

Context-Sensitive Bidirectional OT: a New Approach to Russian Aspect

1. Aspects as temporal inclusion relations

- (1) *Kogda my poženilis',*
when we married_{PAST.PF}
on čital "Vojnu i Mir".
he read_{PAST.IPF} "War and Peace"
"When we got married, he was reading "War and Peace"."

The progressive imperfective: $t \subseteq e$

i.e. 'when we got married' \subseteq an event of him reading W&P

- (2) *Ja čital "Vojnu i Mir" v šestom klasse,*
I read_{PAST.IPF} "War and Peace" in sixth grade
pročital polnost'ju za 6 dnej. (internet)
read_{PAST.PF} completely in 6 days
"I read "War and Peace" in the 6th grade, read it through in 6 days."

The perfective: $e \subseteq t$

i.e. the event of reading W&P \subseteq an interval of 6 days

The 'factual imperfective': $e \subseteq t$

i.e. the event of reading W&P \subseteq an interval of 1 year (6th grade)

2. Russian aspect – a 2x2 game with 3 solutions...?

	$t \subseteq e$	$e \subseteq t$
IPF	√ (weakly optimal)	*(deblocking in certain contexts)
PF	*(ungrammatical)	√ (weakly optimal)

Table 1: Russian aspect

	countable animal	non-countable cow-meat
'cow'	√ (optimal)	*(deblocking in certain contexts: <i>Hindus are not allowed to eat cow.</i>)
'beef'	*(ungrammatical)	√ (weakly optimal)

Table 2: Conceptual grinding

3. Partial blocking and deblocking – basic idea

First round

(Weak BiOT with or without contexts):

- GEN = F x M – {<PF, $t \subseteq e$ >}
- Pf is marked: IPF > PF.
- The pair <IPF, $e \subseteq t$ > is blocked.
- Three possible strategies:
 1. Apply conditional informativity (Blutner 1998, Grønn 2006)
 2. Stipulate¹ the ranking on M: $t \subseteq e > e \subseteq t$
 3. Context-sensitive BiOT (Benz 2001)
 - a) Distinguish between contexts (and constraints) for S and H
 - b) Avoid “dead ends”
- Partial blocking obtains in 1, 2 and 3:
- <IPF, $t \subseteq e$ > and <PF, $e \subseteq t$ > are weakly optimal.

Second round

(requires context-sensitive BiOT or context-sensitive constraints):

- Deblocking of <IPF, $e \subseteq t$ > in contexts where $t \subseteq e$ is unavailable for H.
- Reversed ranking on F: PF > IPF
- Partial blocking obtains:
- <PF, canonical $e \subseteq t$ > and <IPF, non-canonical $e \subseteq t$ > are weakly optimal.

4. Blocking of the complete event interpretation of IPF

“A complete event interpretation $e \subseteq t$ is not available for the IPF whenever a progressive/processual $t \subseteq e$ interpretation is possible” (Grønn 2006 – using conditional informativity).

- (1') *Kogda my poženilis',*
when we married_{PAST.PF}
on uže pročital "Vojnu i Mir".
he already read_{PAST.PF} “War and Peace”
“When we got married, he had already read “War and Peace”.”

<PF, $e \subseteq$ “the whole past *preceding* the time of we’re getting married”>

¹ In cases like (1’/1’), this ranking can possibly be motivated by a constraint for H: “Do not accommodate!”, see below.

(1'') *Kogda my poženilis',*
 when we married_{PAST.PF}
on uže čital "Vojnu i Mir".
 he already read_{PAST.PF} "War and Peace"
 "When we got married, he was already reading "War and Peace"."

<IPF, "the time of we're getting married"_{⊆e}>

How to explain the blocking of *<IPF, $e \subseteq t$ "the whole past *preceding* the time of we're getting married"> in a context c ?

Assumptions:

- The common ground in c is compatible with both an incomplete ($t \subseteq e$) and complete ($e \subseteq t$) event interpretation.
- Ranking on F: IPF_{S,c} > PF (speaker's economy)
- Ranking on M: $t \subseteq e$ _{H,c} \approx $e \subseteq t$
- GEN_S = {< c , IPF, $e \subseteq t$ >, < c , PF, $e \subseteq t$ >}
- GEN_H = {< c , IPF, $e \subseteq t$ >, < c , IPF, $t \subseteq e$ >, < c , PF, $e \subseteq t$ >}
- Global principle: S must avoid dead ends (Benz 2001)

Explanation:

- If S chooses IPF for $e \subseteq t$ in c , H may return the triple < c , IPF, $t \subseteq e$ > \notin GEN_S (dead end!). S must therefore choose PF for $e \subseteq t$ in c . H returns the triple < c , PF, $e \subseteq t$ >, which is thus optimal.
- H knows that S seeks to avoid dead ends. Hence, if S chooses IPF in a context c , it must be the case that < c , IPF, $t \subseteq e$ > \in GEN_S and H will return this triple.
- A polarisation with two c -optimal triples obtains (same result as with conditional informativity; same pairs as in the Horn strategy).

	$e \subseteq t$	$t \subseteq e$
IPF	!* √ (optimal)	√ (weakly optimal)
PF	√ (optimal)	!* √ (weakly optimal)

Table 3: Polarisation in context-sensitive BiOT

5. Deblocking: aspectual competition and complete event interpretations

- We isolate a class of contexts C where CG and/or H's constraint "Do not accommodate!" rule out an incomplete event interpretation.
- PF is the semantic default in C (reranking of F).
- Deblocking of $\langle \text{IPF}, e \subseteq t \rangle$ is possible in C .
- Emergence of a new Horn strategy.
- A stereotypical situation for $e \subseteq t$ in C is "current relevance of the result state" (+RES)

	$e \subseteq t$ (+RES)	$e \subseteq t$ (RES is irrelevant)
PF	√ (optimal)	!*
IPF	!*	√ (weakly optimal)

Table 4: Deblocking of the 'factual IPF' leads to partial blocking in a second round. (Horn strategy in contexts where an incomplete event interpretation is excluded for H).

The presuppositional/anaphoric IPF:

- (3) *Krasivo ukrasili elku. Kto ukrašal?*
 beautifully decorated_{PAST.PF.(PLUR)} spruce who decorated_{PAST.IPF}.
 "A: They decorated the Christmas tree beautifully. B: Who decorated it?"

The existential IPF:

- (4) *Kto čital "Vojnu i Mir"?*
 who read_{PAST.IPF} "War and Peace"
 "Who has read "War and Peace"?"

A resultative PF vs. "the convention of annulled result" (IPF) – with predicates having an inherent target state:

- (5) *Kto otkryl okno?*
 who opened_{PAST.PF} window.
 "Who has opened the window?"

- (5') *Kto otkryval okno?*
 who opened_{PAST.IPF} window.
 "Who had the window open?"

Ranking: PF > IPF; m1 > m2	m1 = $e \subseteq t$ + target state validity	m2 = $e \subseteq t$ + target state cancellation
PF	√ (optimal)	!*
IPF	!*	√ (weakly optimal)

Table 5: Deblocking with target state predicates (an instance of table 4)

m2 is an unstable pragmatic implicature of IPF which is easily cancelled:

- (6) *Eto ty otkryval dver' grjaznymi rukami?*
 that you opened_{PAST.IPF} door dirty_{INSTR} hands_{INSTR}
 “Was it you who opened the door with dirty hands?”

6. Excursus: Aspect and Horn strategies outside the temporal domain

- Folklore aspectology = Horn strategy
- Illustration: *aspectual competition in imperatives under negation*

- (7) *Ty, požalujsta, ne opazdyvaj.*
 you please not be_late_{IMP.IPF}
 “Please don’t be late.”

- (8) *Čerez 10 minut budet uže pozdno.*
Smotri, ne opazdaj!
 look_{IMP.IPF} not be_late_{IMP.PF}
 “In 10 minutes it’s already too late. Be careful not to be late.”

<i>Ranking:</i> IPF > PF; <i>m1</i> > <i>m2</i>	<i>m1</i> = S wants H not to perform an action <i>a</i>	<i>m2</i> = S warns H against accidentally performing an action <i>a</i>
NEG_imperative_IPF	√ (optimal)	!*
NEG_imperative_PF	!*	√ (weakly optimal)

Table 6: A bidirectional optimization of aspect in imperative under negation

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