

Between Perfective and Past: Preterits in Turkic and Nakh-Daghestanian

Author(s): Sergei Tatevosov

Proceedings of the Twenty-Sixth Annual Meeting of the Berkeley Linguistics Society: General Session and Parasession on Aspect (2000), pp. 469-480

Please see “How to cite” in the online sidebar for full citation information.

Please contact BLS regarding any further use of this work. BLS retains copyright for both print and screen forms of the publication. BLS may be contacted via <http://linguistics.berkeley.edu/bls/>.

The Annual Proceedings of the Berkeley Linguistics Society is published online via [eLanguage](http://eLanguage.org), the Linguistic Society of America's digital publishing platform.

Between Perfective and Past: Preterits in Turkic and Nakh-Daghestanian *

SERGEI TATEVOSOV
Moscow State University

1. Perfective, past, and habitual: the Bybee and Dahl approach

A broad typological study reported in Bybee et al. 1994 has established various universal restrictions on the diachronic development of tense-mood-aspect (TMA) categories and on their synchronic distribution. Approach adopted in this study (following Dahl 1999:3, I refer to it as to the «Bybee and Dahl approach») is mostly based on earlier B.Comrie, J.Bybee and Ö.Dahl's work (Comrie 1976, 1985; Bybee 1985, 1988; Dahl 1985, and, especially Bybee, Dahl 1989). According to the Bybee and Dahl approach, PERFECTIVE¹ and PAST are viewed as primitives called *universal gram types*.

Semantically, PERFECTIVE grams indicate that the situation is viewed as bounded temporally (Bybee et al. 1994:317, cf. definitions in Comrie 1976: 4, Dahl 1985:78, Bache 1995:270). Temporal reference of PERFECTIVES may but need not be restricted to the past. Example of a language-specific temporally ambiguous perfective category is Russian Perfective.

PAST grams indicate that a situation referred to by a clause occurs prior to the moment of speech. (By 'past' here I mean what Bybee et al. (1994:82 call SIMPLE PAST, that is, a category for which marking past time reference is the only function). By definition, PAST categories do not express any additional aspectual meanings. A clear-cut example of PAST is the Preterit in German and corresponding categories in some other European languages (Tieroff 1999), that allow perfective, progressive, and habitual readings.

Morphosyntactically, as Bybee et al. 1994:91-92 have found, PAST and PERFECTIVE differ radically: the latter can be zero marked while the former can never be.

The present study follows the main lines of the analyses proposed within the Bybee and Dahl approach. In particular, it aims to provide additional data and examine in more detail three problems concerning cross-linguistic regularities in the distribution of PERFECTIVE and PAST grams.

First, while 'perfective' meaning is viewed as simple and indivisible, 'imperfective', since Comrie 1976 is regarded as complex, encompassing at least the following three: 'progressive', 'habitual', and, for stative predicates, 'ongoing state'. Therefore, 'progressive' + 'habitual' clustering is acknowledged as customary and, to some extent, «natural». But there are also language-specific categories associated with

* I am very much indebted to the inhabitants of the villages Kwanada (Daghestan) and Tat.Yaltan (Tatarstan) who served as informants on Bagwalal and Tatar. The financial support from Russian Foundation for the Humanities (RGNF grant N 98-04-06198) is gratefully acknowledged.

¹ I follow the tradition established by Comrie (1976) in capitalizing labels of language-specific categories. Labels of universal gram types come in SMALL CAPITALS.

'perfective' + 'habitual' cluster, a quite distinct combination of meanings, that can not be regarded as instantiations of either PERFECTIVE, IMPERFECTIVE, or PAST. Although such a distinguished category as English Simple Past is among them, very little cross-linguistic data is available about how such categories develop, and how they interact with other categories and with surrounding lexical context.

Second, Bybee et al. 1994 as well as Dahl 1985 are mainly concerned with *individual grams*. Only a few claims have been made about *possible verbal systems* and possible stages of their development. One of such claims in Bybee et al. 1994 has to do exactly with the distribution of PERFECTIVE and PAST grams:

SYNCHRONICALLY, the main difference between a language that has a simple past and one that has a perfective is the presence or absence of a past imperfective. (Bybee et al. 1994:83) DIACHRONICALLY, inflectional perfectives can develop from anteriors when a past imperfective already exists in the language. (Bybee et al. 1994:91)

This claim seems to be somewhat controversial if compared to the rest of the theoretical generalizations in Bybee et al. 1994. The authors' position is consistently anti-structuralist: they assume that development of ANTERIOR, PERFECTIVE, PAST, HABITUAL, EPISTEMIC POSSIBILITY, etc. is determined mostly by their semantic substance. However, when talking about the PERFECTIVE and its differences from the PAST, the authors adhere to the essentially structuralist view of perfective/imperfective «opposition», according to which distribution of a category is a subject of restrictions determined system-internally, by the contrast with other members of grammatical oppositions. Bybee et al. 1994: 149 suggest that this controversy arises because *objectively* the relation *between* perfectivity and imperfectivity domains is governed by other principles than relations between grams *within* each of these domains:

... it seems that there are certain major contrasts of universal validity — such as the basic distinction between the perfective domain and the imperfective, but that within these domains there are successive waves of grammaticalization which may follow upon one another at such a rate as to produce only very small and subtle semantic distinctions. (Bybee et al. 1994:149)

Although there is a good deal of motivation for this claim, there is a variety of language-specific grams crossing the border between perfectivity and imperfectivity, and 'perfective' + 'habitual' grams are among them. I believe that study of such grams will result in better understanding of the relation between PERFECTIVE and IMPERFECTIVE gram types.

Third, Bybee et al. 1994 provide massive data about cross-linguistic restrictions determined by the lexical class of a predicate. The vast majority of these restrictions reflect various asymmetries between *stative* and *dynamic* predicates. But other distinctions, such as 'telic'/'atelic' and 'punctual'/'durative' pertaining to the domain of Aktionsart, (or, in other terms, 'aspectual class' (Vendler 1967), 'actionality' (Bache 1995, Bertinetto & Delfitto 1999), 'taxonomic class' (Paducheva 1995, 1996)), are also crucial for the distribution of aspectual grams. More elaborated theories accounting for interaction between aspect and Aktionsart (such as Smith 1991, Breu 1994, 1996) than those only operating with static/dynamic distinction have been mostly applied to verbal systems of individual languages. Cross-linguistic data about the behavior of, say, telic vs. atelic predicates are still very restricted, mostly to a few European languages (see, among others, Bertinetto & Squartini 1999, Janssen 1994, Klein 1995, and Tieroff (ed.) 1995). Among comprehensive studies of non-European languages Smith 1996 on

Navajo, and Bhat 1999 on Indo-Arian and Dravidian should be mentioned.

Given these considerations, I would like to examine 'perfective + habitual' categories traditionally labeled as Past Tense or Preterit in Bagwalal (Nakh-Daghestanian, Andic) and Tatar (Uralic, Turkic)². Preterits in these two genetically and areally unrelated languages demonstrate striking similarities in meaning and distribution: both of them are neither prototypical PERFECTIVE nor PAST, and both exhibit virtually the same lexical restrictions. In what follows I give will present a brief overview of verbal systems of Bagwalal and Tatar (section 2), characterize the range of meaning and distribution of these categories, paying special attention to their interaction with lexical context (section 3), and discuss possible suggestions about their diachronic development (section 4).

2. Verbal systems of Tatar and Bagwalal

Major tense-aspect grams in Tatar are the Preterit, Perfect, Pluperfect, Past Imperfective, Present, Future 1, and Future 2 represented in Table 1.

Table 1. Partial verbal paradigm in Tatar

	1 conjugation		2 conjugation	
	'go'	'give'	'count'	'work'
Preterit	bar-dʁ	bir-de	sana-dʁ	ešlā-de
Perfect	bar-gan	bir-gän	sana-gan	ešlā-gän
Pluperfect	bar-gan ide	bir-gän ide	sana-gan ide	ešlā-gän ide
Future 1	bar-ʁ-r	bir-e-r	sana-r	ešlā-r
Present	bar-a	bir-ä	san-ʁj	ešl-i
Past Imperf.	bar-a ide	bir-ä ide	san-ʁj ide	ešl-i ide
Future 2	bar-a-jäčäk	bir-ä-jäčäk	san-ʁj-ačäk	ešl-i-jäčäk

Verbs in Tatar fall into two conjugations, depending on the type of the initial stem from which the Preterit, Perfect, and Pluperfect are formed. Verbs of the 1st conjugation have a consonant initial stem and forms the Present by suffixing the marker *a||ä*, while verbs of the 2nd conjugation change the final vowel *a||ä* of the initial stem into *ʁj||i*. Future 1 morpheme *-r* is suffixed to the initial stem in the 2nd conjugation; in the 1st conjugation the vowel *ʁ||e* is inserted between the stem and the affix. The majority of verbal forms in Table 1 are formed by inflectional markers — *-dʁ||de* for the Preterit, *-gan||gän* for the Perfect, *-r* for the Future 1, and *-a||ä* for the imperfective grams — Present, Past Imperfective, and Future 2. Two periphrastic forms — Pluperfect and Imperfect are both formed with *i-de*, the Preterit of the auxiliary *i* 'be'.

Bagwalal verbal paradigm, part of which is represented in Table 2, exhibits a number of similarities with the Tatar one: marking past time reference involves a contrast between the Preterit and the Perfect, on the one hand, and between the Preterit, and periphrastic Past Imperfective on the other. Pluperfect is also periphrastic, resembling its Tatar counterpart. In the domain of future time reference, then, there are two forms with subtle semantic difference.

Differences between the two systems are nevertheless significant. First, unlike in Tatar, the Preterit in Bagwalal is zero marked: it is identical to the initial stem that consists of the root and optional prefixal agreement marker. Second, the Perfect, the

² Aspect in Turkic languages has been studied extensively by L. Johanson (see, among others, Johanson 1971, 1996). For the general information on Tatar the reader may refer to Zakijev 1993. Aspect in Bagwalal as well as in other Nakh-Daghestanian languages has not been deeply investigated. See Gudava 1967 for the grammatical sketch of Bagwalal.

Present, and the Future 2 in Bagwalal are periphrastic: in contrast with Tatar, they are formed with the present auxiliary *ek'a* 'am, is, are' combined with perfective (marker *-b-o*) and imperfective (marker *-(r)ā-X*) converbs and Future participle respectively. Third, there are two distinct present categories — the Present and the Present Habitual. The latter is identical to imperfective participle and, beyond expressing habitual meaning, functions as a narrative form. Its counterpart referring to the past situations, the Past Habitual, like other periphrastic past forms is formed with the past auxiliary *b-uk'a* 'was, were'.

Table 2. Partial verbal paradigm in Bagwalal

	1 conjugation 'stand up, rise'	2 conjugation 'fly away'	3 conjugation 'do'
Preterit	hec'i	eta	žē
Perfect	hec'i-b-o ek'a	eta-b-o ek'a	žē-b-o ek'a
Pluperfect	hec'i-b-o b-uk'a	eta-b-o b-uk'a	žē-b-o b-uk'a
Present	hec'i-rā-X ek'a	et-i-rā-X ek'a	žē-rā-X ek'a
Habitual	hec'i-rō-b	et-i-r-ō-b	žē-r-ō-b
Past Imperf.	hec'i-rā-X b-uk'a	et-i-rā-X b-uk'a	žē-rā-X b-uk'a
Past Habitual	hec'i-rō-b b-uk'a	et-i-r-ō-b b-uk'a	žē-r-ō-b b-uk'a
Future 1	hec'-a-š	et-a-š	ž-ā-š
Future 2	hec'-ā-ī-o-b ek'a	et-ā-ī-o-b ek'a	ž-āla-ī-o-b ek'a

3. Meaning and distribution of the Preterit

In both languages the Preterit has virtually the same distribution: they can produce perfective and habitual interpretations but not a progressive one. In sections 3.1-3.2 the Preterit under perfective interpretation in various lexical contexts is characterized. Section 3.3 deals with habitual interpretation of the Preterit.

3.1. 'Perfective' Preterit: stative vs. dynamic predicates

It is not always easy to assign a feature 'stativity' to the whole lexeme. One inflected form of a verb may refer to a state, while another one — to a dynamic situation. (Here by 'state' I mean what Bybee et al.:318 call 'state exists': «the state begun before reference time and continues after reference time»).

Let us consider what types of situations are referred to by the Preterit and Present. Discussion in this section is mostly based on Bagwalal material; properties of Tatar forms are similar, unless otherwise indicated. For the moment I do not consider iterative situations (see section 3.3), taking into account only those uses of the Preterit and Present where they refer to a single situation, occupying continuous time span.

The verb *b-ešā* 'put on' represents a clear-cut case where both forms refer to a dynamic situation. Thus, *ošu-r* (erg.) *butuna b-ešā* (pret.) 'He₁ put₃ on₃ a₂ hat₂' involves a complete situation in the past that has reached its resultant state. The Present in *ošu-r* (erg.) *butuna b-eš-inā-X ek'a* (pres.) 'He₁ is₃ putting₃ on₃ a₂ hat₂' refers to one of the intermediate phases of putting-on process, as represented in Scheme 1A.

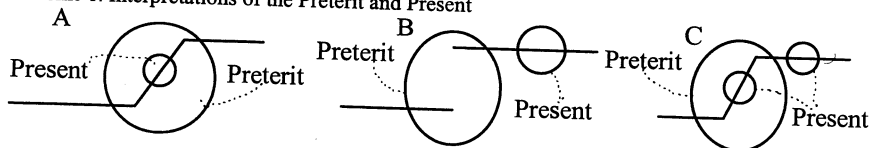
Let us assume, for simplicity, that the rest of the forms of the verb *b-ešā* 'put on' refer to a dynamic situation as well. In this case one can assign the feature [+dynamic] to the whole lexeme.

The picture is not so obvious in all cases, however. In *šali-ba* (aff.) *hā* (pret.) *mahammad* 'Ali₁ saw₂ Mohammed₃' the Preterit of *hā* 'see' refers to a change of state ('not see' → 'see'), that is, to a dynamic situation. But the Present in *šali-ba*

(aff.) *hā-nā-X ek'a* (pres.) *maḥammad* 'Ali₁ sees_{2,3} Mohammed₄' produces a stative interpretation, referring to a resultant state of that change, see Scheme 1B.

In English *see* is regarded as stative, although *saw* refers not to an unbounded state in the past but rather to a change of state, as its Bagwalal counterpart does. I believe this tradition rests on intuition that the least morphologically marked form represents «pure» lexical meaning of a predicate, while addition of any morphological material results in a transformation of this meaning. English Present is less marked than the Preterit, so the meaning of the latter is assumed to be derived from the meaning of the former. On the other hand, in Bagwalal the same intuition leads to the conclusion that the meaning of the Preterit (that is, dynamic meaning) is initial, while the meaning of the Present is derived.

Scheme 1. Interpretations of the Preterit and Present



Furthermore, one is tempted to assume that interpretation of the Present of *hā* 'see' can be predicted from the interpretation of the Preterit. In contrast with *b-ešā* 'put on' in Scheme 1A, the Preterit of *hā* 'see' denotes a *punctual* change of state that has no phase of development. This can be regarded as an evidence supporting the following generalization:

- (1) If a situation referred to by the Preterit has a phase of development, the Present refers to this phase, otherwise it refers to some other phase of a situation³.

If (1) is true one can argue that the stative interpretation of the Present of the dynamic verb *hā* 'see' is an outcome of (1) applied automatically to all punctual predicates.

(1) seems to be too strong a generalization, however. Consider the verb *b-iši* 'seize, catch'. The Preterit of this verb is interpreted in virtually the same way as that of *b-ešā* 'put on' and *hā* 'see' (see Scheme 1C). But the Present allows two different readings. One reading occurs in *ošu-r* (erg.) *L'anč'a b-iši-rā-X ek'a* (pres.) 'lit. He₁ is₄ catching₃ a hare₂', another in *ošu-r* (erg.) *qoča b-iši-rā-X ek'a* (pres.) 'He₁ is₄ holding₃ a book₂'. (see Scheme 1C).

(1) predicts only the interpretation 'be catching', but not 'be holding', a resultant state of 'catch'. This shows that the relation between the Preterit and the Present cannot be fully accounted for by (1), and thus should be specified separately for every verbal lexeme. For such a specification I propose a format represented in (2), where not a value of single binary feature, but rather a pair of values is involved:

- (2) $\langle S(\text{Preterit}); S(\text{Present}) \rangle$, where $S(x) \subset \{ \langle s(\text{tative}) \rangle, \langle d(\text{ynamic}) \rangle, \langle s \rangle | \langle d \rangle \}$.

Thus, the verbs *b-ešā* 'put on (a hat)', *hā* 'see', and *b-iši* 'seize' are assigned specifications $\langle d; d \rangle$, $\langle d; s \rangle$, and $\langle d; d | s \rangle$ respectively.

In Bagwalal verbs with stative Preterit are almost totally lacking. Exceptions

³ The formulation «some other phase» is chosen because generally not only a resultant state of a situation may be taken into account, but also a preparatory state or process. For example, *He is coming* refers to a process occurring *before* the punctual event *He came*.

could be counted on the fingers of one hand. One of such is *b-uk'a* 'be', that can refer to an unbounded state in the past, as in *iši b-ā-b-q'ałani, asijat j-uk'a* (pret.) *ungiri* 'When₂ we₁ came₂, Asijat₃ was₄ there₃'.

S(Present) of the verb *b-uk'a* 'be' is rather not defined than equal to «s»:

- (3) maḥammad anži-lā buk'-urā-X ek'a.
 Mohammed Anzhi-LOC be-IPFV-CONV AUX:PRS
 *Mohammed regularly visits Anzhi. || *Mohammed is in Anzhi.*

As (3) demonstrates, the Present of *b-uk'a* does not produce 'state exists' interpretation; (3) can only refer to a multiple situation such that the proposition 'Mohammed is in Anzhi' is true for some time spans and false for others.

Crucially, there are no verbs of the type <s, d>: the Preterit is never less dynamic than the Present. Therefore, Bagwalal can be characterized as consistently *stativity increasing* (adopting Hopper & Thompson's (1980) term for transitivity): the more marked a verbal form is, the higher is the probability of obtaining stative interpretation of this form. In this respect Bagwalal differs considerably from stativity decreasing languages like English in which more marked are verbal forms denoting a change of state (e.g. *heard* is more marked than *hear*).

The Preterit in Tatar resembles the Preterit in Bagwalal with respect to the stativity. As in Bagwalal, there virtually no verbs with S(Preterit) = «s». Furthermore, the verb 'be', which is <s, → in Bagwalal, in Tatar is <d|s, →. The Preterit of this verb not only can refer to a unbounded state in the past, as Bagwalal Preterit does, but also to a change of state. Thus, for instance, *Rašit uk'xtuč'x bul-d'x* (pret.) yields two readings — 'Rashid₁ was, a₂ teacher₂' and 'Rashid became a teacher'.

In Tatar the Present is not more marked than the Preterit (see Table 1), it is equally marked or, one can argue taking into account shortness of the imperfective affix, more marked. Consequently, depending on what point of view is preferred for, Tatar can be characterized as either a language with no correlation between morphological complexity of a verbal form and stativity, or as stativity decreasing.

3.1. 'Perfective' Preterit: telic vs. atelic predicates

As the above discussion has shown, in both Bagwalal and Tatar the Preterit of the vast majority of verbs refers to a dynamic situation. Dynamic interpretations of the Preterit, then, fall into two major classes. (In this section Tatar material is mostly presented, but what is said about Tatar holds for Bagwalal as well.)

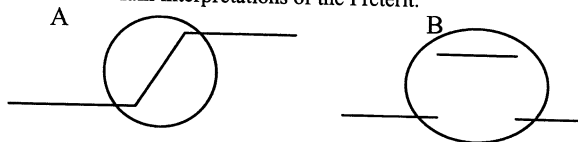
First, the sentence *b'yz erä-de* (pret.) 'ice₁ melted₂' indicates that the situation has reached its resultant state, that is, all of the ice turned into water. Second, the sentence *Rašit ešlā-de* (pret.) 'Rashid worked (for a while)' signals that the situation is temporally bounded, as there was a moment in the past when the situation launched and another moment when it terminated, but no definite result state was attained. These interpretations are represented in Scheme 2.

The difference like that between *erä-de* 'melted' and *ešlā-de* 'worked' is commonly subsumed under the concept of *telicity*, or boundedness⁴ (see Vendler 1967, Comrie 1976, Declerck 1979, Dahl 1981, Mourelatos 1981, Dowty 1986, Breu 1994, Depraetere 1995, Bache 1995, Bertinetto & Delfitto 1999, among oth-

⁴ Some linguistics regards telicity as inherent semantic characteristic of a predicate, reserving 'boundedness' to denote actual interpretation an inflected verbal form produces in an utterance (see discussion in Depraetere 1995). However, I adhere to a more widespread point of view and treat these terms as synonymous.

ers). There is a general agreement that telicity is responsible for both intra- and cross-linguistic variation. Intra-linguistically, telic vs. atelic predicates differ as to their co-occurrence restrictions. Typologically, two types of perfectivity are distinguished depending on whether PERFECTIVE grams are more readily available in telic contexts (as in Slavic languages, hence the term 'Slavic-style aspect' (Dahl 1985)) or both telic and atelic predicates favor PERFECTIVE grams equally.

Scheme 2. Main interpretations of the Preterit.



As in the case of stativity, a verbal lexeme generally can not be unambiguously characterized as either telic or atelic, as in both Tatar and Bagwalal there is massive ambiguity in the use of the Preterit. For instance, *zehrä tabaq-sawıt ju-dır* (pret.) 'Zuhra washed-up, lit. Zukhra₁ washed₂ dishes₃' is ambiguous between two readings represented in Scheme 2. The first, 'Zuhra accomplished washing-up' implies that the resultant state 'dishes are clean' is attained, while the second, in contrast, indicates that for a certain period of time Zuhra was engaged in washing-up activity with no reference as to whether this activity was directed towards any resultant state.

There is tradition of description of European languages according to which predicates of this kind are considered inherently telic, while atelic interpretation is attained by *detelicization*. Among factors triggering detelicization the following are frequently mentioned: adverbials of duration like *for two hours*, characteristics of a direct object of a transitive verb (in particular, definiteness and specificity), and imperfective aspectual grams such as progressive (see Binnick 1991:190; Depraetere 1995, Bertinetto & Delfitto 1999)⁵.

The question of whether telic/atelic distinction still exists in progressive contexts is beyond the scope of this paper, but the other two factors are worth discussing in detail.

The properties of the object are, in fact, crucial for determining telicity of the verbal phrase, cf. *play piano* vs. *play a sonata* or famous Dahl's (1985) 'writing letters' example. Thus, in Tatar there is a choice between the nominative and accusative case marking of the direct object which is determined by the definiteness of an object NP. In *Ul xat-lar || xat-lar-nır* (pl., nom. || pl., acc.) *jaz-dır* (pret.) 'he, wrote₄ letters_{2||3}' atelic interpretation 'he was engaged in writhing letters for some time' of the Preterit is associated with the indefinite direct object, while the definite direct object implies that the situation has reached a resultant state, that is, all the letters have been written.

Meanwhile, I see no serious reasons to assume these effects support the claim that telic interpretations is primary while atelic is derived, and therefore, that predicates like Tatar *jazu* 'write' are inherently telic. It would have been the case

⁵ Another suggestion, to which I do not adhere, has been put forward recently by V.Plungian (1998). He assumes that difference between *erä-de* 'melted' and *ešlä-de* 'worked' has to do not with lexical, but with grammatical ambiguity. 'Perfective' is regarded not as a single atomic meaning: it splits into 'completive' (= 'the situation attained the resultant state' ≈ 'telic') and 'limitative' (= 'the situation started and after taking place for some time canceled' ≈ 'atelic').

had definiteness been the default NP reference type: it is natural to assume that in the default morphosyntactic environment (i.e. definite) the default interpretation of a predicate (i.e. telic) is realized. But this suggestion is far from obvious: in Tatar non-default, morphologically marked option is exactly definiteness.

Predicates, then, differ with respect to the co-occurrence with adverbials like *in two hours* and *for two hours*. In both Tatar and Bagwalal there are items only compatible with 'for two hours' or with 'in two hours'. For example, in Bagwalal *maḥammad-i-ba* (aff.) *paṭ'imat b-ečiča* (pret.) 'Mohammed₁ forgot₃ Fatima₂' can only be modified by *č'era rešen-ini* (interest.) 'in two years', while *maḥammad š,ardi* (pret.) 'Mohammed had a walk, lit. walked' — by *č'era safat-ir* (erg.) 'for two hours'.

But a considerable portion, if not the majority of Preterits in both Bagwalal and Tatar easily co-occur with both types of adverbials producing either telic or atelic interpretations. In Tatar, for instance, *zehrä idän-ne* (acc.) *seberä-de* (pret.) 'Zukhra₁ swept₃ the₂ floor₂' allows both *ike sagat-ta* (loc.) 'for two hours' and *ike sagat ečendä* 'in (lit. inside₃) two₁ hours₂'.

Finally, Preterits of 'write' and 'sweep' type in both Bagwalal and Tatar can be interpreted as atelic without any overt trigger of detelicization provided that the pragmatic context favors such a reading. In (4), for example, there is no adverbials of duration, and the direct object is definite, yet it is quite naturally interpreted as atelic, if Mohammed's field is too big to be plowed in one day.

- (4) *maḥammad-i-r,* *baq'ada* *hec'i-w-o,* *hüşa* *b-eL'i,* *hē*
 Mohammed-OBL-ERG, early rise-M-CONV field N-plow:PRET then
 eša *w-ā*
 home M-come:PRET
 Mohammed got up early, plowed (his) field, and returned home.

These data suggest that we are not likely to deal with detelicization of inherently telic predicates. Rather, in accordance with Declerck 1979, verbs like *b-eL'i* 'plow' in (4) are most adequately treated as not specified for a particular value of telicity (or, if one likes, specified for both). If so, the specification for the telicity of the Preterit looks as follows:

- (5) $\langle T(\text{Preterive}) \rangle$, where $T(x) \subset \{ \langle t(\text{elic}) \rangle; \langle a(\text{telic}) \rangle; \langle t|a \rangle \}$

In Tatar the proportion of verbs that allow for atelic interpretation is considerably higher than in Bagwalal. Thus, for dozens of $\langle t \rangle$ and $\langle t|a \rangle$ Bagwalal verbs corresponding verbs in Tatar are $\langle t|a \rangle$ and $\langle a \rangle$ respectively. For example, the Preterit of the Bagwalal verb *Lṭhā* 'sleep' can be interpreted as either 'fell asleep' or 'slept for some time'. Corresponding Tatar verb *jr'kr/la-u* 'sleep' produces only the latter interpretation and can not refer to the change of state 'fell asleep'. At the same time, there are virtually no atelic Bagwalal verbs with telic Tatar counterparts.

To sum up, data from Tatar and Bagwalal points towards at least two essential parameters of cross-linguistic variation. First, the proportion of verbs that allow both telic and atelic readings may vary across languages. For Russian Perfective verbs this proportion is zero, in English there is a number of such verbs, and in Bagwalal and Tatar their amount is even higher. Second, the same situation may be projected into the verbal lexicon as telic in one language and as atelic in the other, and languages can vary as to what types of a situation they choose for telic (vs. atelic) representation. Moreover, this variation is not arbitrary: an implicational relation

holds between lexical classes in Tatar and Bagwalal, such that if a Tatar verb is of <t|a> type, we do not expect a corresponding Bagwalal verb to be of <a> type. The nature and cross-linguistic validity of such relations require, of course, further examination, but it does not look impossible that there are universal restriction on accessibility of certain types of situations for telic (resp. atelic) representation.

3.3. Habitual interpretation

The above discussion has concerned the perfective use of Preterits in Bagwalal and Tatar. But the distribution of the Preterits covers also habitual contexts. (a-b) (cf. Ö.Dahl's (1985) TMAQ #91, 98) allow two different readings — perfective proper and habitual — not admitting the progressive reading.

- (6) a. ul jetker-de (Tatar) b. o-w oñori (Bagwalal)
 he cough-RET this-M cough:RET
 He coughed {once} || {Last winter he used to catch a cold.} He coughed
 *{all the time} || *{When I came in,} he was coughing*

The ranges of meanings of the Preterit overlaps with that of the Past Imperfective, associated with progressive and habitual meanings, as (a-b) show.

- (7) a. ul jetker-ä i-de (Tatar)
 he cough-IPFV AUX-RET
 b. o-w oñor-ä-X b-uk'a (Bagwalal)
 this-M cough-IPFV-CONV N-AUX:RET
 {Last winter he used to catch a cold.} He coughed {all the time} || {When I
 came in,} he was coughing

Semantic contrast between the habitual Past Imperfective and Preterit is evident only if S(Preterite)=<s>. In this case imperfective forms in both Bagwalal and Tatar imply iterative nature of the situation: the proposition is true at some temporal intervals and false at others. (3) from Bagwalal cited in section 3.1 is an example of this. In a similar fashion, in Tatar the Preterit has 'state exists + past' interpretation. Occurring in *Zakir bu awıl-da* (loc.) *bul-dır* (pret.) 'lit. Zakir₁ was₄ in₃ this₂ village₃, it implies that Zakir *lived* in the village, while the Past Imperfective *bul-a i-de* implies that he *visited* the village from time to time.

When S(Preterite) = <d>, difference between the habitual Preterit and habitual Past Imperfective is scarcely visible. Many speakers considers them completely synonymous⁶. Others suggest minor differences such as that observed in *Zehrä idän-ne* (acc.) *seberä-de* (pret.) || *seber-i i-de* (past imperf.) 'Zuhra₁ (regularly) swept₃ the₂ floor₂'. The Past Imperfective can produce a pragmatic implicature that a habitual situation occurring in the past does not last in the present. The Preterit is never associated with such an implicature.

Another difference between the two habitual forms is demonstrated by *kür-ü* 'see, meet' in *Raşıit här wakıt marat-nır* (acc.) *kür-de* (pret.) || *kür-ä i-de* (past imperf.) 'Rashit₁ constantly (lit. every₂ time₃) met₃ Marat₄'. The Preterit tends to refer to customary habitual situations every repetition of which are enforced by some social or physical condition. Repetitions of a habitual situation referred to by the Past Imperfective are viewed as a matter of pure coincidence.

⁶ In Bagwalal, where in addition to the Preterit and Past Imperfective there is a Past Habitual occurring in past habitual contexts, synonymy is even more prominent than in Tatar.

Meanwhile, these differences seem to be a matter of preference and not a strict rule. They are pragmatically unstable and hardly allow typological generalizations. But I assume that similarities in the distribution of the Preterit and Past Imperfective are more significant than differences. In the light of Bybee et al. 1994:83 cited in section 1 who predict that PERFECTIVE vs. IMPERFECTIVE grams tend to establish maximal contrast, difference between the Past Imperfective and Preterit is what we can expect. What we are not likely to expect is exactly the existence of a group of contexts where the meaning of the Preterit and Past Imperfective are virtually indistinguishable.

Bagwalal and Tatar provide evidence that the domain of aspectual meanings is not obligatory shaped in such a way as to produce maximal contrasts. Indeed, in these languages synonymy exists not only within perfective and imperfective domains, but also across these domains. Therefore, maximal contrasts emerging in English ('perfective' + 'past habitual' vs. 'past progressive') or Russian ('perfective' vs. 'past habitual' + 'past progressive') but absent in Tatar and Bagwalal can be best viewed as a parameter of cross-linguistic variation.

4. The Preterit: restricted PAST or extended PERFECTIVE?

Synchronic distribution of the Preterits in Bagwalal and Tatar discussed above requires a diachronic interpretation. According to Bybee et al. 1994, expected distribution of the overtly marked Preterit in Tatar is that of the PAST; zero marked Preterit in Bagwalal is expected to behave like PERFECTIVE. Yet the two categories are associated with virtually the same range of meanings, neither PAST nor PERFECTIVE.

The possible suggestion about the Preterit in Tatar is that originally it was a PAST contrasting with no imperfective category in the domain of the past time reference. Then the development of the Past Imperfective results in that the meaning of the old PAST was reshaped, and its distribution became more restricted. (M. Haspelmath (1998) has offered a detailed characterization of such development in the domain of present imperfective categories.) This accounts for 'habitual' and 'state exists' (with stative predicates) uses of the Preterit and for its potential to refer to atelic situations. These properties are not surprising for the PAST: indeed, the PAST is readily available in 'habitual' and 'state exists' contexts provided that a situation occurs prior to the moment of speech; besides, the PAST imposes no restrictions on the Aktionsart of a predicate. Now we have such a stage of development where the old PAST has lost the progressive reading which is seized by the developing Past Imperfective, while other semantic characteristics survived.

The same account applied to the zero marked Bagwalal Preterit is appreciably more problematic: postulating for Bagwalal the same path of development as for Tatar will result in acknowledgment of zero marked PASTS. In fact, the Preterit in Bagwalal apparently represents a «perfective-from-zero» case (see Bybee et al. 1994: 90-91, Bybee 1994). But if «perfective-from-zero» hypothesis is true, viz. the development of zero marked PERFECTIVES is a side effect of the development of IMPERFECTIVE, then before this development starts, the zero marked category has the distribution of the PAST. But zero marked PASTS are not allowed by the theory, and the whole situation looks like a vicious circle.

I suppose, therefore, that restrictions on the distribution of zero-marked grams should be relaxed a little. In particular, I adhere to the «default» view of zero marked categories put forward in Dahl 1985, according to which an unmarked category can occupy the whole semantic space not associated with any other categories. This view allows zero marked Preterit to cover the whole domain of past time reference given that there is no overtly marked category associated with (part of) the same domain.

If so, the Bagwalal Preterit at some diachronic stage may have the same distribution as the Tatar Preterit and than enter the same process of development.

Ultimately, the cross-linguistic properties of 'perfective' + 'habitual' categories require further examination. The present study dealing with only two languages, although genetically and areally unrelated, should be regarded not as typological but rather as *pre-typological*. Nevertheless, I assume that striking similarities observed above are unlikely to be a result of coincidence, and it will not be too much surprising if as soon as new typological evidence appears, out knowledge about the relation between 'progressive', 'habitual', and 'perfective' changes.

References

- Bache, Carl. 1995. *The study of aspect, tense and action. Toward a theory of the semantics of grammatical categories*. Frankfurt am Main: Peter Lang.
- Bertinetto, Pier Marco & Denis Delfitto. 1999. Aspect vs. Actionality: Why they should be kept apart. In Ö.Dahl (ed.) *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Bertinetto, Pier Marco & Mario Squartini. 1999. The Simple and Compound Past in Romance languages. In Ö.Dahl (ed.) *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Bhat, Shankara D.N. 1999. *The prominence of tense, aspect, and mood*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Binnick, Robert I. 1991. *Time and the verb. A guide to tense and aspect*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Breu, Walter. 1994. Interactions between lexical, temporal, and aspectual meanings. *Studies in language* 18-1: 23-44.
- Breu, Walter. 1996. Komponentenmodell der Interaktion von Lexik und Aspekt. In W.Girke (ed.) *Slavistische Linguistik 1995*. München: Otto Sagner.
- Bybee, Joan L. 1985. *Morphology: a study of the relation between meaning and form*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Bybee, Joan L. 1988. Semantic substance vs. contrast in the development of grammatical meaning. *Berkeley Linguistic Society* 14: 247-264.
- Bybee, Joan L. 1994. The grammaticization of zero: Asymmetries in tense and aspect systems. In W. Pagliuca (ed.) *Perspectives on grammaticalization*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins: 235-254.
- Bybee, Joan L. & Östen Dahl. 1989. The creation of tense and aspect systems in the languages of the world. *Studies in Language* 13: 51-103.
- Bybee, Joan L., Revere Perkins & William Pagliuca. 1994. *The Evolution of Grammar. Tense, Aspect, and Modality in the Languages of the World*. Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1976. *Aspect. An introduction to the study of verbal aspect and related problems*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1985. *Tense*. Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press.
- Dahl Östen. 1981. On the definition of the telic-atelic (bounded-nonbounded) distinction. In Ph. Tedeschi & A.Zaenen (eds.) *Tense and Aspect. Syntax and Semantics 14*. New York: Academic Press.
- Dahl, Östen. 1985. *Tense and Aspect Systems*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Dahl, Östen. 1999. The tense-aspect systems of European languages in a typological perspective. In Ö.Dahl (ed.) *Tense and aspect in the languages of Europe*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Declerck, Renaat. 1979. Aspect and the bounded/unbounded (telic/atelic) distinction.

- tion. *Linguistics* 17: 761-794.
- Depraetere, Ilse. 1995. The effect of temporal adverbials on (a)telicity and (un)boundedness. In P. M. Bertinetto, V. Bianchi, Ö. Dahl & M. Squartini (eds.) *Temporal Reference, Aspect, and Actionality*. Vol. 1. Torino: Rosenberg and Sellier: 43-54.
- Dowty, David R. 1986. The effect of aspectual class on the temporal structure of discourse: semantics or pragmatics? *Linguistics and Philosophy* 9:37-61.
- Gudava, Togo Je. 1967. Bagvalinskij jazyk. {Bagwalal.} In *Jazyki narodov SSSR*. {Languages of the USSR} Vol. 4. Moscow: Nauka: 225-243.
- Haspelmath, Martin. 1998. The semantic development of old presents: New futures and subjunctives without grammaticalization. *Diachronica* XV.1: 29-62.
- Hopper, Paul & Sandra Thompson. 1980. "Transitivity in grammar and discourse". *Language* 56: 251-299.
- Janssen, Theo A.J.M. 1994. Preterit and perfect in Dutch. In C.Vet & C.Vetters (eds.) *Tense and aspect in discourse*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter: 21-49.
- Johanson, Lars. 1971. *Aspekt im Türkischen. Vorstudien zu einer Beschreibung des türkeitürkischen Aspektsystems*. Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Turcica Upsaliensia 1. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell.
- Johanson, Lars. 1996. Terminality Operators and Their Hierarchical Status. In B. Devriendt, L. Goossens & J. van der Auwera (eds.) *Complex Structures: A functionalist perspective*. Berlin and New York: Mouton de Gruyter: 229-58.
- Klein, Wolfgang. 1995. A time-relational analysis of Russian aspect. *Language* 71. 669-695.
- Mourelatos, Alexander P. 1981. Events, processes, and states. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 2:415-434.
- Paducheva, Elena V. 1995. Taxonomic categories and semantic of aspectual opposition. In P. M. Bertinetto, V. Bianchi, Ö. Dahl & M. Squartini (eds.) *Temporal Reference, Aspect, and Actionality*. Vol. 1. Torino: Rosenberg and Sellier: 71-90
- Paducheva, Elena V. 1996. *Semanticheskiye issledovaniya*. {Essays on semantics}. Moscow: JRK.
- Plungian, Vladimir. 1998. «Perfektiv, kompletiv, punktiv: terminologija i tipologija». {Pervective, completive, punctual: terminology and typology} M.J. Chertkova (ed.). *Tipologija vida*. Moscow: JRK: 370-380
- Smith, Carlota S. 1991. *The parameter of Aspect*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Smith, Carlota S. 1996. Aspectual categories in Navajo. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 62: 227-63.
- Thieroff, Rolf (ed.) 1995. *Tense systems in European languages II*. Tübingen: Niemeyer.
- Tieroff, Rolf. 1999. Preterites and imperfects in the languages of Europe. In W. Abraham & L.Kulikov (eds.) *Tense-aspect, transitivity, and causativity: essays in honor of Vladimir Nedjalkov*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Vendler, Zeno. 1967. *Linguistics in Philosophy*. Cornell: Cornell University Press.
- Zakijev M.Z. 1993. *Tatarskaja grammatika* {Tatar}. Vols. 1-3. Kazan': TKI.

Sergei Tatevosov

Department of Theoretical and Applied Linguistics, Philological faculty
I korpus gmanitarnykh fakul'tetov, Vorobjevy Gory
Moscow State University, 119899 Moscow, Russia

tatevos@philol.msu.ru