is expressed by such doublets in Cz (cf. also Toops in this volume, fn. 36). Like Cz and Slk, USor attests numerous pf doublets prefixed in *za-*, e.g., *zakřikać*^{p}*/zakřiknyć*^{p} 'shout'.

With USor we have covered all the languages in which a contrast between prefixed *a*-stems and *n*-stems appears to be a widespread, systemic feature within the pf aspect: the westernmost Slavic languages, USor, Cz and Slk.[9] Eastward of these languages, dictionaries attest fewer such doublets (cf. the discussion of Ru in 2.1).

---

[8] It deserves mention that Ermakova assumes the same derivational path as Nübler and Karlík (1999): *čerpać* → *dočerpać* → *dočerpnyć*.

[9] Lower Sorbian must await further investigation; it is in all likelihood similar or identical to USor, cf., e.g., *dokopaś*^{p}*/dokopnuś*^{p}*—dokopowaś*^{i} 'völlig umhacken'.

Strekalova (1979: 114–22) discusses pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets in Pol, observing that the contemporary language has "over forty" such doublets.[10] This is certainly lower than the number in Cz and USor (figures for Cz and USor are not available, but my incomplete lists of such doublets for each of these languages contain many more than forty). Not only are there fewer pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets in Pol, but it seems that the semantic distinction in distributivity between the verbs is less stable in Pol than in Cz: Strekalova (1979: 120) points out that the "prefix […] to a considerable extent erases the procedural meaning inherent in the stems" (i.e., the iterative—semelfactive distinction; cf. Isačenko's view concerning Ru cited above). Thus, some doublets, e.g., *wepchać*^{p}/*wepchnąć*^{p} 'push in', retain the distributivity distinction, whereas others, e.g., *nadeptać*^{p}/*nadepnąć*^{p} 'step on' are aspectually completely synonymous. One reason that Pol has fewer pf doublets than Cz is that its prefixed *a*-stems very often became impf, more frequently than in Slk: compare Pol *odciągnąć*^{p}—*odciągać*^{i} with Cz *odtáhnout*^{p}/*odtahat*^{p}—*odtahovat*^{i}. Another reason is that Pol (like Ru, cf. section 2.1), has not derived as many prefixed *-nǫ-* verbs as Cz, cf., e.g., Pol *odskrobać*^{p} (but **odskrobnąć*) vs. Cz *odškrabat*^{p}/*odškrábnout*^{p} 'scrape off'.

The description given above indicates that Pol has rudiments of the distributive/semelfactive distinction, but not to the same high degree of USor, Cz and Slk. On the other hand, Pol informants confirm the existence of the doublets attested in dictionaries (e.g., *wepchać*^{p}/*wepchnąć*^{p} 'push in'), which indicates that the status of such doublets (both morphological and semantic) is more than an artifact of exhaustive dictionaries. Thus, we are justified in concluding that prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets are more a part of standard Pol than they are a part of standard Ru. This accords with the hypothesis of Pol as a transitional zone between the western and eastern aspectual types according to the east-west aspect theory (cf. section 1 above).

As for Uk and Br, the academy dictionaries for these languages attest more pf doublets than in Ru. But the doublets attested are only sometimes defined as differing according to the distributive/semelfactive distinction. For example, Uk *výsmykaty*^{p} and *vysmyknuty*^{p} 'pluck out' are defined as synonymous pf variants, whereas *výtjahaty*^{p} means 'pull out after a few tugs' in contrast to *vytjahnuty*^{p} which is simply pf 'pull out'. As far as I am aware, the doublets attested in Uk and Br correspond with very few exceptions to the doublets attested in Pol. For instance, Uk and Br attest doublets corresponding to Pol *wepchać*^{p}/*wepchnąć*^{p}—*wpychać*^{i} 'push/shove in': Uk *vpxaty*^{p}/*vpxnuty*^{p}—*vpyxaty*^{i} and Br *upxac'*^{p}/*upxnuc'*^{p}—*upixac'*^{i}/*upixvac'*^{i}. Regarding these verbs, in this case the Uk pf verbs are again synonymous, whereas the Br pf verbs express the distributivity

[10] She also discusses pf. root-stem/*n*-stem doublets, e.g., *ociec*^{p}/*ocieknąć*^{p}—*ociekać*^{i} 'flow down'. Such doublets are also found in Cz and USor, but will not be treated here.

distinction—Br *upxacʼ*^{p} is defined as 'push in all of or many'. But compare the following verbs corresponding to Pol *odepchnąć*^{p}*—odpychać*^{i} 'push away': Uk *vidipxnuty*^{p}*—vidpyxaty*^{i}, Br *adpixnucʼ*^{p} (*adapxnucʼ*^{p})*—adpixacʼ*^{i}/*adpixvacʼ*^{i}. Thus, for 'push in', Uk and Br attest pf doublets corresponding to the Pol pf doublets, but in the case of 'push away', for which Pol attests no pf doublets, the doublets are also absent in Uk and Br.

I consider it significant that, with few exceptions, searches in Uk and Br dictionaries only yield pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets for those very roots for which doublets are attested in Pol, e.g., *-pchać/-pchnąć* 'push'. Another example is Pol *odcharkać*^{p}*/odcharknąć*^{p}*—odcharkiwać*^{i} 'clear one's throat [by coughing]', for which Uk attests *vidxarkaty*^{p}*/vidxarknuty*^{p}*—vidxarkuvaty*^{i} and Br *adxarkacʼ*^{p}*/adxarknucʼ*^{p}*—adxarkvacʼ*^{i}. On the other hand, another example of the lack of pf doublets is Pol *odciągnąć*^{p}*—odciągać*^{i} 'draw away', for which Uk attests *vidtjahnuty*^{p}[11]*—vidtjahaty*^{i}*/vidtjahuvaty*^{i} and Br *adcjahnucʼ*^{p}*—adcjahvacʼ*^{i} (*adcjahacʼ*^{p} has a different meaning, 'wear clothes/shoes for a [specified] long period of time'). So again we see a correlation between Pol on the one hand and Uk and Br on the other. In my view, this indicates the possibility that Uk and Br as East Slavic languages have not developed many such pairs on their own, but have imported them from Pol and/or maintained them under Pol influence (the extensive Pol linguistic influence on Uk and Br in historical times is well known). It is important to point out that Uk and Br never produce doublets from other verbs on a par with Cz, cf. Uk *vidrizaty*^{p}*—vidrizuvaty*^{i} 'cut off' (there is no Uk **vidriznuty*, cf. Cz *odříznout*^{p}). The suggestion of Pol influence is admittedly speculative, and needs to be investigated thoroughly before it can be accepted as fact. However, there are some facts which are circumstantial evidence for this hypothesis. Consider the case of Pol *dmuchać*^{i}*—dmuchnąć*^{p} 'blow'. According to Bańkowski (2000: vol 1, 276), *dmuchać*^{i}*—dmuchnąć*^{p} was loaned from Pol into Uk and Br. And Uk and Br attest pf doublets derived from these verbs which correspond to Pol doublets. Thus, corresponding to Pol *wdmuchać*^{p}*/wdmuchnąć*^{p}*—wdmuchiwać*^{i} 'blow into' Uk attests *vdmuxaty*^{p}*/vdmuxnuty*^{p}*—vdmuxuvaty*^{i}, and corresponding to Pol *oddmuchać*^{p}*/oddmuchnąć*^{p}*—oddmuchywać*^{i} 'blow off/away' Br attests *addzʼmuxacʼ*^{p}*/addzʼmuxnucʼ*^{p}*—addzʼmuxvacʼ*^{i}. I think the simplest explanation of the Pol-Uk-Br match concerning prefixed pf doublets is that this is the result of Pol linguistic influence, especially in view of the fact that Ru attests none of the doublets discussed above (neither does Bg). The reason that Pol influence as the source of such prefixed doublets in Uk and Br is significant is that it explains the presence of such doublets as ultimately

[11] A variant infinitive lacks the *-nu-* suffix: *vidtjahty*. Many Uk prefixed *-nu-* verbs have alternate unsuffixed infinitives. This perhaps reflects different dialectal sources, but a full description must await futher investigation.

the result of non-East Slavic (and non-eastern in terms of Dickey 2000) interference.[12] However, as pointed out, this issue cannot be resolved here.

Let us now turn to South Slavic, moving west to east. Sln, which patterns in many respects like the extreme western languages in terms of the east-west aspect division, attests far fewer *a*-stem/*n*-stem pf doublets than Cz, Slk and USor. They occur only exceptionally, but enough can be found to merit consideration, cf. the following examples: *odmahati*^{p}/*odmahniti*^{p}—*odmahovati*^{i} 'wave' (*odmahati*^{p} means 'respond to wave by waving'; *odmahniti*^{p} means 'dismiss with a single wave') *odvihati*^{p}/*odvihniti*^{p}—*odvihavati*^{i} 'roll/turn back' (*odvihati*^{p} occurs with plural objects, e.g., *odvihati*^{p} *rokave* 'roll up sleeves'; *odvihniti*^{p} occurs with singular objects, e.g., *odvihniti*^{p} *hlačnico* 'roll up a pant leg'). The SSKJ gives particularly illustrative examples with the doublets *izbruhati*^{p}/*izbruhniti*^{p} 'vomit':

(1) a. Vse, kar je pojedel, je **izbruhal**^{p}.
'Everything that he ate, he vomited.' [Sln]

b. Komaj je zaužil hrano, že je **izbruhnil**^{p}.
'He had hardly put any food in his mouth when he vomited.' [Sln]

The distinction between (1a) and (1b) is clearly that of distributivity (the complete affectedness of the food eaten, which involves a multiple number of "heaves") vs. semelfactivity (a single "heave"). Similarly, *spodvihati*^{p} 'turn under' denotes an action lasting some time, as in *spodvihati*^{p} *rob krila* 'turn the hem of a skirt under [hem a skirt]', whereas *spodvihniti*^{p} is a quicker action, as in *spodvihniti*^{p} *rjuho pod zimnico* 'tuck a sheet under a mattress'. Like Cz, Sln also makes the distinction occasionally with intransitives, e.g., *odskakati*^{p} (*skakajoč oditi* 'go away jumping')/*odskočiti*^{p} (*s skokom se oddaljiti* 'move away with a single jump')—*odskakovati*^{i} (cf. the discussion of the Cz correlates in 2.1). The Sln informants I have consulted readily recognized such doublets as a real part of Sln. While such examples indicate that the distinction is a real part of Sln, it is puzzling that Sln does not attest many of the more commonly attested doublets for notions such as 'pull out', etc.

Ser and Cro dictionaries attest more of such doublets than Sln, or at least more which correspond to the lexical verbs producing them in Cz. For example, Cro attests *istrgati*^{p}/*istrgnuti*^{p} (—*istrzati*^{i}) 'pull/tug out', and

[12] This is not the first time a hypothesis of this kind has been offered. Rudnik-Karwatowa (1986) suggests that the higher productivity of *po-* as a distributive prefix in Uk and Br in contrast to Ru is the result of Pol linguistic influence. This is remarkable, as the phenomena involved (aspect morphology and markers of distributivity in particular) resemble those under discussion here.

Cro informants confirm that they express the distributive/semelfactive distinction (I have not had a chance to question Ser informants). However, in Ser/Cro *odskakati* is impf, unlike in Sln, and is paired with *odskočiti*^{p}/*odskoknuti*^{p}, which are apparently synonymous. Note also that Sln *izbruhati*^{p}/*izbruhniti*^{p} 'vomit' both correspond to Ser/Cro *izbljuvati*^{p}. Thus, Ser and Cro exhibit such doublets to an extent, though it is not clear what the productivity is in Ser/Cro relative to Sln, or whether Ser and Cro are entirely uniform in this respect. A precise description of Ser and Cro must await further investigation, though the opinions of Cro informants indicate that the doublets attested in dictionaries are a real part of that language.

In contrast, Bg attests no such doublets as far as I am aware. Prefixed *a*-stem verbs are regularly impf, cf., e.g., *otpadam*^{i} 'fall off', and are aspectually paired with their prefixed *n*-stem correlates, e.g., *otpadna*^{p}. The only verbs that might appear to be such doublets involve multiple senses of the prefix *iz-*, which has a meaning of 'out' in addition to functioning as a distributive prefix. Thus, in the RBE one can find both the pair *izskubvam*^{i}—*izskubna*^{p} 'pluck *out*', as well as *izskubja*^{p}, which bears a superficial resemblance. But the latter has a distributive meaning 'pluck many/all of' and is not an instance of lexical *iz-* 'out'.[13] Likewise, *izpadvam*^{i}—*izpadna*^{p} means 'fall *out*', whereas *izpadvam*^{i}—*izpadam*^{p} is a distributive, meaning 'fall [of many or all]'. The lack of any apparent doublets with other prefixes confirms this analysis.

The descriptions of Ru and Cz in 2.1 and those given above for Slk, USor, Pol, Uk, Br, Sln, Ser/Cro and Bg evince the *rudiments* of an overall east-west difference regarding the productivity of prefixed pf *n*-stems as a subtype of pf verb contrasting with prefixed pf *a*-stems. I stress the idea of the rudiments of a division, because the languages do not pattern completely in accordance with the parameters forming the basis of the east-west aspect theory. This is to be expected, however, as the inventory of lexical verbs attested for a given language at a given time (and thus what its existing patterns of verb derivation are) can be simultaneously affected by various conservative and innovative factors, such as retention of unproductive yet attested forms on the one hand and organic innovations as well as sources of interference (e.g., loans, either within Slavic or from non-Slavic languages) on the other. In contrast, patterns of aspect usage, such as aspect usage in habitual utterances, tend to be conventionalized more uniformly as components of the abstract aspecto-temporal system of a language community, and thus exhibit fewer idiosyncrasies than the lexicon.

---

[13] In other words, *izskubja* is the distributive of the verb *skubja*^{i} 'pluck'; *iz-* (sometimes *izpo-*) is the Bg distributive equivalent to *po-* in other Slavic languages, which expresses full affectedness of *all* of a given set of objects (subjects).

With this in mind, let us recapitulate the situation described above. Prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets are widely attested in the extreme west—Cz, Slk and USor. Sln attests fewer such doublets than expected (though this issue has not been investigated thoroughly), given its predominantly western aspectual patterning according to the east-west aspect theory. Pol has fewer pf doublets than the extreme west, but more than Ru and Bg (this corresponds nicely to its transitional status in the east-west aspect theory); Ser/Cro also pattern as expected for a transitional zone—doublets are attested and recognized by informants, but are apparently not particularly productive. As for the east, Uk and Br have higher numbers of such doublets than is expected given their consistently eastern patterns of aspect usage, but it is possible that Pol linguistic influence has contributed to this. Lastly, Ru and Bg attest the fewest such doublets; some doublets are attested for Ru in the Academy Dictionary, but in contrast to Sln or Ser/Cro, informants do not recognize those doublets as characteristic of the contemporary language.[14]

What the precise significance is of such prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets is for a theory of Slavic aspect is even harder to determine fully, and it is not my intention to do so here. However, some preliminary remarks may be made. If a language makes no subdivisions within its prefixed pf verbs, e.g., Ru *otrezat*^{p} 'cut off', then one may conclude that the aspectual "functional load" of prefixation (to use a structuralist term) is very high, including not only the terminativity/telicity entailed by the metaphorical transfer of the spatial meanings of the prefixes, but any and all other semantic elements of the perfective aspect, for instance the abstract notion of totality that most treatments assume to be a central feature of the pf aspect (this statement is not meant to be an endorsement of that view of aspect for all of Slavic). On the other hand, if a language makes distinctions within its prefixed pf verbs according to the suffix involved, e.g., Cz *odřezat*^{p}/*odříznout*^{p} 'cut off', this may be taken as an indication that the primary functions of prefixes are their spatial content and the accompanying terminativity/telicity; the presence vs. absence of the more abstract temporal notion of totality appears to be expressed more by the suffixes involved, and less by the prefix itself. Accordingly, one is justified in

[14] It is worth pointing out that the unexpected pattterning of Sln and Uk (though not Br) for prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets also matches their unexpected patterning for another category of aspectual derivation, verbal nouns: Sln derives noticeably fewer aspectual pairs of verbal nouns than Cz and Slk (while nevertheless retaining the general semantic distinctions involved); on the other hand, Uk derives many more morphologically aspectual pairs of verbal nouns than the other eastern languages (which, however, do not express the Uk aspect opposition, cf. Dickey 2000, chapt. 8). Unfortunately, any possible significance of this split between patterns of aspectual *usage* and relevant patterns of *derivation* evident for Sln and Uk with respect to the east-west aspect theory cannot be considered here.

concluding that in Ru perfectivization is more centered around prefixation than it is in Cz. This conclusion is admittedly tentative, but is supported by other kinds of evidence in sections 3–4.

The exact historical source of the division regarding prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets is not entirely clear either, but again, some preliminary observations may be made. Such doublets appear to reflect an older state of affairs and are generally not recent innovations. Indicative of this is the fact that according to Silina (1982: 253–59) Ru has simplified many triplets since the seventeenth century either by eliminating the *a*-stem (e.g., Old Ru *vytjanuti*^{p}—*vytjagati*^{i}/*vytjagivati*^{i} → CSR *vytjanut*^{p}—*vytjagivat*^{i} 'pull out') or by eliminating the secondary *-iva-* impf (e.g., Old Ru *vmetnuti*^{p}—*vmetati*^{i}/*vmetyvati*^{i} → CSR *vmetnut*^{p}—*vmetat*^{i} 'cast into'). Likewise, Kucała (1966: 78–79) discusses the loss in Pol of some prefixed pf *a*-stems with distributive meaning, e.g., *natykać*^{p} 'stuff [into]' (/*natknąć*^{p}) and *wyciskać*^{p} 'stamp/press out' (/*wycisnąć*^{p}); such verbs have ordinary impf homonyms in the contemporary language: *natykać*^{i}, *wyciskać*^{i}. The details of the loss of impf *a*-stems as discussed by Silina and of pf *a*-stems as discussed by Kucała are not entirely clear, but these issues cannot be resolved here. One last point that deserves mention is that although these doublets are characteristic of older stages of Slavic, Cz, Slk and especially USor have innovated within this category, chiefly by creating prefixed verbs in *-nǫ-*, e.g., Cz *načrtnout*^{p} 'sketch', *namáznout*^{p} 'smear/spread' *odříznout*^{p} 'cut off' (cf. the observation by Bondarko 1963: 30 cited in 2.1).

The difference in the documented productivity of prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets corresponds to other differences between the Slavic languages regarding the productivity of *-nǫ-* in Slavic. As one might already suspect, there is evidence that *-nǫ-* was more productive as a perfectivizing suffix in simplex (unprefixed) verbs in the western languages. Some of this evidence is discussed in the following sections.

3. Some Ancient Verbs

In this section, some verbs of Common Slavic provenance are examined in the forms in which they are attested in the individual languages, and the significance of the distribution of suffixation with *-nǫ-* is considered. Before going on, it should be pointed out that the West Slavic languages provide evidence of an early productivity of *-nǫ-* as a pf suffix.[15] Šlosar

[15] This statement must immediately be qualified as tentative: it is not clear that the category that *-nǫ-* expressed during Late Common Slavic or the early stages of the individual languages was identical to the "perfective" of the contemporary languages. It should be emphasized that aspect was grammaticalized relatively late in the (historical) Slavic languages. Three issues arise in this regard: (1) the meanings of the aspects in a given language (cf. Dickey 2000); (2) the meanings of the aspects—to the extent that they existed—in Late Common Slavic and the early individual languages; (3) the degree to which the

(1981: 9) suggests that in Old Cz the *-n-* in the present tense of old nasal root stems (e.g. *-čieti* 'begin', *-jieti* 'take', *-kleti* 'curse', *-pieti* 'stretch', *-žieti* 'mow') was reanalyzed as the present-tense suffix *-ne-* (of class II verbs) and ultimately included in the infinitive, yielding such Modern Cz infinitives as *klnout*^{i} 'curse', *pnout*^{i} 'span', *žnout*^{i} 'mow'.[16] Notably, this did not occur in the infinitives of the nasal root stems in Slavic languages other than Cz, Slk and USor.

This process was at some point extended to root-stem pf[17] (i.e., class I) verbs in general, to include verbs without the old nasal roots, such as Old Cz *pasti* 'fall' *siesti* 'sit down'[18] and *vrci* 'hurl'. This process apparently occurred in the other West Slavic languages, so that Cz, Slk and Sor consistently generalized *-nǫ-* to the infinitives of unprefixed pf verbs; in my view this is evidence of the establishment of *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizing suffix. Pol did not carry this out so consistently. In some other languages *-nǫ-* was adopted for the present tense, in others not. Consider the following three verbs:

***leg-ti 'lie down'**

Cz lehnout	Pol lec/legnąć, lągnie[19]	Bg legne (OCS lešti, lężetъ)
Slk l'ahnút'	Sln leči,[20] legne	Ru leč′, ljažet
USor lehnyć so	Cro leći,[21] legne	Uk ljahty, ljažet′
		Br lehčy, ljaže

meaning of *-nǫ-* matched the meaning of the pf aspect in a given language at that early time.

[16] Of course, all these verbs are *imperfective*. It must be pointed out that *-nǫ-* also acquired greater productivity in the western languages in the derivation of certain kinds of impf verbs, chiefly inchoatives, e.g., Cz *stárnout* 'grow old' (cf. Ru *staret'*) and determinate verbs of motion, e.g., Cz *lítnout* 'fly', Pol *biegnąć* 'run' (cf. Ru *letet'* and *bežat'*). Impf verbs containing *-nǫ-* are indeed very relevant for a comprehensive analysis of *-nǫ-* as an aspectual morpheme in the history of Slavic. However, an adequate discussion of impf *-nǫ-* will not be discussed here, and is not immediately relevant to the issues under consideration.

[17] Again, this is not intended as a claim that Slavic aspect was grammaticalized in Late Common Slavic. Perhaps a better term would be "proto-perfective".

[18] There was originally a nasal infix in the present tense of *siesti*, but it is very doubtful that this was ever morphologically visible enough in West Slavic to be associated with nasal root stems such as *žieti*.

[19] Conjugated forms are given in the 3rd pers. sg.

[20] Note the alternate infinitive *legniti* given by Pleteršnik (1894).

[21] Note the alternate infinitive *legnuti*.

***_pad-ti_ 'fall'**

Cz padnout	Pol paść/padnąć,[22]	Bg padne (OCS pasti, padetъ)
Slk padnút'	padnie	Ru past', padet
USor padnyć	Sln pasti, padne	Uk pasty, padet'
	Cro pasti,[23] padne	Br pasci, padze

***_sěd-ti_ 'sit down'**

Cz sednout	Pol siąść, siądnie	Bg sedne (OCS sěsti, sędetъ)
Slk sadnút'	Sln sesti, sedne	Ru sest', sjadet
USor sydnyć so	Cro sjesti,[24] sjedne	Uk sisty, sjadet'
		Br sesci, sjadze

These three cases show a graded east-west division with regard to *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizer. There are in principle three "grades" of suffixation with *-nǫ-*: (1) the presence of *-nǫ-* in both the present tense and the infinitive; (2) the presence of *-nǫ-* in the present tense but not the infinitive; (3) the absence of *-nǫ-* in both the present tense and the infinitive. The maximum grade (1) characterizes the western extreme, the next grade (2) characterizes Sln and the transitional zones Pol and Cro, and the lowest grade characterizes the east, *except for* Bg. The fact that Bg suffixes these three verbs in the present tense (suffixation with *-nǫ-* in the infinitive is not an issue, as Bg has lost the infinitive) appears to contradict the hypothesis about perfectivizing *-nǫ-* as an east-west variation, but there are facts which speak against identifying the *-nǫ-* suffixation in Bg verbs such as *legna*, *padna* and *sedna* with the *-nǫ-* suffixation in Cz verbs such as *lehnout*, *padnout* and *sednout*. Note that OCS attests only root stems, e.g., *sěsti*, *sędetъ*. Moreover, another root which underwent *-nǫ-* suffixation, **sъret-* 'meet, encounter', patterns as expected in Cz if the suffix was added directly to the root, i.e. *střetnout*, whereas Bg produced *sreštna*, which is obviously a secondary derivation based on the present tense-stem—cf. the OCS infinitive *sъrěsti* (< **sъrět-ti*) and present-tense forms *sъręštǫ*, *sъręšteši*, etc. In other words, if Bg had added *-nǫ-* to pre-inflection roots, the result should be Modern Bg **sretna* and not *sreštna*.[25] In this regard, I suggest that the suffixation of

---

[22] Kreja (1956: 288) gives the latter form of the infinitive as a variant.

[23] Note the alternative infinitive *padnuti*.

[24] Note the alternative infinitive *sjednuti*.

[25] Mac has *sretne* 'meet', but also has retained the older root-stem variant *srete*, which generalized the unmutated stem to the present tense. Thus, *sretne* may be likewise explained as suffixation of the present-tense stem with *-ne*.

There are other facts from the history of Bg that cast doubt on the idea that *-nǫ-* was ever a specifically *perfective* suffix as opposed to a *semelfactive* suffix. Maslov (1963: 75) observes that in an older stage of Bg, impf iterative verbs were regularly derived from pf verbs suffixed with *-nǫ-* with the suffix *-nuva-*, e.g., *padna—padnuvam* 'fall', but that these

such root stems in Bg was unconnected with the same process in West Slavic; it appears to be a slightly later phenomenon, perhaps connected with the loss of the infinitive in Bg. It should be clear in any case that forms such as *lęgnǫ*, *padnǫ*, *sędnǫ* are not Common Slavic, as they are not attested in all Slavic languages (note that this is the conclusion reached by Vailliant 1966: 256–57); thus, they must have arisen in the individual languages.

A similar case is that of *vrъg-ti* 'hurl': West Slavic generalized *-nǫ-* to make this verb pf, whereas in the eastern languages the nasal-suffixed version has either been lost or has competed with root-stem forms of the same verb.

***vrъg-ti* 'hurl'**

Cz vrhnout	Pol wierzgnąć	Bg — (vârgaj)[26]
Slk vrhnúť	Sln vreči, vrže	Ru — (Old Ru vrěšti, vergnuti)
USor wjerhnyć	Cro vrći, vrgnuti	Uk verhnuty, verhty, verečy
		Br —[27]

In this case Sln does not attest the form in *-nǫ-*, (cf. the case of **s(t)ret-nǫti* in section 4). Here Bg either never developed a form suffixed in *-nǫ-* or eliminated it very early (cf. the OCS root-stem *vrěšti*, *vъrže*). Early East Slavic attests both nasal-suffixed *vergnuti* as well as root-stem forms, e.g.

verbs were later eliminated from the literary language. (Note that this pattern is currently productive in Mac: cf., e.g., *legne—legnuve*, *padne—padnuve*, *sedne—sednuve*, *sretne—sretnuve*.) Inasmuch as this derivational pattern was at one time productive, it indicates that *-nǫ-* in Bg was not functioning primarily as a marker of perfectivity: otherwise the nasal would not occur in the impf iterative as well. In addition, Maslov (1963: 79) discusses cases in which unprefixed impf verbs in *-nǫ-* have been derived by a process of "deprefixation" from prefixed pf verbs, e.g., *kradna* 'steal' from *otkradna*. The derivation of such dynamic impf verbs in *-nǫ-* (which cannot be connected with the homonymous impf inchoative suffix) is hard to reconcile with the idea that *-nǫ-* ever acquired status as a marker of perfectivity per se. Finally, Maslov (1963: 77–79, cf. also the references cited there) discusses verbs suffixed in *-nǫ-* such as *visna* 'hang' and *sekna* 'strike a spark' which have been attested as being biaspectual. Again, this is unexpected if *-nǫ-* was ever a primary perfectivizing (as opposed to semelfactive, ingressive) morpheme. Due to the many variables involved, such as dialectal differences and the chronologies involved, the issues presented by Bg (which have not been systematically investigated as far as I am aware) deserve a separate investigation.

[26] The same root has produced a common verb *hvârgam*, but its pf correlate *hvârlja* does not contain the nasal suffix.

[27] According to the HSBM, older stages of Br attest isolated forms of *verhnuti* competing with root-stem presents, e.g. 3rd p. sg. *veržetь*, similar to Uk.

vrěšti. Contemporary Uk has kept *verhnuty*. However, such nasal-suffixed verbs in Uk most often have alternate root-stem forms, e.g., *verhty*.[28]

In addition to the above distribution in *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizing suffix, there are at least two cases in which a verb in *-nǫ-* attested throughout Slavic became pf in the extreme west and impf everywhere else:

***gъb-nǫti* 'bend, move'**

Cz hnout^{p}	Pol giąć^{i} (gnie)	Bg gâna^{i}
Slk hnút'^{i}	Sln ganiti^{p}	Ru gnut'^{i}
USor hnuć^{i}	Cro ganuti^{p}	Uk hnuty^{i}
		Br hnuc'^{i}

Note that suffixed **gъbnǫti* is much older than the West Slavic and Bg suffixed pf verbs discussed above: this is indicated by the lack of the syllable-final stop of the root in all the Slavic languages, as opposed to its presence in younger verbs such as Cz *pa**d**nout*, Slk *pa**d**nút'*, Pol *pa**d**nąć*, Bg *pa**d**na*. Common Slavic **gъbnǫti* became pf in Cz, Sln, and Cro. The imperfectivity of USor *hnuć* in this regard is hard to evaluate, inasmuch as the USor reflex of **gъbnǫti* should be **hnyć*. In Slk, Pol, Bg, and East Slavic, *gъbnǫti* became impf. Thus, the east-west pattern is evident. The imperfectivity of Slk *hnút'* is admittedly unexpected, as it contrasts with the situation in Cz. In this respect it should be pointed out that Cz patterns more consistently according to the western type than any of the languages of the western group. Recall in this regard my observation in 2.2 that Slk attests slightly fewer prefixed perfective *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets than Cz. Consider also the fact that, according to Ivančev (1961: 45), the contextually-conditioned ingressive use of the imperfective past, which is characteristic to varying degrees of the western languages and Pol, occurs less in Slk than in Cz. I think there must certainly be a connection between the imperfectivity of Slk *hnút'* and these other ways in which it has slightly less "western-like" patterning than Cz; the closer typological proximity of Slk to Pol, the latter of which is very clearly transitional between the West and East, has likely been a factor here.

The other case is **gasnǫti*:

***gas-nǫti* 'go out'**

Cz hasnout^{p}	Pol gasnąć^{i}	Bg gasna^{i}
Slk hasnút'^{i}	Sln gasniti^{i}	Ru gasnut'^{i}
USor hasnyć^{p}	Cro gasnuti^{i}	Uk hasnuty^{i}
		Br hasnuc'^{i}

[28] This applies to prefixed pf verbs suffixed in *-nuty* as well: the SUM consistently gives alternate infinitive forms, cf., e.g., *vytjahnuty* and *vytjahty* 'pull out'.

In Cz and USor, **gasnǫti* became pf; it became impf everywhere else. In this respect, recall that Pol and Ser/Cro are very transitional in Slavic aspect as a whole. The imperfectivity of Sln *gasniti* is not particularly troubling in my view, as Sln deviates in some cases from the extreme west, patterning slightly more like the east (cf. , e.g., Dickey 2000: 210, 245, 261). As for the imperfectivity of Slk *hasnúť*, the remarks about *hnúť* made above apply as well.

Though these cases might not make the impression of weighty evidence, I should point out that I have yet to find a convincing case of either (a) unprefixed pf verbs suffixed with *-nǫ-* occurring in the eastern languages but not in the western languages (excluding recent, expressively marked semelfactives in East Slavic), or (b) an unprefixed Common Slavic verb in *-nǫ-* that became pf in the eastern languages and impf in the western languages.[29] Thus, the consistent marking of perfectivity with *-nǫ-* in the extreme west in contrast with all languages to the east can in a general sense be tied in with the higher number of prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets in the west (inasmuch as the latter is at least partially a result of the higher productivity of prefixed pf verbs suffixed with *-nǫ-* in the west). It is possible that further investigation will produce more verbs patterning like **leg-ti*, **pad-ti* and **sěd-ti* in the modern languages (one more case is given in section 4), as well as more cases of Common Slavic suffixation with *-nǫ-* producing pf verbs in the west and impf verbs in the east.

4. Semelfactives and "Aspectual Pairs"

Sections 2–3 established an overall pattern within Slavic of the higher productivity of *-nǫ-* as a pf suffix in the west (Cz, Slk, USor) in contrast with languages farther to the east (the transitional languages Pol and Ser/Cro, and the eastern languages Ru, Uk, Br, Bg). A careful consideration of *-nǫ-* as a pf suffix in Slavic, however, potentially involves not only quantitative issues (e.g., how much *-nǫ-* is there in a given language?) but qualitative issues as well (e.g., what exactly is the semantic/aspectual status of *-nǫ-* in the individual languages?). Some of these qualitative issues are considered briefly in this section, beginning with some remarks on *-nǫ-* and aspectual pairs in Slavic.

An examination of Ru and Cz dictionaries reveals that lexicographers of the respective languages have treated "semelfactives" in *-nǫ-* differently. Russian dictionaries, e.g., the Academy Dictionary, tend to mark semelfactives "as such"—*odnokratnyj* (even if different dictionaries treat

[29] The only possible exception is **sunǫti*: Cz *sunout*^{i}/Slk *sunúť*^{i} and Pol *sunąć*^{i} 'shove' are imperfective and not perfective (cf. Rus *sunut'*^{p}). However, the verb is also perfective in Sln (*sunitи*^{p}) and USor (*sunyć*^{p}), as well as Ser/Cro (*sunuti*^{p}).

such verbs slightly differently and occasionally inconsistently, cf. Isačenko 1960: 253–55, this is still generally true). In contrast, Cz dictionaries, e.g., the SSJČ, regularly list them as the "perfectives" of the corresponding impf verbs (as do Pol dictionaries). An example is the treatment of 'shout'. The Academy Dictionary lists *kriknut*^{p} 'shout' as the "semelfactive" (*odnokratnyj*) correlate of *kričat*^{i}—not its pf "partner";[30] the SSJČ lists *křiknout* as the "perfective" of *křičet*^{i}.

Of course, such apparent variation could be due to no more than an insignificant difference in approach by the respective lexicographers. But some facts from the history of the two languages provide circumstantial evidence of this difference in the status of *křiknout*^{p} and *kriknut*^{p} in Cz and Ru (respectively). It might come as a surprise, but *kriknut*^{p} is unattested in Ru until the *eighteenth century*.[31] On the other hand, *křiknúti*^{p} is attested as far back as the earliest Old Cz texts (i.e., the fourteenth century). It would be a mistake to conclude from the lack of attestations that Ru *kriknut*^{p} did not exist before the eighteenth century, but it is more reasonable to hypothesize that *kriknut*^{p} was somehow stylistically marked in Old Ru in a way that *křiknúti*^{p} was not in Old Cz, which corresponds to the definition of Modern Cz *křiknout*^{p} as the "perfective" of *křičet*^{i} in contrast to its "semelfactive" definition in Ru. In this respect it should be pointed out that **kriknǫti*^{p} is attested earliest in the west and later in the east across the entire Slavic territory. Thus, *křiknúti*^{p} is attested in Old Cz in 1400, *krzyknąć*^{p} is attested in Old Pol in 1500, and *kriknuti*^{p} is attested in Br in the sixteenth century. Of course, this is only one lexical item, and it might turn out to be a coincidence; the issue deserves more investigation to see if this has been a pattern in Slavic.

A related issue is how centered around "semelfactivity" the meaning of *-nǫ-* is. In all Slavic languages, there are many perfectives in *-nǫ-* that are accurately characterized as semelfactive, e.g., Ru *kopnut*^{p}, *bodnut*^{p} and Cz *kopnout*^{p} 'dig [make a stab with a shovel]', *bodnout*^{p} 'stab'. But there are more pf verbs in the western languages that cannot be accurately charac-

---

[30] Scholars of Russian will know that there is in fact no single "perfective partner" of *kričat'* and similar verbs in Ru, but rather a number of procedural verbs—*zakričat'*, *pokričat'*, *prokričat'*, *kriknut'*, etc. Lehmann (1988) has offered an elegant solution to this problem by rejecting the notion that Ru aspect pairs are static, binary oppositions. Rather, aspectual partnership is based on the principle of "functional aspectual pairs": a given impf verb is "paired" with different pf verbs depending on the discourse context at hand. Accordingly, semelfactive *kriknut'* occasionally *functions* as the pf of *kričat'*, and its additional semantic element of semelfactivity is "taken in the bargain". While the theory offered in Lehmann 1988 makes eminent sense, the possibility must be left open that in some languages the meaning of *-nǫ-* might in fact be closer to that of the "prototypical" pf verb in that language.

[31] Note also that *vskriknut'* is likewise unattested before the eighteenth century; the only verb attested in OCS and Old Ru is *vъzkričati*.

terized as semelfactive. Three examples have been given above: Cz *lehnout*^{p} *si* 'lie down', *padnout*^{p} 'fall' and *sednout*^{p} *si* 'sit down'. Whereas *bodnout*^{p} denotes one 'stab' in an iterative action, *lehnout*^{p} *si* does not denote a subevent of an iterative action. Another good example is the verb for 'meet': Cz *střetnout*^{p} does not denote a single subevent of an iterative action. And a general east-west division regarding unprefixed forms of the verb is discernible:

***s(t)ret-ti* 'meet'**

Cz střetnout^{p}	Pol śretnąć, śrzatnąć[32]	Bg sreštna (OCS sъrěsti,
Slk stretnút'^{p}	Sln srečati, sreča	Ru — sъręštetъ)
USor —	Cro sresti, sretne, sretnuti	Uk strinuty, striti, strine
		Br strèc', strène

Bg *sreštna*^{p} has already been discussed above. As for Uk, while *strinuty* exists, the verb usually occurs in the prefixed forms *zustrinuty*^{p}—*zustričaty*^{i}, similar to Ru *vstretit*^{p}—*vstrečat*^{i}. Likewise, Br attests *strèc',* but 'meet' is most often expressed by the prefixed verbs *sustrèc*^{p} and *spotkac*^{p}. In general, East Slavic prefers prefixation as a marker of perfectivity to *-nǫ-* (though they occasionally cooccur in East Slavic verbs). One example of this is the strong Ru preference for prefixed *upast*^{p} for all kinds of physical falling as compared with Cz and Slk, cf., e.g., Ru *On upal*^{p} *k ee nogam* vs. Cz *Padl*^{p} *jí k nohám* 'He fell at her feet', Ru *Rebenok upal*^{p} *so stula* vs. Slk *Diet'a padlo*^{p} *zo stoličky* 'The child fell from the chair.'

One last issue deserves mention concerning the status of *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizer as opposed to a specifically semelfactive suffix: East Slavic verbs in *-anut'/-onut'*. In Ru, Uk and Br this suffix (in its respective variants in the individual languages) is very productive in the derivation of semelfactive (i.e., momentary) pf verbs with various expressive nuances, cf. the following parallel examples from East Slavic: Ru *davanut*^{p}, Uk *davonuty*^{p}, Br *ciskanuc*^{p} 'press/squeeze'; Ru *dolbanut*^{p}, Uk *dovbonuty*^{p}, Br *dvazdanuc*^{p} 'shove'; Ru *derganut*^{p}, Uk *šarhonuty*^{p}, Br *tuzanuc*^{p} 'tug/pull'. Though Ru linguists have given various opinions about the exact meaning expressed by such verbs, Sigalov (1963: 70–71) concludes that the most characteristic meaning of such verbs is the "intensity, forcefulness… swiftness, and abruptness of the action". This is most evident in dictionaries of Uk, which regularly give such verbs (unlike Ru dictionaries, where such verbs are considered *prostorečie*) with the label *pidsyljuvanyj* 'intensive'. Though verbs in *-anu-/-onu-* are specific formations, they have obviously developed on the basis of the semantic nature of *-nǫ-* in East Slavic, which I would argue is specifically semelfactive/momentary as

[32]These verbs are archaic, but attested at least as late as the sixteenth century; the contemporary Pol verb with this meaning is *spotkać*.

opposed to simply perfectivizing. This can be seen in the case of Ru *rezanut*^{p} 'cut/hack' which on the one hand has apparently been derived in order to eliminate the consonant cluster in *reznut*^{p} (note that most Ru informants reject *reznut*^{p} as part of their language, preferring *rezanut*^{p}[33]), but which on the other hand expresses the nuances of swiftness/abruptness characteristic of such verbs.

I think it is no accident that such expressive verbs have become productive in East Slavic as opposed to western languages such as Cz, Slk and USor, for the following reason: if *-nǫ-* has been established primarily as a *perfectivizing* suffix in the west, it is less likely to develop into a suffix expressing the swiftness/abruptness of an action than it is in languages where it is a specifically *semelfactive* suffix foregrounding the momentary nature of an action. Inherent in this argument is the idea that one may have occasion to make a conceptual distinction between a *perfectivizing* morpheme and a *semelfactive/momentary* morpheme, and that the difference between the two can have consequences for a semantic analysis of aspect in a given Slavic language. This view will surely raise objections from various quarters, as some aspectologists (e.g., Xrakovskij 1997) view Ru semelfactive-iterative pairs such as *prygnut*^{p}*—prygat*^{i} 'jump' as aspectual pairs on a par with pairs such as *perepisat*^{p}*—perepisyvat*^{i} 'rewrite'. In my view, however, this issue is subject to debate, and I would argue that the morphologically "prototypical" pf verb in Ru is nevertheless a prefixed verb derived from a simplex impf (e.g., *perepisat*^{p}) and not a semelfactive suffixed in *-nu-*. Notably, Čertkova (1996) does not mention *-nu-* among the morphemes currently used in Ru to perfectivize loan verbs (all are prefixes).[34] The situation is slightly different in Cz, where *-nou-* remains a productive and stylistically neutral perfectivizing suffix to the present day, cf. the following loans: *kouknout*^{p} 'watch/look at' *krachnout*^{p} (*—krachovat*^{i}) 'go bankrupt', *stopnout*^{p} 'stop [the clock]/interrupt', *šprajčnout*^{p} *se* (*—šprajčovat*^{i} *se*) 'be obstinate/resist', *tipnout*^{p} (*—tipovat*^{i}) 'spot [a winner]'.[35] Such comparative data from the perfectivization of loan verbs should not be taken lightly in an assessment of the respective status of *-nǫ-* in the respective languages.

---

[33] Note that the consonant cluster is acceptable in the western languages, cf., e.g., Cz *říznout*.

[34] Čertkova (personal communication) confirms that *-nu-* is not used to create stylistically neutral perfectives from loan verbs in Ru.

[35] I am grateful to Norbert Nübler for some of these examples; he observes that the Ru pair *riskovat*^{i}*—risknut*^{p} 'risk' (cf. Cz *riskovat*^{i}*—risknout*^{p}) is an isolated case, and not representative of a productive pattern.

5. Concluding Remarks

This discussion has presented evidence of a difference in the productivity of *-nǫ-* in the Slavic languages and in its status as a stylistically neutral perfective suffix. In a group of western languages (Cz, Slk, Sor), *-nǫ-* has been productive in the derivation of prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets expressing a distinction in distributivity (i.e., a predicate affecting multiple objects or occurring iteratively vs. its affecting a single object or occurring as a single action). To the east, *-nǫ-* has been less productive (Pol, Sln, Ser/Cro); the unexpectedly high number of such doublets in Uk and Br, which generally attest the same pf doublets as Pol does, is arguably the result of historical Pol linguistic influence on Uk and Br. On the easternmost end, contemporary Ru attests very few and Bg attests no such prefixed pf *a*-stem/*n*-stem doublets.

A similar pattern is evident regarding some Common Slavic unprefixed pf verbs: Cz and USor have consistently suffixed such verbs with *-nǫ-* as a marker of perfectivity; Slk has generally done this as well, though it made some older verbs (*gъnǫti* and *gasnǫti*) imperfective. Pol has employed *-nǫ-* to a lesser extent, whereas East Slavic has to a very small extent or not at all, preferring prefixation as a marker of perfectivity. The South Slavic languages, including Bg, have also suffixed such unprefixed pf verbs to varying degrees (the loss of the infinitive in Bg obscures the full extent of the historical process there, which has not been thoroughly investigated to my knowledge, nor is the precise extent of infinitive suffixation with *-nǫ-* clear in Ser).

Taking these two phenomena together, a relatively very high historical productivity of *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizing suffix is evident in Cz, Slk and USor. In the other languages, *-nǫ-* has not played such a prominent role as a (stylistically neutral) perfectivizing suffix: rudimentary evidence of *-nǫ-* in this function is apparent to a lesser degree in Pol, Sln and Ser/Cro. In East Slavic and Bg, one finds scattered instances of *-nǫ-* as a perfectivizer, but in these languages it appears to be slightly more centered around semelfactivity/momentaneity *per se*, which is evident in the innovation of the intensive *-anu-/-onu-* suffix in East Slavic as well as the historical derivation of impf iterative verbs containing the nasal suffix in Bg (e.g., *padna—padnuvam*; cf. also the existence of such pairs in contemporary Mac). In other words, these data may be interpreted as indicating a relative difference of status of *-nǫ-* in the west and the east: a neutral perfectivizer vs. a specifically semelfactive procedural suffix. Such a difference might seem unlikely in the particular case of *-nǫ-*, but the view advocated here accords well with some recent views of aspectual morphology. Wiemer (2001) demonstrates that Slavic and Baltic (his analysis uses Lithuanian data) have taken basically the same inventory of prefixes and developed them in slightly different ways: Slavic has grammaticalized

prefixation as a way of marking its (new) perfective aspect, whereas Lithuanian lexicalized prefixes in a (pre-aspectual) system of procedural verbs. Dickey and Hutcheson (to appear) have taken a similar approach to delimitatives within the Slavic language family, arguing that the high productivity of delimitatives in the eastern languages represents a step towards the full grammaticalization of the aspectual opposition, whereas their lower productivity in the western languages (e.g., Cz) is evidence of their primarily lexical status. While on the one hand it seems intuitively correct to assume that there are minor semantic differences between aspectual prefixes/suffixes in the individual Slavic languages, the precise differences involved are difficult to pin down (and very easy to ignore!). But to the extent they can be demonstrated, they will certainly add to our general knowledge of Slavic aspect and very likely provide valuable clues about the development of the aspect category in the individual Slavic languages.

References

Academy Dictionary = (1950–65). *Slovar´ sovremennogo russkogo literaturnogo jazyka*. Moscow–Leningrad: Akademija nauk SSSR.

Anan′jeva, N. E. (1998) "Problemy sopostavitel′nogo analiza prefiksal′nyx glagolov v jazykax drevnego perioda (na materiale prefiksal′nyx glagolov s *do-/do-* v drevnepol′skom, drevnečešskom i drevnerusskom jazykax)". A. G. Širokova, ed. *Sopostavitel′nye issledovanija grammatiki i leksiki russkogo i zapadnoslavjanskix jazykov.* Moscow: Moskovskij gosudarstvennyj universitet, 229–325.

Avilova, N. S. (1976) *Vid glagola i semantika glagol′nogo slova*. Moscow: Nauka.

Bańkowski, Andrzej. (2000) *Etymologiczny słownik języka polskiego*. Warsaw: Wydawnictwo naukowe PNW. (2 vols.)

Barentsen, A. A. (1985) *'Tijd', 'aspect' en de conjunctie* poka. Ph.D. dissertation, Amsterdam.

BER = (1971–) *Bâlgarski etimologičen rečnik*. Sophia: Izdatelstvo na Bâlgarskata akademija na naukite.

Bondarko, A. V. (1963) "Mnogočlennye vidovye koreljacii pri imperfektivacii pristavočnyx glagolov v sovremennom češskom jazyke". A. G. Širokova, Ed. *Issledovanija po češskomu jazyku*. Moscow: Izdatel′stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 3–21.

Čertkova, Marina. 1996. *Grammatičeskaja kategorija vida v sovremennom russkom jazyke*. Moscow.

Dickey, Stephen. (2000) *Parameters of Slavic aspect: A cognitive approach*. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

Dickey, Stephen and Hutcheson, Julie. (to appear) "Delimitative verbs in Russian, Czech and Slavic". Timberlake, Alan, ed. *American contributions to the 13th International Congress of Slavists*.

Ermakova, M. N. (1973) *Očerk grammatiki verxnelužickogo jazyka: Morfologija*. Moscow: Nauka.

Fasske, Helmut and Michalk, Siegfried. (1980) *Grammatik der obersorbischen Schriftsprache der Gegenwart*. Bautzen: VEB Domowina Verlag.

Galton, Herbert. (1976) *The main functions of the Slavic verbal aspect*. Skopje: Macedonian Academy of Sciences and Arts.

HSBM = (1982–) *Histaryčny slownik belaruskaj movy*. Minsk: Navuka i tėxnika.

Isačenko, A. V. (1960) *Grammatičeskij stroj russkogo jazyka v sopostavlenii s slovackim: Morfologija*. Bratislava: Izdatel'stvo Slovackoj akademii nauk.

———. (1962) *Die russische Sprache der Gegenwart. Teil 1: Formenlehre*. Halle.

Ivančev, Svetomir. (1961) "Kontekstovo obuslovena ingresivna upotreba na glagolite ot nesvâršen vid v češkija ezik". *Godišnik na Sofijskija universitet* 53(3): 1–152.

Kreja, Bogusław. (1956) "Czasowniki z sufiksem *-ną-* we współczesnym języku polskim". *Język polski* 36: 285–89.

Kucała, Marian. (1966) *Rozwój iteratiwów dokonanych w języku polskim*. Wrocław: Zakład Narodowy im. Ossolińskich.

Langenscheidts Taschenwörterbuch = (2000). *Langenscheidts Taschenwörterbuch tschechisch*. Munich.

Lehmann, Volkmar. (1988). "Der russische Aspekt und die lexikalische Bedeutung des Verbs". *Zeitschrift für slavische Philologie* 48(1): 171–81.

Maslov, Ju. S. (1963) *Morfologija glagol'nogo vida v sovremennom bolgarskom literaturnom jazyke*. Moscow–Leningrad: Akademija nauk SSSR.

Nübler, Norbert and Petr Karlík. (1999) "Tschechische Verben des Typs *zamávnout*". Ernst Hansack et al., eds. *Festschrift für Klaus Trost zum 65. Geburtstag*. Munich: Otto Sagner, 211–21.

Peciar, Štefan. (1971) "Tipy vidovyx al'ternacii v slovackom jazyke". E. I. Demina et al., eds. *Issledovanija po slavjanskomu jazykoznaniju.* Moscow: Nauka, 216–27.

Pleteršnik, M. (1894) *Slovensko-nemški slovar*. Ljubljana: Katoliška tiskarna.

Petruxina, E. V. (2000) *Aspektual'nye kategorii glagola v russkom jazyke v sopostavlenii s češskim, slovackim, polskim i bolgarskim jazykami.* Moscow: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta.

Piernikarski, Cezar. (1969) *Typy opozycji aspekotwych czasownika polskiego na tle słowiańskim*. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Polskiej akademii nauk.

RBE = (1977–) *Rečnik na bâlgariskija ezik*. Sophia: Izdatelstvo na Bâlgarskata akademija na naukite.

Rudnik-Karwatowa, Zofia. (1986) "Z historii poliprefiksalnych formacji dystrybutywnych w językach wschodniosłowańskich". Majowa, Jad-

wiga, ed. *Język i jego odmiany w aspekcie porównawczym*, Wrocław: Zakład narodowy imienia Ossolińskich, 201–07. (= *Prace slawistyczne* 53)
Sigalov, P. S. (1963) "Glagoly s suffiksom *-anú-* (*-oní-*) v russkom jazyke". *Učenye zapiski Leningradskogo gosudarstvennogo universiteta* 322 (*Serija filologičeskix nauk, vyspusk* 68): 64–79.
Silina, V. B. (1982) "Istorija kategorii glagol′nogo vida". R. I. Avanesov and V. V. Ivanov, eds. *Istoričeskaja grammatika russkogo jazyka. Morfologija: Glagol*. Moscow: Nauka, 158–279.
SRJa = (1981–84). *Slovar´ russkogo jazyka v četyrex tomax*. Moscow: Russkij jazyk.
SSKJ = (1970–91). *Slovar slovenskega knjižnega jezika*. Ljubljana: Slovenska akademija znanosti in umetnosti.
SSJČ = (1960–71). *Slovník spisovného jazyka českého*. Prague: Nakladatelství Československé akademie věd.
SSRJa = (1985). *Slovoobrazovatel′nyj slovar′ russkogo jazyka*. Moscow: Russkij jazyk.
Strekalova, Z. N. (1979) *Morfologija glagol′nogo vida v sovremennom pol′skom literaturnom jazyke*. Moscow: Nauka.
Stunová, Anna. (1991) "In defense of language-specific invariant meanings of aspect in Russian and Czech". In *Studies in West Slavic and Baltic linguistics*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 291-313.
———. (1993) *A contrastive analysis of Russian and Czech aspect: Invariance vs. discourse*. Amsterdam.
SUM = (1970–80) *Slovnik ukrajins′koji movy*. Kiev: Naukovka dumka.
Toops, Gary. (this volume) "Aspectual Competition and Iterative Contexts in Contemporary Upper Sorbian".
Vaillant, André. (1966) *Grammaire comparée des langues slaves. Tome III: Le verbe*. Paris: Editions Klincksieck.
Vey, Marc. (1948) "Verbes momentanés et verbes distributifs en tchèque littéraire contemporain". *Bulletin de la Société de linguistique de Paris* 44: 116–143.
Wiemer, Björn. (2001). "Aspektual´nye paradigmy i leksičeskoe značenie russkix i litovskix glagolov." *Voprosy jazykoznanija* 2: 26–58.
Xrakovskij V. S. (1997) "Otvet na voprosy ankety aspektologičeskogo seminara filologičeskogo fakul′teta MGU". Čertkova, M. Ju., ed. *Trudy aspektologičeskogo seminara filologičeskogo fakul′teta MGU: Tom 2*. Moscow: Izdatel′stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 210–16.

Stephen M. Dickey
Dept. of Slavic Languages and Literatures
University of Kansas, Wescoe 2134
Lawrence, KS 66046-7590
smd@ku.edu

Received: 15 February 2002
Revised: 31 October 2002