

“Aspect and Negation in Russian and Czech,” coauthored with Stephen M. Dickey.
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Abstract

This article compares aspectual usage in contexts of negation in Russian and Czech narratives. It examines the four possible aspectual correspondences: Russian imperfective : Czech imperfective (common), Russian perfective : Czech perfective (common), Russian imperfective : Czech perfective (frequent), and Russian perfective : Czech imperfective (infrequent). The data is argued to support the hypothesis that aspect in Czech primarily expresses a distinction in totality, whereas aspect in Russian expresses a distinction in temporal definiteness. Aspectual usage in contexts of negated repetition is also examined. The question of grounding is considered in light of the comparative data, and it is found that previous views of grounding with regard to aspect and negation can be replaced by a more nuanced sense of grounding that accommodates variation across languages. Finally, data from other Slavic languages are adduced, which indicate that the differences discussed between Czech and Russian are symptomatic of the overall east-west division in Slavic aspect established by Dickey (2000).