The Development of Overt Aspectual Marking among Biaspectral Russian Verbs
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In Russian, the majority of verbs are marked morphologically for aspect. Biaspectral verbs, however, enter the Russian language without such formal aspectual marking. Most scholars agree that the aspect of a biaspectral verb in a particular instance can be deduced from the context. For example, in the sentence "Вы используете́ сейчас эти материалы?", the verb indicates the present tense and is therefore unambiguously imperfective. Syntax also assists in disambiguating the verbal aspect in certain cases; in the sentence "Вы будете использовать́ эти материалы?", the verb is again unambiguously imperfective. (Čertkova and Čang 1998: 13) Finally, particular verbal forms are unambiguously perfective or imperfective. For example, the past passive participle and past gerund may only be formed from perfective verbs, while the present active participle and present gerund are formed only from imperfective verbs.

Furthermore, biaspectral verbs may gain formal aspectual morphology after some time which assists in expressing the aspect of the verb (Ryazanova-Clarke and Wade 1999). Several recent studies (Čertkova & Čang (1998) and Jászay (1999)) have noted the tendency for Russian verbs to gain aspectual partners with the addition of affixes. There are eleven prefixes employed to form perfective partners for biaspectral verbs, as well as the imperfectivizing suffix <-yva-> to form imperfective partners. Jászay notes that these new aspectual partners are not present all across the paradigm. Rather, biaspectral verbs exhibit what he terms “partial biaspectuality”, thus yielding an aspectual derivative that is typically used only for certain forms or in certain registers. Jászay (1999) shows in a survey of native speakers that реализовать́ 'realize' derives an imperfective реализовывать́ 'realize' that is used in imperfective contexts, but does not exclude possibly using реализовать́ in such a context. The verb организовать́ 'organize' forms организовывать́ 'organize' for use in the past tense and is preferred in the present tense, except for the third person singular.

With this paper I will examine the phenomenon of biaspectuality and partial biaspectuality in several high-frequency verbs using data collected from the Russian National Corpus (http://www.ruscorpora.ru). It appears that the phenomenon of partial biaspectuality is unique for each biaspectral verb. However, some common trends exist. For perfective partner verbs, the prefixed perfective partners often, but not always exclusively, serve in forming the past passive participle and past gerund. However, with imperfective verbs, the unaffixed biaspectral verbs is more commonly used to form the present active participle and present gerund. It is also possible through Ruscorpora to collect and analyze the date of each instance. Finally, I will examine the influence of the lexical meaning of the biaspectral verb on the relationship with its aspectual partner.
