

## CATEGORY OF ASPECT IN RUSSIAN VERBS: GRAMMAR, SEMANTICS, TEACHING METHODS

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**Abstract:** The article deals with the features of the category of aspect in Russian verbs in terms of the methods of teaching foreign students about them. Verb aspects are one of the most complex topics of Russian grammar. Consequently, a lot of central issues of aspectology remain subjects of discussion, which determines the relevance of this topic. The purpose of the article is to briefly describe the most important grammatical and semantic features of the category of aspect that are essential to the development of the teaching methodology. The author analyzes the issues of the grammatical content of the aspect, whether aspectual pairs are part of word-formation or inflection, as well as the semantic properties of the perfective and the imperfective aspect. The descriptive-analytical method and the methods of quantitative analysis and modeling are used in the study. As a result of the study, the author has come to the following conclusions: the methods of teaching aspects to foreign students should be based on aspectual pairs of verbs; students should not only receive necessary information on the formal features of verbs but also understand the semantic differences between them. Examples of exercises have been proposed to help students develop the skill of using aspectual pairs of verbs.

**Keywords:** aspectual pairs, category of aspect, imperfective aspect, Russian as a foreign language, perfective aspect, teaching methods, verb.

### 1 Introduction

Aspect is a very important and distinctive category of the Russian verb. The academician V.V. Vinogradov wrote, "The category of aspect is at the basis of most processes of intra-verb word formation and inflection. The morphological mechanism of the category of aspect is more complex and varied than that of other categories of the verb. However, its pattern is silent and expressionless unless one illuminates the inner, semantic bases for aspectual differences" [1: 393]. There are no verb forms in the Russian language that would be outside the aspectual system and would have no aspectual meaning. It is the aspectual meaning that determines the ability or inability to produce tense forms, participles and adverbial participles. According to A.V. Bondarko, the grammatical category of aspect has a central place among the means of expressing aspectual relations in the Russian language [2: 42]. Works on the category of aspect were written by such scholars as N.S. Avilova [3], A.V. Bondarko [4, 2], L.L. Bulanin [4], A.V. Isachenko [5], S.A. Karpukhin [6], Yu.S. Maslov [7], I.P. Muchnik [7], E.V. Paducheva [9, 10], A.N. Tikhonov [11], M.Yu. Chertkova [12] and others. However, many questions related to aspect do not have conclusive solutions [13, 14].

Verb aspects are one of the most important and complex topics of Russian grammar. In many studies dedicated to teaching Russian as a foreign language, it is emphasized that learning aspects of the Russian verb is very difficult for students as this category is not present in many languages [15 - 19]. The most optimal method of teaching the category of aspect of the Russian verb is the functional-semantic method that includes the grammatical forms of expressing aspectual meanings [17, 18]. However, many questions that arise while studying the aspects of the Russian verb remain unsolved. In view of this, the purpose of the article is to briefly describe the most important grammatical and semantic features of the category of aspect that are essential to the development of the methodology of teaching it to foreigners. The relevance of the purpose is determined by the fact that many central issues of aspectology that are directly connected to teaching methodology remain subjects of discussion. The descriptive-analytical method and the methods of quantitative analysis and modeling, as well as pedagogical experiment, were used in the study.

### 2 Methods

The problem of the grammatical content of aspect is extremely important for the methodology of teaching Russian as a foreign language. The academician V.V. Vinogradov believed that "the

main function of the perfective aspect is to limit or eliminate the notions of the duration of action, drawing attention to a single moment of action as its limit" [1: 409]. At the same time, the imperfective aspect denotes the action in progress "not constrained by the idea of the limit of the process as a whole" [1: 409]. Therefore, the category of aspect denotes the relationship between the action and its inner limit.

However, a different definition often occurs in teaching practice. According to the definition, the perfective aspect denotes that the action is finished, completed while the imperfective aspect denotes the continuity, duration. This version is not exhaustive as it contradicts the semantics of many verbs. For example, the verbs of beginning in the perfective case do not carry the meaning of finishedness: *zapet, zashumet, vzrevet, pobezhat, poletet* [to start singing, to begin to make a noise, to start roaring, to start running, to start flying].

The notion "finishedness of an action" complicates the determination of the aspect of tense forms. It is difficult to explain to foreign students learning Russian that the Future Simple forms *napishem, postavim, otvechu* [we will write, we will set, I will reply] denote finishedness whereas the action denoted by this tense form has not yet been carried out. A.V. Isachenko notes that "the notion of 'finishedness' erases the distinction between the tense-related and solely aspectual semantic elements since 'finishedness' can be only applied to past tense forms (of the perfective aspect) like *on skazal, on napisal* [he said, he wrote]" [10: 134]. The notion of "finishedness" is also applicable to imperfective verbs because any part form denotes an action finished before the moment of speech: *rasskazyval, prieszhal, podpisывal* [he was telling, he was coming, he was signing], etc.. Therefore, the terms "finishedness/unfinishedness" should not be used when teaching the aspects. It seems more appropriate, although not always, to use the terms "efficiency" for the perfective aspect and "inefficiency" for the imperfective. The meaning of efficiency is manifested in the clearest way in the combinations of perfective verbs with direct objects: *postroit dom, napisat pismo* [to build a house, to write a letter], etc. However, many actions denoted by verbs of perfective aspect do not have an efficient result: *pomolchat, pogrusti, pobegat; zabolet, zaplakat* [to be silent, to be sad, to run; to fall ill, to start crying], etc. Sometimes imperfective forms can have an efficient meaning: *Kak tolko prekrashchalsya dozhd, deti vykhodili na progulku* [As soon as the rain stopped, children would come out for a walk].

Thus, the most accurate definition of grammatical semantics is through the notion of the "inner limit". The inner limit denotes the natural outcome of an action, reaching the goal, result or limit set by the semantics of the verb.

The basis of the category of aspect is aspectual pairs. As A. Meie wrote, "A notable feature of Slavic languages is the presence of the system of verb pairs" [20: 228]. In M.Yu. Chertkova's studies the data was received on the ratio of verbs with aspectual pairs and verbs without them – 97%:3% which "makes it possible to draw a conclusion about the development trend of the category of aspect in the modern Russian language that follows the path of universalization of the aspectual opposition in the entire verb lexis" [12: 134].

However, it remains the subject of discussion whether aspectual pairs are part of word-formation or inflection. In the academic Russian grammar 1980 [21], they are part of word formation: "An aspectual pair is formed by two different words that have a relationship of word-forming motivation: in the pair *delat – sdelat* [to do – to finish doing], the verb *sdelat* is formed from the verb *delat* with the prefix *s-*; in the pair *perepisyat – perepisyvat* [to finish rewriting – to rewrite], the verb *perepisyvat* is formed from the verb *perepisyat* with the help of the suffixal morph *-iva-*. Each member of an aspectual pair is an independent verb with its own basic form – the infinitive" [21: 584]. This notion contradicts the aforementioned idea, "An

aspectual pair is a pair of lexically equal verbs of perfective and imperfective aspects, that are different only in the grammatical semantics of aspect: *delat – sdelat, perepisat – perepisyvat* [21: 583]. If the members of an aspectual pair are lexically equal, they cannot be in a relationship of word-forming motivation as only syntactical derivatives that are different parts of speech can remain lexically equal in the process of word formation (*perepisat – perepisyvanie, dobryi – dobrota, les – lesnoi* [to rewrite – rewriting, kind – kindness, wood – woody], etc.). Therefore, following A.N. Tikhonov, we will consider the verbs with aspectual pairs within the framework of inflection, “An aspectual pair is a strictly grammatical notion” [11: 15]. This means that verbs that are part of an aspectual pair are identical in their lexical meaning, differing only in the grammatical meaning of the perfective/imperfective aspect.

### 3 Results and Discussion

The difficulties that foreign students face when studying the category of aspect are due to the fact that aspectual pairs in Russian do not have a single pattern and numerous suffixes and prefixes are used for their formation, for instance: *sozdat – sozdavat, perepisat – perepisyvat, oslabet – oslabevat, razgryzt – razgryzat, napravit – napravlyat, delat – sdelat, risovat – narisovat* [to finish creating – to create, to finish rewriting – to rewrite, to get weak – to be getting weak, to break with one’s teeth – to be breaking with one’s teeth, to direct – to be directing, to do – to finish doing, to draw – to finish drawing], etc. Besides suffixes and prefixes, aspectual differences are also expressed by the stress (*raz’rezat – razre’zat* [to cut – to be cutting]), sound interchange (*osvetit – osveshchat* [to illuminate – to be illuminating]), suppletion (*brat – vzyat, govorit – skazat* [to be taking – to take, to talk – to say]). This is the reason why verb aspects are one of the most difficult topics of Russian grammar.

As a result of our study, we came to the following methodological conclusion: the main requirement for teaching aspects to foreign students is to study all verb forms in aspectual pairs. Both one-aspect and two-aspect verbs should be studied but the verbs with aspectual pairs should always be the center of attention as they are the basis of the word-formation of the verb. Members of aspectual pairs should be introduced in such a context that will enable students to understand their connection as that of grammatical forms of the same verb: *Uchenik reshaet zadachu. – Uchenik reshil zadachu. Malchik lovit rybu. – Malchik poimal rybu* [A student is solving a task. – A student has solved the task. The boy is catching fish. – The boy has caught a fish].

The work on aspectual pairs of verbs should be the center of attention throughout the course when studying any kind of material – vocabulary, word formation, morphology, syntax. This can be done not only during Russian classes. One should pay attention to aspectual pairs while reading literature, during extracurricular events, guided trips and any other speech situations.

The introduction to aspectual pairs goes well with studying the questions *Chto delayu? Chto delaet? Chto delat? Chto sdelat? (chitayu stikhotvorenie – chital stikhotvorenie – prochital stikhotvorenie; stroit dom – stroil dom – postroil dom)* [What am I doing? What is one doing? What was one doing? What has one done? (I am reading a poem – one was reading a poem – one has read a poem; one is building a house – one was building a house – one has built a house)].

When studying tense forms (present, past, future compound, future simple) one can use oppositions of the following kind: *Ya pishu pismo. – Ya budu pisat pismo. Ya pisal pismo. – Ya napisal pismo. – Ya napishu pismo. Ya pishu pismo. – Ya napishu pismo* [I am writing a letter. – I will be writing a letter. I was writing a letter. – I have written a letter. – I will write a letter. I am writing a letter. – I will write a letter], etc. If the meaning of tenses is not taught in such oppositions, students will not learn to use them correctly as the tense and aspect systems are closely connected. The aforementioned constructions can be made more complex by introducing adverbial words, such as: *kazhdyi den, redko,*

*chasto, inogda, nikogda, vdrug, neozhidanno* [every day, seldom, often, sometimes, never, suddenly, unexpectedly], etc.

When studying the phonetic system of the Russian language, one should note the sound interchange during the formation of aspectual pairs of verbs, for instance: *otvetit – otvechat, sprosit – sprashivat, sobrat – sobirat* [to reply – to be replying, to ask – to be asking, to gather – to be gathering], etc.

The morphemic differences in aspectual pairs can be pointed out during the studying of the word structure – prefixes and affixes. One should devote attention to the groups of monostructural verbs so that students can learn several models of aspect formation: *pisat – napisat, risovat – narisovat, chertit – nachertit; dat – davat, uspet – uspevat* [to be writing – to finish writing, to be painting – to finish painting, to be drawing – to finish drawing; to give – to be giving, to manage – to be managing], etc. Moreover, one should note the most productive ways of aspect formation, such as purely aspectual prefixation, the formation of imperfective verbs with the suffixes *-iva-* (*-yva-*), *-a-* (*-ya-*), the formation of perfective verbs with the suffix *-nu-*, etc.

When studying adverbs, particular attention should be drawn to how aspectual forms collocate with different groups of adverbs. One could inform students which groups of adverbs collocate only with perfective or imperfective verbs and which collocate with both. For example, the adverbs denoting continuous actions (*vsegda, bespreryvno, postoyanno* [always, ceaselessly, constantly], etc.), irregularly repeated actions (*inogda, vremenami, vremya ot vremeni* [sometimes, at times, from time to time], etc.) and regularly repeated actions (*ezhednevno, po subbotam* [daily, on Saturdays], etc.) usually collocate with imperfective verbs. As for adverbs denoting momentariness, the swiftness of an action (*vdruk, neozhidanno* [suddenly, unexpectedly], etc.), they usually collocate with perfective verbs. While covering this topic, one could do the following exercises:

Exercise 1. Use the verbs in the correct aspect, make sentences with the adverbs listed below.

Example: *Brat inogda берет меня с собой на рыбалку. Vdrug podul silnyi veter i nachalsya dozhd.*

*Vnezapno, vdruk, neozhidanno, totchas, vseгда, izredka, vremenami, inogda, ezhednevno.*

Exercise 2. Use the verbs in the correct aspect, make sentences with the words and word combinations listed below.

Example: *Kazhdoe utro ya delayu zaryadku.*

1. *Kazhdyi god, kazhdyi mesyats, kazhduyu nedelyu, kazhdyi den, kazhdyi vecher.*
2. *Vremenami, godami, vecherami.*
3. *Po vecheram, po voskreseniyam.*
4. *Redko, chasto, inogda.*

The study of aspect is connected to the predicate, especially the complex verbal predicates. One should pay particular attention to the collocation of imperfective verbs with phrasal verbs and their incompatibility with the perfective verbs, for instance: *nachnu chitat, prodolzhayu chitat, zakonchil chitat* [I will begin reading, I am continuing to read, I have finished reading], etc. It is recommended to do the following exercises:

Exercise 1. Choose the verb in the correct aspect in the indefinite form.

1. *Sestra nachala (myt – vymyt) posudu.*
2. *Prepodavatel prodolzhaet (obyasnit – obyasnayat) novuyu temu.*
3. *V zale pogasili svet i stali (pokazat – pokazivat) kinofilm.*

Exercise 2. Explain the difference in the meaning of the sentences. What is the difference in meaning expressed by?

1. *Ya nachal rasskazyvat druzyam interesnuyu istoriyu. – Ya nachinal rasskazyvat druzyam interesnuyu istoriyu.*
2. *Kogda ya*

*zakonchu chitat stikhotvorenie, my ego budem analizirovat. – Ya uzhe zakanchivayu chitat stikhotvorenie. Teper my ego proanaliziruem.*

When studying the complex verbal predicate, one should also work on using aspect in the combinations of the infinitive with the words of the category of state (impersonal-predicative words) that have a modal meaning. Some of them collocate with perfective infinitives, others with imperfective ones. Thus, with the words *nado, nuzhno, sleduet, dolzhen, neobkhodimo* [one has to, one needs to, one should, one ought to, one must], etc. perfective infinitives are predominantly used (*dolzhen soobshchit, nuzhno uekhat* [one ought to inform, one needs to leave], etc.). When there is a negation *ne* [not], these words (*ne nado, ne nuzhno, ne sleduet, ne dolzhen* [one does not have to, one does not need to, one should not, one ought not]) require the imperfective infinitive (*ne dolzhen soobshchat, ne nuzhno uezzhat* [one ought not inform, one need not leave], etc.). The same is true for *ne stoit, ne k chemu, nezachem* [there is no point, it is no use, it is pointless], etc. (*ne stoit volnovatsya* [there is no point in worrying], etc.). The verbs *privyknut, nadoest, nauchitsya, ustat, zapretit* [to get used to, to get bored of, to learn, to get tired, to ban], etc. are always followed by the imperfective infinitive (*nadoelo zhdet, nauchilsya plavat* [bored of waiting, learned to swim], etc.). With the verbs *udalos, uspel, zabyl* [managed, had time to, forgot], etc. the perfective infinitive is often used (*udalos kupit, uspel rasskazat* [managed to buy, had time to tell], etc.). This material can be easier learned with the help of these exercises:

Exercise 1. Make sentences with the words *nado, nuzhno, dolzhen (dolzhna, dolzhny), neobkhodimo* [one has to, one needs to, one ought to, one must] by using them with an infinitive and a direct object.

Example: *Mne nado skhodit v magazin. Tebe nuzhno zapisatsya na priem k vrachu.*

Exercise 2. Make sentences with the words *ne nado, ne nuzhno, ne sleduet, ne dolzhen* [one does not have to, one does not need to, one should not, one ought not]) by using them with an infinitive and a direct object.

Example: *Mne ne nado idti v magazin. Tebe ne nuzhno zapisyatsya na priem k vrachu.*

Exercise 3. Make sentences with the words *ustal, zapretit, nauchilsya, nadoelo* [got tired, banned, learned, got bored] by combining them with the indefinite form of the necessary verb.

Example: *Letom ya nauchilsya plavat.*

Exercise 4. Make sentences with the words *udalos, uspel, zabyl* [managed, had time to, forgot] by combining them with verbs in the indefinite form.

Example: *Sestra zabyla kupit khleb.*

The teacher should draw students' attention to the usage of aspects in the imperative mood with the negative particle *ne* [not]. The imperfective forms in the imperative mood with the particle *ne* denote an order, request (*ne krichi, ne prygai* [do not shout, do not jump], etc.). The perfective forms in the imperative mood with the particle *ne* denote a warning (*ne krikni, ne prygni* [do not make a shout, do not take a jump], etc.). Imperfective forms with a negation also denote a categorical order: *Ne dvigatsya!* [Do not move!]. To express a categorical order, infinitives of both kinds should be used without a negation: *Vstat! Molchat!* [Stand up! Be quiet!].

Already at the beginning stages of learning the Russian language, foreign students should know that homogeneous predicates usually contain verb forms of the same aspect. At the same time, a chain of perfective verbs denotes a sequence of finished actions (*Umylsya, odelsya, pozavtrakal...* [Washed up, got dressed, had breakfast...]). A chain of imperfective verbs denotes simultaneous actions (*Umyvalsya, odevalsya,*

*zavtrakal...* [Was washing up, was getting dressed, was having breakfast...]).

When studying complex sentences, especially those with time clauses, conditional clauses, purpose clauses, etc. one must teach students to correctly form sentences that express simultaneous and consecutive actions. For example, *Kogda ya napisal sochinenie, uchitel podoshel ko mne* [When I finished writing the composition, the teacher came up to me] (the perfective aspect denotes a sequence of actions); *Kogda ya pisal sochinenie, uchitel podkhodil ko mne* [As I was writing the composition, the teacher would come up to me] (the imperfective aspect denotes simultaneous actions).

When choosing aspectual pairs for students' active vocabulary, one must proceed from lists of basic vocabulary, vocabulary from Russian textbooks and readers and consider words that are useful in communication even if they are not part of basic vocabulary dictionaries or textbooks.

There are more opportunities to work on the semantics of aspects at the more advanced stage of learning. This work is based on the fact that students are more or less fluent in forming various types of simple and complex sentences, while they are mastering the rules of collocating aspects with other words and vice versa – the study of aspects is beneficial for learning the rules of collocation of Russian words, word combinations and sentences.

Another important result of our study is in the following statement: students must receive all the necessary information not only on the formal features of verbs but also deeply understand their semantic features and understand the differences between their meanings. Only this way one can ensure the correct usage of aspect forms in speech.

Every aspect has its general and particular meanings. As noted previously, the general meaning of the perfective aspect is the denotation of the inner limit of an action and the general meaning of the imperfective aspect is the denotation of an action in progress, as it is carried out. The general meanings of the aspects are inherent and present in any usage, although, the degree of their manifestation varies significantly in different grammatical forms. The general meanings are realized in particular meanings when verbs are used in certain aspect forms. The theory of the general and particular meanings of the aspect was developed by A.V. Bondarko and L.L. Bulanin [4: 52-61].

Every aspect has its particular meanings. The following are the particular meanings of the imperfective aspect: 1) the concrete-process meaning – the action takes place within a certain period of time, once, for example: *Tselyi chas reshal zadachu* [Spent an entire hour solving a problem]; 2) the continuous-uninterrupted meaning, for instance: *Reka Volga vpadat v Kaspiiskoe more* [The river Volga flows into the Caspian sea]; 3) the clear-exemplary meaning – the repeated action is presented in one of its manifestations, for example: *Kazhdoe voskresene my gulyaem v parke* [Every Sunday we take a walk in the park]; 4) the unlimited-multiple meaning – the action is presented as an unlimited row of repetitions, for instance: *Inogda po dvoru proezhali mashiny* [Sometimes cars would drive through the courtyard]; 5) the potential meaning – the action is possible at any moment, for example: *Devushka khorosho tantsuet* [The girl dances well]; 6) the limited-multiple meaning – the repetition of the action is limited, for example: *Brat dva raza priezhal k nam v gosti* [My brother came to visit twice]. The first three meanings are connected to non-repeated, single actions and the other three are connected to repeated multiple actions.

The particular meanings of the perfective aspect are: 1) the concrete-factual meaning – the action is a concrete single fact, for example: *Uchenik reshil zadachu* [The student has solved the problem]; 2) the clear-exemplary meaning – one act of a repeated action is a clear example of other acts, for instance: *Kak vseгда, vstanu rano, odenus, poedu na rabotu* [As usual, I will get up early, get dressed and go to work]; 3) the potential meaning – the action can take place at any time, for example: *Poidet dozhd* [It will rain]; 4) the aggregate meaning – the action

manifests as the sum of single facts, for instance: *Neskolko raz poskolznulsya i upal* [He slipped several times and fell].

Particular meanings of aspects have different positions in the system of language and speech, so their frequency of usage is not equal. Thus, the concrete-process and the general-factual meanings of the imperfective aspect are much more common than others. Some particular meanings of aspects are typical only for small semantic groups of verbs. For example, the continuous-uninterrupted meaning occurs only in the verbs of relation, state, transition, as well as the verbs denoting an action that can be thought of in its development: *imet, tsvesti, vytekat, vpadat, chernet, zelenet, bolet, zybnut* [to have, to blossom, to flow out, to flow into, to become black, to become green, to be ill, to be cold], etc. The most common meaning of the perfective aspect is concrete-factual. The second most commonly used is the aggregate meaning of the perfective aspect. The clear-exemplary and the potential meanings of the perfective aspect occur rarely and are stylistically limited. Such meanings should be studied only at the advanced stage of learning the Russian language when students have a rather good command of the system of aspects and tenses and can understand the usage of grammatical forms in figurative meaning.

Considering the different frequency of usage of different aspectual meanings, the stylistic limitations on some of them and the different communicative significance of the particular meanings of aspects, one must take a differentiated approach to learning them. More attention should be given to the particular aspectual meanings that occur more often and that are the most important for communication. When studying the semantics of the aspects of the Russian verb, it is feasible to concentrate on the following particular aspectual meanings: for the imperfective aspect – on the concrete-process meaning and the meaning of repeated action (as these meanings become familiar and based on the first meaning – the concrete-process meaning – one could introduce a more abstract, the general-factual meaning of the imperfective aspect); for the perfective aspect – on the concrete-factual and the aggregate meanings.

The realization of aspectual meanings in a particular speech situation depends on several factors: communicative attitudes, the speaker's and the interlocutor's intentions and what messages they want to transmit to one another. Based on this, the speaker chooses a perfective or an imperfective verb. For example: *Vchera Ivan pozvonil mne i pozdravil s prazdnikom* [Yesterday Ivan called me and congratulated me on the occasion]. The speaker is talking about what happened in this particular case and in accordance with that chooses a perfective verb. If the communicative intention changes, the same fact can be represented by an imperfective form, for example: – *Ivan zvonil tebe?* – *Da, zvonil vchera, pozdravlyal s prazdnikom* [– Has Ivan called you? – Yes, he did yesterday, congratulated on the occasion].

The choice of the aspect also depends on the communicative orientation of the reply in the dialogue. Compare: 1) – *Plan raboty kafedry utverdili vchera na zasedanii?* – *Net, ne utverdili.* [Was the schedule of the department approved yesterday during the meeting? – No, it was not approved.] 2) – *Plan raboty kafedry utverdili vchera na zasedanii?* – *Net, ne utverzhдали.* [Was the schedule of the department approved yesterday during the meeting? – No, it was not considered.] Both dialogues are in accordance with the norms of the Russian language. However, they express different meanings. The first dialogue states that the plan was not approved, it was declined. In the second dialogue, the interlocutor says that the plan was not considered, this action did not occur.

Aspect usage often depends on linguistic factors. Various limitations are due to other grammatical categories such as time, mood and voice, the functioning of which is closely connected to the category of aspect and affect its semantics. This is caused by the fact that any verb in its usage expresses a whole complex of grammatical meanings at once – aspect, tense, mood, transitivity/intransitivity, voice, person, number. This creates the conditions for the interaction and mutual influence of

grammatical meanings and as a result, the usage of the verb form can be limited or its meaning can be transformed.

Some grammatical meanings of verbs interact very closely while others maintain relative independence. The closest contacts are between the categories of aspect and tense. The interconnection of these categories is reflected in the fact that the forms of the imperfective aspect of verbs create a complete tense paradigm (*chitat – chitayu – budu chitat* [I was reading – I am reading – I will be reading]), and the forms of the perfective aspects have an incomplete tense paradigm (*prochital – prochitayu* [I read – I will read]), do not have a present tense.

The interconnection of these categories also manifests in the fact that aspect usage is closely connected to the functioning of tenses. The past and the future, denoting repeated actions, and the abstract present are the main areas of using the imperfective aspect. The perfective aspect rarely occurs in these tense forms. Single particular aspect meanings are realized in limited tense forms. For example, the clear-exemplary meaning of the perfective aspect is rarely used in the past. Usually, this meaning is realized in the future simple and much more rarely in the infinitive. The meaning of the statement of fact of the action that is typical for the imperfective aspect is widely used in the past forms. As for future forms, the usage of this meaning is limited.

When studying the main meanings and functions of aspects in their interaction with the tense forms of verbs, it is feasible to do various tasks and exercises. For example, semantic analysis of tense forms of verbs in texts, the replacement of aspect forms, the choice of the correct aspect forms to insert into already existing sentences, the formation of word combinations, sentences and coherent stories based on the given aspectual pairs, the organization of a conversation between students while using the given verbs, writing compositions with the given aspect forms, etc. Let us provide examples of some types of exercises that should be used while studying aspects in the past tense of the verb:

Exercise 1. Put the verb pairs into the past tense and make sentences with them. Explain the meanings of the sentences.

Example: *Ko mne prishel tovarishch.* – *Ko mne prikhodil tovarishch.* – *Otets segodnya prishel s raboty v 18 chasov.* – *Otets vseгда prikhodil s raboty v 18 chasov.*

*Priiti – prikhodit, zaiti – zakhodit, doiti – dokhodit, uiti – ukhodit, podoiti – podkhodit, naiti – nakhodit, vyiti – vykhodit.*

Exercise 2. Answer the questions using the given verbs in the form of the past tense in the perfective or the imperfective aspect and adding other words.

Example: *Chto ty delal vchera?* – *Vchera ya uchil stikhotvorenie.*

*Chto ty delal vchera? Chto ty sdelal vchera? Chto ty delal vchera utrom? Chto ty sdelal vchera utrom? Chto ty delal segodnya posle obeda? Chto ty sdelal segodnya posle obeda? Chem ty zanimalsya do obeda? Chem ty obychno zaimaesh'sya do obeda? Chto ty delal v sadu? Chto ty sdelal v sadu?*

Words for answers: *chitat – prochital knigu, gladit – pogladit bryuki, myt – vymyt posudu, smotret – posmotret televizor, ubrat – ubirat komnatu, otdokhnut – otdykhat, sazhat – posadit derevya, polit – polivat tsvety.*

Exercise 3. Explain which of the two forms can be used in these sentences.

*Ya vseгда (vstaval, vstal) rano. No segodnya prospal i (vstaval, vstal) tolko v 8 chasov. Nikogda ne (opozdal, opazdyval) na zanyatiya, a segodnya (opozdal, opazdyval). Ya (podoshel, podkhodil) k auditorii i (stuchalsya, postuchalsya) v dver. Mne (razreshili, razreshali) voiti, no (delali, sdelali) zamechanie. Ya (izvinilsya, izvinyalsya) i (govoril, skazal), chto bolshe ne budu opazdyvat.*

The category of mood significantly influences the usage of aspects. The forms of imperative mood are particularly worth noting as they express a full range of meanings – from a categorical order to a request – and introduce additional shades and meanings to aspectual verb forms.

Most modal meanings of imperative forms are attached to a particular aspect. For instance, the main modal meaning of the imperfective aspect form is the hortative meaning. The speaker's attention is directed towards the fact of the action instead of its result, for example: *Sobiraisya! Odevaisya!* [Get ready! Get dressed!]. The hortation can be addressed to the interlocutor to continue the action that was already started, for instance: *Govorite, govornite! Ya slushayu* [Speak on, speak on! I am listening]. Imperfective forms tend to have the meaning of invitation, for example: *Zakhodite!* [Come in!]. They can express permission to carry out an action, for instance: *Sadites!* [Sit down!] (the teacher to students). The imperfective aspect in the imperative mood is often used in calls to action, instructions and other similar texts, for example: *Ne ostavlyajte detei bez prisma!* *Ne razreshaite detyam igrat ryadom s zheleznoi dorogoi!* [Do not leave children unattended! Do not let children play near the railroad!]

Perfective forms usually express an order, recommendation, request, for example: *Rasskazhi o poezdke! Vozmi dengi! Kupi bilet!* [Tell me about your trip! Take the money! Buy a ticket!]

To improve the knowledge of the imperative mood, it is recommended to do the following exercises:

Exercise 1. Explain the meaning of the verbs in italics, specify their mood.

1. *Priezhaite* k nam v gosti. 2. *Smotri, uchis* khorosho. *Smotri, ne opozdai. Smotri, ne upadi.* 3. *Vkhodite, razdevaites, sadites.* – *Voidite, razdentse, syadte.* – *Voidi, razdensya, syad.* 4. *Podozhdi* menya zdes. Ya skoro pridu.

Exercise 2. Make sentences according to the given situation.

1. *Kto-to stuchitsya v dver. Khozyain razreshaet voiti. Kakoi glagol nuzhno upotrebit i v kakoi forme? Obyasnite ego znachenie.* 2. *Vy uvideli v okno znakomogo, kotoryi idet k vam. Vy otkryli dver i priglashaete ego voiti. Predlagaete stul, potom ugoshchenie. Kakie glagoly nuzhno ispolzovat i v kakoi forme?* 3. *Vas zovet mama i prosit skhodit v magazin, kupit khleba, moloka, posmotret, rabotaet li ovoshchnoi larek. Kakie glagoly nuzhno upotrebit i v kakoi forme?*

Exercise 3. Make up a task that you would give to a younger sibling using verbs in the imperative mood.

Exercise 4. Find forms in the imperative mood in the literary text and explain their meaning. Note when they can be replaced by a different form.

During classes dedicated to the category of aspect and verb inflection, one should use a grammar dictionary [22]. This dictionary contains aspectual pairs in one entry which emphasizes their interconnectedness and interdependence. A detailed elaboration of the verb inflectional paradigms for each member of an aspectual correlation makes the dictionary an important reference book for teaching Russian as a foreign language [23].

#### 4 Conclusion

In conclusion, the aspectual meanings are realized differently in different grammatical verb forms. Every grammatical form is highly specific in the way that particular aspectual meanings are combined within it, as well as in the way they are realized, which must be taken into consideration when teaching Russian as a foreign language. The main teaching method when learning the aspect is the reliance on aspectual pairs of verbs considering their semantic features. As a result, students gradually accumulate important grammatical knowledge on the formation and usage of aspects of the verb.

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