Title: Aspect, Grounding, and Negation in Czech (in contrast to Russian)
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The literature on grounding notes a strong cross-linguistic correlation between the perfective aspect and the narrative function of foregrounding, and between the imperfective aspect and backgrounding. Timberlake (2004: 400) observes:

> Narrative presumes a dynamic by which… each event starts from the prior situation and proceeds to a new result, which in turn becomes the starting point for the next subsequent event. Narrative, then, involves both temporal succession and modal causality.

Prototypical foregrounds involve not only a sense of totality, with each event leading to a "new result", but also a sense of temporal definiteness, with each predicate differentiated from the situations in preceding and subsequent temporal intervals. Czech data, while supportive of the general tendencies of grounding, show more deviation than Russian, in accordance with the "east-west" theory of aspect outlined in Dickey 2000: Czech has a greater tendency than Russian to encode as perfective verbs with an inherent sense of totality, with less regard to syntagmatic relations with preceding and subsequent events.

A second issue addressed in the paper is the influence of negation on grounding. Slavic-based aspectological literature on negation has generally treated negation as creating a sense of stativity, which would seem to automatically classify negated events as background. However, negated clauses are often directly involved in temporal successions and modal causalities and may thus be indispensable to the development of a narrative line as plot-advancing, foreground clauses (cf. Leinfellner-Rupertsberger 1991, De Swart and Molendijk 1999). The paper discusses the underspecificity often associated with negated events and the interrelations of grounding and negation as reflected differentially in Czech and Russian aspect.

Bibliography

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