


# Aorist and imperfect active participles in Bulgarian – a corpus-based study

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# Introduction

- Five types of participles in modern Bulgarian: present active, aorist active, imperfect active, past passive, and gerund
- The hybrid nature of participles: marked for aspect, tense and voice / gender, number and definiteness
- The research aims at studying the functions of the aorist and imperfect active participles by using the empirical data of the Bulgarian National Corpus

# Bulgarian national corpus (BuINC)

- Created at the Institute for Bulgarian Language (BAS)
- The largest corpus of Bulgarian
- Covers the language production since 1945 and the language varieties of different text types
- Consists of a monolingual Bulgarian part of 1,2 billion words and 47 Bulgarian-X-language parallel corpora (over 2 billion of words altogether)

# Bulgarian national corpus (BuINC)

- Compilation
  - available text collections
  - manual compilation
  - automatic compilation by web crawling
- Text classification
  - style (fiction, informal, science, administrative, journalism)
  - thematic domain (politics, economy, etc.)
  - genre (novel, news, etc.)

# Bulgarian national corpus (BuINC)

- Extended metadata description
  - file name, title, author's name, language, translator's name (if relevant), year of creation, source, style, domain, genre, keywords, etc.
- The detailed metadata allow for
  - a robust text classification
  - easy corpus restructuring
  - extraction of subcorpora according to predefined criteria

# Bulgarian national corpus (BuINC)

- Linguistic annotation
  - monolingual annotation: tokenization and sentence splitting of all the texts and morphosyntactic tagging and lemmatization for Bulgarian and English texts
  - multilingual annotation: sentence and clause alignment
- Application
  - NLP tasks
  - linguistic research
- Online access: [search.dcl.bas.bg](http://search.dcl.bas.bg)
- Koeva et al. The Bulgarian National Corpus: Theory and Practice in Corpus Design. – *Journal of Language Modeling*, Vol. 0, No 1 (2012), pp 65 – 110.

# Past active participles in Bulgarian: formation

- Aorist past participle: aorist stem of an imperfective or a perfective verb + the suffix *-l*  
*пиша – писал*  
*напиша – написал*  
*правя – правил*  
*направя – направил*  
*казвам – казвал*  
*кажа – казал*
- Imperfect past participle: imperfect stem of an imperfective or a perfective verb + the suffix *-l*:  
*пиша – пишел*  
*напиша – напишел*  
*правя – правел*  
*направя – направел*  
*казвам – казвал*  
*кажа – казал*

# Past active participles in Bulgarian: meaning and usage

- The aorist past participle denotes property of an action that is performed before a given interval of reference (GSBKE: 379; Nitsolova 2008: 434)
- Usage
  - resultative tenses of indicative (perfectum, plusquamperfectum, futurum exactum, futurum exactum praeteriti)
  - indirect evidentials (renarrative, inferential and dubitative) and admirative
  - Slavic type of conditional mood



# Past active participles in Bulgarian: meaning and usage

- The imperfect active participle denotes an action whose interval is larger than a present or a past interval of reference (Nitsolova 2008: 436)
- It can be used only in indirect evidentials (renarrative, inferential or dubitative) and in admirative
- Unlike the aorist participle, it can't function as an adjective

# Aspectual oppositions

- Aorist participles
  - perfect tenses of indicative
  - conditional
  - indirect evidentials
- Imperfect participles
  - indirect evidentials

# Perfect and pluperfect:

*правил vs. Направил, казвал vs. казал*

- Participles display the common characteristics of the respective aspect
  - participles of imperfective verbs present the event as atelic, more often iterative or non-concrete
  - participles derived from perfective verbs view the event as telic, usually single and/or concrete
- The examples of BulNC show that there are several typical contexts of each type of participle

# Imperfective: iterativity

*Колко пъти ѝ го беше казвал Джайм?*

*Всичко това той го е казвал и преди безброй пъти.*

*Ти винаги си казвал, че така е по-добре за нас.*

➤ Lexical context: *many times, how many times, always*

# Perfective: bounded iterativity?

- Perfective aorist participles are not used with the meaning of bounded iterativity when they are a part from a perfect tense form
- Bounded iterativity combines better with aorist than with perfect  
*... в течение на един ден два пъти **каза** истината.*
- If the aorist form is replaced with perfect, the most probable interpretation would be the inferential.  
*... в течение на един ден два пъти **е казал** истината.*

# Imperfective: general factuality

*Ясно си спомняше, че го беше **правил**.*

*Ясно ще ти повтора същото, каквото съм ти **казвал** и преди.*

*Да съм **казвал** някога, че планът е свършен?*

- Context: the most frequent context is an interrogative sentence enhanced by the adverb *ever*; other lexical markers are *before, somebody, etc.*

# Imperfective: general factuality

*Никой не ѝ беше **казвал** за тази част.*

*Никога по-рано не съм **правил** това!*

*Щеше ми се да не го бе **казвал**.*

- Lexical context: the main lexical marker is *never*, it can be implicit; *nobody, at all*

# Perfective: concrete factuality

*Егон, не си го измислям. – Не съм **казал** това.  
**Направил** съм това проследяващо устройство.  
Дано съм **направил** правилното нещо.  
Беше **направил** всичко, което беше по силите му.*

- Context: verb arguments explicitly describing the circumstances of the event realization



# Futurum exactum and futurum exactum praeteriti

- Only perfective participles are found in the corpus
- FE and FEP refer to an event whose result is situated before a given moment (FEP is mostly used in conditional sentences)
- Very often in the near context there is another completed event, and fact that the second event is completed generally implies the completion of the first event too

# Futurum exactum and futurum exactum praeteriti

*... тридесет минути след приемането на химикала, **ще е казал** на търтеите всичко, което Елиът иска да знае.*

*Ако се с-свива при т-твоего докосване, това н-няма да е з-заради онова, к-което той **ще е направил**, а от това, к-което ти няма да н-направиш.*

*Станеше ли то, за няколко месеца **щеше да е направил** кариера и то каква!*

# Futurum exactum

- The combination *ще е* + participle of imperfective verb has usually a presumptive reading (130 results)  
*Някога, на младини, тя **ще е била** стройна и хубава. Когато най-сетне се приготви, беше невероятен – така **ще е блестял** Харунал Рашид на първата си сватба. От това може да се съди, че в Букурещ тя **ще е преболедувала** доста сериозно.*
- Exceptions: biaspectual verbs with perfective interpretation:  
*След около два часа вашата нервна система **ще е асимилирала** вече Зеко.  
На практика, населението **ще е гласувало** за умерено, традиционно или поне реформистко правителство, а **ще се установи режим на твърдата левица***

# Evidentials: renarrative present and imperfect

- The renarrative present and imperfect are formed with imperfective participle: *правел* vs. *направел*, *казвал* vs. *кажел*
- Display the characteristics of the respective tenses of indicative.
- The most frequent aspectual meanings: processual, iterative, habitual and general factual.

*Но Зайо Байо не **правел** нищо особено.*

*Кажете им, че ей сега тръзвам – **казвал** той на пратениците, а това "ей сега" нямаше край.*

*Ахав, великият миротворец на Вискос, често **казвал**: ...*

***Правел** го, защото обичал Саша и искал да ѝ достави удоволствие.*

*Не **правела** така.*

# Evidentials: renarrative present and imperfect

- The imperfect participle of perfective verbs can be used in dependent clauses only, or in imperative and optative clauses
- That corresponds to the usage of the perfective verbs in indicative

*... триста пъти да **кажел** „Отче наш“ и триста пъти „Аве Мария“.*

*Който **кажел** една нова истина, вдигали му паметник. Бащата запази Анри при себе си, за да го **откъснел** от влиянието на майката и да го **направел** добър католик.*
- Context: dependent clause, introduced by *да*, *за да*, interrogative or relative pronoun, etc.

# Evidentials: renarrative perfect and pluperfect

- Formed with the past active participle of the auxiliary *съм*, i.e. *бил*, and aorist participle of the lexical verb
- *правил vs. направил, казвал vs. казал*
- The usage of the participles in the renarrative perfect and pluperfect is identical with their functioning in indicative and they are found in a similar lexical context.

# Evidentials: renarrative perfect and pluperfect

- The imperfective participles refer to repetitive events, general facts, in many cases in negative context  
*Колко пъти ѝ **бил казвал** на тази патка, че краката му са вечно студени и ако не бъдат добре затоплени, той изобщо не може да заспи!  
От разменените приказки разбрах, че не се е мил от Пролетния празник. Никой не му **бил казвал** да го направи след смъртта на майка му.*
- The perfective participles denote a concrete fact  
*Престояло цяла седмица в храма, защото никой не им **бил казал** къде си отседнал.*

# Temporal opposition

- Holds between the aorist and the imperfect participles, which is only possible within the evidentiality system
- The two types of participles are used to form the temporal structure of the category
- Tenses are organized by pairs expressed by a single form: present and imperfect; perfect and pluperfect; future and futurum praeteriti; futurum exactum and futurum exactum praeteriti; aorist
- Due to the two participial paradigms the evidential temporal system can express all types of events and their relations as the indicative tenses



# Temporal opposition

- Renarrative imperfect vs. aorist  
*правел, направел vs. правил, направил*  
*казвал, кажел vs. казвал, казал*
- The imperfect denotes an event that is simultaneous to a past moment, while the aorist refers to a completed event in the past.  
*Щом **свършил** първият танц, Петер **се наредил** с дамата си горе на площадката до Краля на танца и щом онзи **рипнел** три стъпки над земята, Петер **скачал** четири. **Направел** ли онзи чудни, изящни стъпки, Петер **започвал** да усуква и върти краката си така, че хората, които го **гледали**, **се захласвали** от удоволствие и възторг.*

# Aspect, tense and adjectives

- The aorist past participles may have adjectival usage
- The perfective stem is preferred
- In particular contexts both perfective and imperfective participles may be used as adjectives inheriting the aspectual and the temporal characteristics of the respective participle.

*Четящият впоследствие ще почувства душата на писалия.*

*„Часът на зеления прилив“ очевидно е някакво предварително определено време между **написалия** документа и онзи, който трябва да го прочете.*

# Frequency

правил	направил	правел	направел
6 023	24 847	1 121	43

# Conclusion

- Past active participles in Bulgarian form a complex system combining aspectual and temporal characteristics
- Their usage in different tenses, moods and evidentials depends on the compatibility of the respective grammatical meanings
- Corpus-based studies outline:
  - the general tendencies of their usage
  - the specific contexts that require a given type of participle
  - the restrictions due to incompatible aspectual and temporal meaning

The end 😊

Thank you!