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### Studies on the Polisch verbal prefix prze-

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### III SOME THOUGHTS ON EMPTINESS

#### 0 Introduction

Nowadays Polish (as well as all Slavic) verbal prefixes are generally considered important formational affixes in the derivation of perfective verbs from imperfective simplexes. Of course, as is shown for instance in the very interesting article by Galton, originally, prefixes had much the same function in Proto-Slavic as they do in other Indo-European languages.

Auch die Präfigierung hatte ursprünglich mit dem Aspekt nichts zu tun, sondern war ein rein semantisch motivierter Prozeß, ...: *ubiti* bedeutete vor allem etwas anderes als *biti*, erst die Schaffung von *ubivati* machte es pf., und auf diesem Gebiet ist es, daß Baltisch nicht folgt ... und dabei ist es geblieben, es gibt keine weitere Ableitung mittels Suffix. Es ist auch durchaus kennzeichnend, daß die Abtrennungsmöglichkeit des Präfixes im Slavischen gefallen ist, denn ein pf. Zeitwort wurde eben als Ganzes imperfektiviert.

Galton (1997: 73)

(Prefixation too originally had nothing to do with aspect, but was a purely semantically motivated process, ...: *ubiti* ['kill' - rg] originally meant something different from *biti* ['beat' - rg] and only became perfective after the formation of *ubivati* ['kill' - rg] and it is in this that Baltic does not follow suit ... and that has not changed, as [in Baltic] there is no further suffixal derivation [of *ubiti*]. It is also characteristic that the possibility to separate the prefix [from the verb] has been lost in Slavic, as it is the entire verb [with its prefix] that undergoes imperfectivisation.)

It is really rather remarkable that Slavic languages, once they apparently developed the grammatical category called aspect, would have allocated such a characteristic role in this respect to prefixes. They did this to such an extent in fact, that it has led some authors to comment that the fundamental function of prefixes is to express aspect and especially perfectivity. Compare Rospond who

states this in respect to Old Polish:

Zasadnicza funkcja przedrostkowych formantów czasownikowych jest aspektowa, ściślej: ma znaczenie dokonaności ...  
Rospond (1971: 229)

(The basic function of prefixal verbal formational affixes is aspectual, or more precisely: it has perfective meaning ...)

Whatever we may think of this – we shall come to that presently – there is another important notion about the functioning of verbal prefixes in the past, commented on by Długosz-Karczabowa and Dubisz:

Derywacja prefiksalna zachowuje w polszczyźnie żywotność od najdawniejszych czasów do dziś. Jednakże z perspektywy historycznej widać, że zespolenie formantu-prefiksu z czasownikiem podstawowym było o wiele słabsze niż jest to współcześnie. W tej grupie formacji istniała bardzo duża fakultatywność w stosowaniu przedrostków – por. niezróżnicowane znaczeniowo formacje *umyć się, omyć się, obmyć się, wymyć się*, podobnie: *uczesać się, szczesać się, wzczesać się, zaczesać się*. Dopiero w ostatnim trzydziestoleciu XIX w. oraz na przełomie XIX i XX w. nastąpiła stabilizacja form i ich specjalizacja znaczeniowa (lub stylistyczna czy chronologiczna).  
Długosz-Karczabowa and Dubisz (2001: 344)

([Verbal - rg] Prefix derivation has maintained vitality in Polish from earliest times until today. However, from a historical point of view it is clear, that the connection of the formational prefix with the base verb was considerably weaker than it is nowadays. In this kind of formation the choice between prefixes was to a large degree optional. Compare the semantically non-distinct formations *umyć się, omyć się, obmyć się, wymyć się* ‘wash oneself’ and *uczesać się, szczesać się, wzczesać się, zaczesać się* ‘groom oneself’. Only in the last 30 years of the 19th century as well as around the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries a stabilisation of forms and their semantic (or stylistic and chronological) specialisation set in.)

Młynarczyk (personal communication) interprets this to mean also, that perfective twins to imperfective simplexes that are formed by means of a so-called “empty prefix”<sup>1</sup> only really took their final shape during that rather late period. This is striking, as the general opinion is that the beginnings of the aspectual system itself started to form already in Proto-Slavic times. Also, the

language of the earliest written sources in Slavic already had a lively and productive system of forming new verbs by means of prefixes and “pure” aspectual partners<sup>2</sup> to these by means of suffixes (compare Lunt 1974: 79 and Leskien 1969: 170-175).

Galton’s (1997) view on how the imperfectivising suffixes stem from already existing Indo-European suffixes with different functions is attractive. He traces the genesis of this process back to contact between the languages of the subjected Proto-Slavs and their masters, the Avars and Huns. The latter groups, commanding their slaves, felt the need to express in Slavic a verbal category, “constantivity”, of their own non-Indo-European language(s), which semantically came close to the iterativity expressed in Proto-Slavic by the originally Indo-European suffix \*-ā-. This suffix was then employed as a “Verlegenheitslösung,” a nonce formation thus provoking the beginnings of what later became the grammatical category nowadays referred to as Slavic aspect.

The question we are left with is then, how come the already existing Indo-European prefixes inherited by Proto-Slavic were allocated primarily this aspect-marking property, if indeed this is so. Scholars have long employed the term “empty prefix” for prefixes that are apparently used devoid or bereft of their lexical meaning, even though all verbal prefixes essentially do have their own lexical meaning.<sup>3</sup>

In order to possibly shed the tiniest of glimmers of light onto this problem we would like to return to the present, always clearer than those dark days of the past. Although even now, that is to say when present-day scholars comment on present-day language, it is easy to find strongly divergent opinions on this matter. So, to continue along the line set out by Galton in 1997, here are a few thoughts and considerations.

### 1 “Pure” aspectual pairs

The question we are faced with first must be: what exactly is an aspectual pair.

This is relevant for our present purposes as, as we see it, there are three positions on the functioning of prefixes within the aspectual system based on the respective definitions of aspectual pairing. We will, in the briefest possible terms, discuss the main points made by the chief exponents of these positions.

The first position is that most clearly advocated by Isačenko (1960). He actually denies that prefix-pairs<sup>4</sup> could ever be considered “pure” aspectual pairs as prefixes always retain some of their lexical meaning. Isačenko’s position seems harsh but it is very clear and for instance for the non-native learner this clarity can be a great advantage. A comparable position is implemented in the treatment of aspectual pairs in the more traditional Polish dictionaries such as Doroszewski, Szymczak and all earlier ones. In this respect the recent dictionary by Dubisz (2003) is old-fashioned. We should mention here the small, but in our opinion quite significant paper by Śmiech (1970), one of the few papers dealing with the problem of prefix-pairs in Polish and referring to papers on Russian. He seems to be one of the first to oppose the view of Isačenko (1960), albeit somewhat reluctantly. Śmiech however, refers to Maslov (1963: 5) and omits Isačenko (1960) as the first to object to prefix-pairs existing at all. He also mentions, in reference to Koschmieder (1934: 7,8), that in earlier times the following types were all considered to be aspectual pairs: *krzyczeć<sub>i</sub> : krzyknąć<sub>p</sub>* ‘shout’, *wrócić<sub>p</sub> : wracać<sub>i</sub>* ‘return’, *zarobić<sub>p</sub> : zarabiać<sub>i</sub>* ‘earn’ and *robić<sub>i</sub> : zrobić<sub>p</sub>* ‘do, make’. He remarks that the lack of secondary imperfective \**zrabiać<sub>i</sub>* would already constitute a motivation for recognizing the aforementioned *robić<sub>i</sub> : zrobić<sub>p</sub>* as aspectual pair. Interestingly however, the even earlier dictionary by Linde (1854) as well as the *Słownik Wileński* and the *Słownik Warszawski* all do mention *zrabiać* as the only imperfective twin to *zrobić<sub>p</sub>*. It would seem that in this respect Polish has undergone quite some considerable change although it may also be the underlying lexicographical insights or principles that have changed. Returning to Śmiech, it should be noted that already in 1970 the observation that the lack of a secondary imperfective partner to a prefixed perfective verb implies that the unprefixated imperfective simplex is the aspectual

partner to that prefixed verb was outdated.

We now proceed with the second view on the matter of aspectual pairs. Barentsen words his position on the matter of aspectual pairs as follows.

Kenmerk A is meer een lexicaal dan een grammaticaal kenmerk. Het komt zowel bij pf als ipf werkwoorden voor. Essentieel is echter dat het bij alle pf werkwoorden voorkomt maar slechts bij een deel van de ipf werkwoorden. Slechts wanneer een gegeven pf en een gegeven ipf werkwoord met dezelfde ‘handelingseenheid’ worden geassocieerd kan er van een zuiver ‘aspectpaar’ gesproken worden. Dit kenmerk vormt a.h.w. de ‘basis’ van de aspectoppositie.

Barentsen (1985: 60)

(Feature A [the verb specific positing of the XYZ-constellation (for which see chapter II paragraph 1); the ‘unit of action’ - rg] is a lexical rather than a grammatical feature. It occurs with both perfective and imperfective verbs. However, it is essential that it occurs with all perfective verbs but not with all imperfective verbs. Only when a given perfective and a given imperfective verb can be associated with the same ‘unit of action’ can we speak of a pure aspectual pair. This feature is the basis for the aspectual opposition.)

This means that the two members of an aspectual pair differ only in aspect but share terminativity and a verb specific XYZ-scheme. The view on terminativity, which this suggests is a rather stretched and extended version of the original Maslov concept, discussed in chapter II, paragraph 1 and for which compare also Bondarko (1991). For the non-native this position, although perhaps not as easy as one might have hoped for, is nevertheless clear and helpful. A nowadays generally accepted test to establish whether two verbs actually form an aspectual pair was devised by Maslov (1948) for Russian and is generally known as the “Maslov Criterion”. It comes down to converting a context including a perfective verb in past tense to the so-called historic present, which exposes the imperfective counterpart. As the original perfective verb presents a terminative and completed situation – perfective verbs are always terminative – the same situation in the historic present must also include a terminative verb, this time

imperfective. It is demonstrated to also work for Polish by Śmiech (1970: 146-7). It fully backs up the Barentsen position.

The key criterion is then terminativity, which we discussed extensively in the previous chapter. We already mentioned there (chapter II paragraph 1) that the semantic category of terminativity (with values ‘terminative’ and ‘aterminative’) was actually conceived by Maslov (1948, 1961) to deal with the problem of aspectual defectiveness; the fact that not all verbs exist in aspectual pairs, and quite a few are IMPERFECTIVA TANTUM.<sup>5</sup> The two recent dictionaries that are mentioned most frequently in the present book, Dunaj (1996) and Bańko (2000), on the whole seem to adhere to principles that come close to that of Maslov-Barentsen. In the previous chapter (paragraph 2) we have already quoted literally from Dunaj and we have pointed out that the two dictionaries are at variance, but it is often impossible to retrieve clearly the underlying principles that were adhered to.

The third exponent, Młynarczyk (2004), is also the most recent but is in fact a return to pre-Maslov times. We suppose that from a certain perspective it would be wonderful if we could state that in Slavic languages every event is expressed by an aspectual pair as this would allow us to treat all verbs the same. The truth is that this is not so but Młynarczyk comes very close to effectuate this aesthetic ideal and she does so by classifying Polish verbs on morphological rather than semantic criteria, actually stating that “the vast majority of Polish verbs really do come in aspectual pairs (2004: 1).” (We will deal with the matter of her definition of what an aspectual pair actually is presently.) In doing so she ends up with this classification (cf 2004: 109 a.f.).

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	ep	<i>po-</i>	<i>-nq-</i>	mpc
class <sub>1</sub>	yes			
class <sub>2</sub>		yes		
class <sub>3</sub>	yes	yes		
class <sub>4</sub>	yes	yes	yes	
class <sub>5</sub>				yes

In the table “ep” stands for empty prefix, “*po-*” is the delimitative prefix *po-*, “*-nq-*” is the semelfactive suffix and “mpc” stands for ‘morphological change’. The latter refers to the process of imperfectivisation and so all class<sub>5</sub> verbs are perfective, whilst class<sub>1</sub> through 4 are imperfective. Młynarczyk claims furthermore that the classification reveals considerable semantic regularity in the Polish verb system and class<sub>1</sub> verbs are either state verbs or gradual transition verbs, class<sub>2</sub> verbs are process verbs, class<sub>3</sub> verbs are culminating process verbs, class<sub>4</sub> verbs are unitisable process verbs and class<sub>5</sub> verbs are culmination verbs which, according to Młynarczyk (2004: 122) “might be achievements, Vendler (1957)”.<sup>6</sup> We think we are right to conclude that Młynarczyk’s semantic classes are in fact the result of her morphological classification. And so, all of the following are considered aspectual pairs and please note that we have copied Młynarczyk’s translations here (2004; 117, 118) but added our usual subscript markings for aspect.

Class<sub>1</sub> verbs include *wierzyć*<sub>i</sub> ‘to believe’ : *uwierzyć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to start to believe’; *rozumieć*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be understanding’ : *zrozumieć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to start to understand; *grubnąć*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be becoming fat’ : *zgrubnąć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have become fat’<sup>7</sup> and *mądrzeć*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be growing wise’ and *zmądrzeć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have become wise’. The first two examples are ‘states’, the second ‘gradual transitions’. Młynarczyk admits that in this classification it is not possible to separate the class<sub>1</sub> verbs ‘states’ from the class<sub>1</sub> verbs ‘gradual transitions’ by purely morphological means; both take empty prefixes for perfectivisation. She claims however to come very close to just such a separation by

introducing a semantic criterion; the perfective partners of ‘states’ assume an ingressive quality (Młynarczyk uses the term ‘inchoative’), whilst those of ‘gradual transitions’ merely signal “completion of the transition” (2004: 132). We shall leave the matter of establishing this separation of the subgroups of her class<sub>1</sub> verbs for what it is, as we do not need it for our further line of arguing. What is important here is that, in the author’s opinion, “we cannot undo the perfectivising effect of the empty prefixes in any other way than by going back to the original verb (2004: 117)”, and so, for her there is no hindrance in giving it ‘pair’-status. With regard to ‘state’ verb pairs, this means that she fully accepts the induced semantic discrepancy between the members of such “aspectual pairs”. This is remarkable as the ingressive quality of verbs such as *uwierzyźć<sub>p</sub>*, lacks in what according to Młynarczyk is its “aspectual partner”, *wierzyźć*. In this then, she goes further than for example Dunaj (1996: 1226). Młynarczyk actually states this herself, but for us, as for Dunaj, it goes rather too far to assign ‘pair’-status on this basis, even if it would be a systemic feature for a certain type of verb, which, by the way, the author does not establish as in fact she describes herself (2004: 132 a.f.). In the end, when all is said, although the author fully accepts this, we would have a “pair” with members that do, to all intents and purposes oppose in more than sheer aspect.

Class<sub>2</sub> verbs include *siedzieć*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be sitting’ : *posiedzieć<sub>p</sub>* ‘to have sat for a while’; *spacerować*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be walking’ : *pospacerować*<sub>i</sub> ‘to have walked for a while’. Here too the author accepts ‘pair’-status where e.g. Dunaj would not. We do not on account of the fact that we have a very clear additional semantic element on the side of the perfective verb, that of temporal delimitation. Of course it may be true that only her class<sub>2</sub> verbs, on account of their lexical semantic properties, form such single perfective pendants. Whether or not one allows this semantic complication to be “legitimate” (to use a term employed by Młynarczyk) is a matter of systemic choice, just as it was for class<sub>1</sub> verbs discussed above. It is clear that this author makes that systemic choice in her quest to establish that most verbs come in pairs.

For class<sub>3</sub> verbs Młynarczyk states that two options are legitimate: *pisać*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be writing’ : *napisać*<sub>p</sub> ‘to finish writing / to have written’, *popisać*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have written for some time’. Here too the author allows a delimitative derivative to be assigned as an aspectual partner, this time in addition to a non-delimitative compositum, thus leaving the notion that a pair consists of two partners. For us the delimitative variant has an added element of meaning which could be described as “for a while”, or better “a certain amount / portion of the action described by the base verb”. For more on this see II.1.

Class<sub>4</sub> verbs, Młynarczyk uses the term ‘unitisable processes’ to describe them, have as many as three perfective forms that are legitimate aspectual partners: *pukać*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be knocking’ : *zapukać*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have knocked’, *popukać*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have knocked for a while’, *puknąć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have knocked once / briefly’. According to Młynarczyk (2004: 124-126) the term semelfactive is too coarse to describe this class of verbs which she then subdivides into “frequentatives” such as *pukać*<sub>i</sub> and its perfective partners and “non-frequentatives” such as *krzyczeć*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be shouting’ with perfectives *zakrzyczeć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have shouted’, *pokrzyczeć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have shouted for some time and *krzyknąć*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have shouted out / to have given a cry’. The subdivision is necessary because, according to the author, the semelfactive perfective of the former group easily leads to a “one time” reading (a single knock), whereas the latter group does not, and the imperfective is then not evidently a string of such single “one time” events. In other words *krzyczeć*<sub>i</sub> could be read as a single, lengthy shouting event in which the units (separate shouts) are not distinguishable, whereas *pukać*<sub>i</sub> is clearly made up of a string of just such single units (knocks). In our view there are a few problems with this presentation of the matter. Firstly, in addition to the kind of thing we found for class<sub>3</sub> verbs, we may also reckon the otherwise semelfactives *puknąć*<sub>p</sub> and *krzyknąć*<sub>p</sub> as “pure” aspectual partners of the imperfective base verbs, and so again, the idea of an aspectual “pair” consisting of two members is abandoned. Actually, we have no objection to the suggestion that *pukać*<sub>i</sub> : *puknąć*<sub>p</sub> and indeed *krzyczeć*<sub>i</sub> : *krzyknąć*<sub>p</sub> could and indeed should be considered as aspectual

pairs as they pass the Maslov-criterion unscathed. Pairs such as these, consisting of a multiplicative imperfective and a semelfactive perfective, are generally accepted as such in all of the major dictionaries. Młynarczyk's objection to the coarseness of the term semelfactive is in our view only a problem if one analyses the extra-lingual events that are described by such verbs, and if one then sets them off against each other, requiring that all such extra-lingual events share exactly the same characteristics. In this case, we think, we are dealing with a lingual classification of such events. Anyway, Młynarczyk herself renders the meaning of *krzyknąć<sub>p</sub>* as 'to have shouted out / to have given a cry', and in so doing she herself acknowledges that the event can be broken down to a single short event. The other two perfectives in these constellations, the delimitative compound with prefix *po-*, which we reject as aspectual partner for the same reason as explained for class<sub>3</sub> above, and the more general perfective with prefix *za-*, are less obvious to us as 'pure' aspectual partners. None of the dictionaries that we have had at our disposal in fact list any of these forms as 'pure' perfective partners and *zakrzyczeć<sub>p</sub>* is typically paired with *zakrzykiwać*, which already makes us think that these two are a pair that belongs to Młynarczyk's class<sub>5</sub> verbs. Of course, it is not unimaginable that native speakers would morphologically arrive at the perfective form *zakrzyczeć<sub>p</sub>* when they need a verb in the meaning that Młynarczyk suggests: 'to have shouted as much as he or she thought necessary', but I have not been able to persuade my native informants spontaneously to such a reading. The more basic meaning of this verb pair is 'shout down', and so constitutes a rather different lexical entity. As for *zapukać<sub>p</sub>*, in relation to *pukać<sub>i</sub>* matters are somewhat more complex. Here Młynarczyk is not entirely alone in assigning pair status to these two verbs, as Bańko (2000) does so as well. However, he does so, quite rightly in our opinion, only for the particular lexical meaning of knocking "on a door that it might be opened for us"<sup>8</sup> and so not for the mere meaning of knocking itself. This kind of knocking is naturally not characterised by its unitisable quality and so, the semelfactive perfective *puknąć<sub>p</sub>* does not naturally fit in this kind of context and is marked;

Polish native speakers usually indicate that “it is of course possible but rather draws the attention to the fact that a single knock was made on the door and so detracts from the idea that there usually is another purpose to knocking on a door”. We think then that we could, along with Bańko (2000), in fact, speak of a division into two aspectual pairs, two sets of separate lexemes: *pukać* : *puknąć*<sub>p</sub> for the first meaning in which the knocking is the central concept with members that are multiplicative and semelfactive respectively, and *pukać* : *zapukać*<sub>p</sub> for the particular meaning ‘knock to draw attention’ and such like, in which the knocking itself is in fact secondary to drawing attention. It is not on the level of aspect that the lexical difference is decided as it were.

Młynarczyk’s class<sub>5</sub> verbs “culminations” include basic examples *kupić*<sub>p</sub> ‘to have bought’ : *kupować*<sub>i</sub> ‘to be buying’. The class as such must consist of the rather small list of verbs mentioned in our chapter II paragraph 2.1 as well as all prefixed perfectives with secondary imperfectives. The latter are discussed only very briefly by the author, and she shows throughout her study (but especially at (2004: 123)) that she is primarily interested in “single event readings” of these verbs. This corresponds to what in chapter II paragraph 1.2 we have termed “intraterminal” after Barentsen (1985: 88-92), and which in his more didactic publication was called “process-variant” (Barentsen 2003: 373). Later on Młynarczyk (2004: 190) seems to struggle a bit with what she calls “iterative reading” and the matter is never really developed even at this point. It must already be clear that we rather differ in opinion as to the importance of both “readings” of secondary imperfectives for the whole system of aspect in Slavic languages, the Polish variant included, and we will return to this matter presently.

When all is said and done it would seem then, that Młynarczyk in spite of her two lots of tests, in fact and in effect returns to a position in which the lack of a clear (processual) secondary imperfective of a perfective prefixed compositum derived from a simplex verb would mean that that perfective prefixed verb is a candidate for “pure” partnership.<sup>9</sup> Already in 1948 Maslov criticised this

view as too mechanistic and inconclusive without further criteria!

It must already be clear that Młynarczyk's model is based on a completely different definition of both "pure" aspectual opposition and the status of the morphological means to form pairs, as well as on the view that additional lexical semantic elements other than aspect are not considered to hinder a pure aspectual opposition. She is of course very consistent in this and as such the model holds. We have not been able to find a clear-cut definition of aspect though in her publication. In her introduction (2004: 1-6), called "A little Polish lesson", Młynarczyk clarifies that in her view "the choice between imperfective and perfective forms corresponds to the binary opposition between ongoing and completed." And that is it, except that she notices that perfective state verbs do not code for the completion of an event, but for the beginning, which then immediately shows the inappropriateness of the term "completed". Furthermore she states (2004: 116) about the formation of aspectual twins that "the operations involved only temporal changes of meaning, and hence that we are dealing with genuine aspectual pairs." She also writes of "the pre-theoretical intuition [of Polish native speakers - rg] that Polish verbs come in aspectual pairs" (2004: 116). And so, if one chooses to leave any of the concepts underpinning the more accepted approaches to aspect as well as accept the notion that a 'pair' can actually consist of more than two verbs it does indeed work as a model, although it is, in our modest view, semantically less pleasing, especially for the non-native speaker, who does not have the intuition Młynarczyk (2004: 6, 11) uses as one of her criteria for establishing aspectual opposition and pair status. True, whichever way you put it, the non-native who wants to learn Polish has to simply remember what the native does. But some explanation and analysis is helpful to understand the matters at hand.

Although we are now inadvertently and unintentionally embarking upon matters didactic, we do wish to point out that the Młynarczyk model is already in this very practical respect not tremendously helpful. Having said that, the consequence of her approach is also less pleasing from a systemic point of view.

In our view, apart from terminative verbs or terminatively used dual verbal lexemes (for which see II, paragraph 1.2, 2.3.1, 4, and 5.3), verbs do not form aspectual pairs in which both members oppose each other merely aspectually and share an equivalent lexical basis. This means that Młynarczyk's work does not actually solve any of the matters around e.g. delimitatives, semelfactives etc. in a systemic manner. Specific explanation to the appointed classes is still necessary and this sounds and looks exactly like that we have been seeing from authors such as Maslov and Barentsen for a while now, without feeling the need to call all of these aspectual pairs. As we pointed out a little earlier, in Młynarczyk's book it would seem that simplex *писа́ти* 'to be writing' has not one, but two aspectual twins: *написа́ть* 'to finish writing / to have written,' and *пописа́ть* 'to have written for some time'. And so, an explanation is necessary why this is so or indeed, whether this is actually intended. The simple fact is though, that in certain usages, and always with reference to some kind of direct object or other limited, terminative indicator, *написа́ть* does function as a pure aspectual partner of *писа́ти* and its meaning, whilst *пописа́ть* always needs to be explained as something like 'completion with respect to time'. The latter can occur with or without direct object or other limitizer. And so, the Młynarczyk model leaves us with a lot of explaining to do as to actual usage of these verbs both grammatically as well as semantically.

In passing we would like to point out one in our view really rather major problem with the Młynarczyk model. As we already pointed out, it does not really consider nor discuss any habitual verbs nor verbs that have what she would term a multi-episode or iterative reading. On these readings, for which we have adopted the term terminal iterative after Barentsen (1985: 88-92), we have commented in chapter II, paragraph 1.2 and we consider them rather central to the aspectual system of Slavic languages.

At the end of the day the Maslov-Barentsen position does not differ so very much in describing the various verb classes from Młynarczyk. Allocating 'pair'-status on the basis proposed by Młynarczyk though, actually adds

problems, especially for the non-native for whom the semantic underlying notion becomes complex and fuzzy, especially as s/he cannot be assumed to have at their disposition the necessary intuition to classify the various verbs into classes of morphological behaviour anyway.

However, both the Maslov-Barentsen and the Młynarczyk positions agree in that there are such things as empty prefixes although the former has rather more strict criteria. Both mention the same types of semantic differentiation, even if they do not always agree to the name or the ‘pair’-status. One side of the argument explains things regarding terminativity and does not allocate pair status when additional semantic elements seep into the opposition of aspectually opposing verbs, whilst the other side allows all of these to be termed aspectual pairs. In the end though, both sides need the existence of “empty” prefixes for their respective models, and the definition of these “empty” prefixes seems to agree pretty much although the way they arrive at the concept is rather different.

And so we can proceed with our own position and some further observations.

## 2 Pairing and terminativity

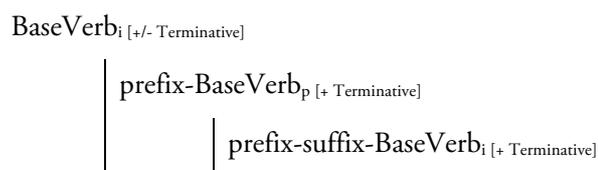
In our previous chapter we have already shown (notably paragraph 2.2) that we see a clear correlation between prefix meaning and terminativity, and so for us, primarily concerned with prefixes, adhering to the Maslov-Barentsen terminativity based model for aspect and aspectual pairs seems to fit like a glove. In chapter II then, we set out that all prefixes basically describe two situations: old and new, and so, when connected with verbal meaning, they add terminativity. Probably all Indo-European languages have systems with prefixes, which are related to prepositions and have terminativising properties. Compare for instance Dutch *door-lopen* ‘walk through’, Gothic *þairh-leiþan* ‘go through’, Latin *per-ambulare* ‘walk through’, Sanskrit *pari-bhramati* ‘walk around (sth)’ and many more examples from many more branches of the Indo-European

language family could be added. However, none of these languages have developed an aspectual system like that of Slavic. In Slavic languages as anywhere else, prefixes add more than “perfectivity” and, in fact, we think the main function of prefixes is lexical; the vast majority of prefixed verbs derived from simplexes undergo a change of lexical meaning. It is then this change of lexical meaning that primarily motivates the formation of a compositum, not the change of aspect. In this then, we oppose the view of Rospond (1971: 229) we mentioned earlier in the introduction to this chapter. We can also approach this matter from a different angle. Departing from the premise that the primary function of prefixes is to describe the two positions X and Z in the XYZ-scheme of Barentsen (see chapter II, paragraph 1) as part of their lexical meaning, they automatically introduce the XYZ-scheme itself and so terminativity. The same base verb can usually be prefixed by several prefixes, each of which describes different X and Z situations, or better, different relations between X and Z. Why are these prefixed verbs then usually also perfective? Well, Slavic perfectivity is strongly connected with terminativity (and terminativity is in fact a precondition of Slavic perfectivity as we showed in chapter II paragraph 1). The likelihood is that prefixed verbs were already terminative in Indo-European times. Prefixes were then, as they are now, primarily meant to mark lexical meaning(s) that have terminativity (which is a lexical semantic category, not a grammatical one) as a general, basic feature in their lexical meaning. And so, then and now, a perfective(-like) interpretation (including the actualisation of the XYZ-scheme) is the most natural for such explicitly terminative verbs, which are primarily dealing with the XYZ-situational scheme. In short: terminativity and the XYZ-scheme it introduces are most naturally presented by perfective verbs, which then actualise this scheme. It is then a very Slavic peculiarity to have developed a system in which terminative situations can be presented in a reversed way, in which the boundaries that are implied in the XYZ-scheme are deactualised. One historical explanation for this was set out by Galton as we already quoted above. As we already discussed in II 1.2 this

homogenous rendition creates an image of the situation in which ‘constancy’ dominates. This element corresponds to the meaning of aterminative verbs, which are ‘naturally’ homogenous. This is then the reason why we can speak of ‘imperfectivity’ in both these cases, in spite of the rather considerable differences between aterminative and terminative imperfectivity.

Even apart from all historical considerations, it is very striking that it is the imperfective prefixed verb that is marked by yet further morphological means: the imperfectivising suffix (plus any accompanying alternations to the root morpheme).

Furthermore, as is also already apparent from the above quotation from Galton, only after imperfectives were derived from the prefixed composita the original formation assumed a perfective identity, through the introduction of aspectually opposing forms. The system of prefixing verbs was maintained in Slavic languages once they had developed an aspectual system. From then on the prefixed verbs ‘automatically became’ perfective as they were clearly marked for terminativity and not marked for imperfectivity (as the latter task was associated with the newly developed principle of utilising suffixes and morphological alternation to derive pure imperfective twins). The basic derivational model...



... was then arrived at in this way and once it was in place it remained and new formations kept being made according to the same principle.

At this point we would like to emphasize that the problem of the so-called empty prefixes we touched upon earlier in the previous paragraph, especially in respect to originally Slavic verb forms, arises when the third derivational step of this scheme has not occurred or does not occur (which by the way, in the

modern system does not affect the perfective status of verbs in the second line). If however, one accepts that the main goal of imperfectivisation is the deactualisation of the terminus, it should not be surprising that a mere simplex sometimes suffices. This would hold for cases in which a given relationship X-Z occurs “naturally” through the interaction of a certain process and certain (types of) actants or adjuncts. In such cases the “effort” of forming a secondary imperfective does not always take place. We shall return to this briefly in paragraph 4.

Returning then to the matter of the formation of aspectual pairs, it should be noted that the process of “specialisation” in a single aspectual value after the member with the opposing value is morphologically formed, is very similar, albeit reversed as to values, to the one Kudlińska (1988) describes for modern Polish loan words. According to this author verbs such as these are initially aspectually indistinct: bi-aspectual. Later, when the need arises to have a distinct perfective form, they are prefixed. The prefixed form becomes the perfective, the unprefixated the imperfective (compare *transportować* : *przettransportować<sub>p</sub>*).<sup>10</sup> This is in fact the formation of an aspectual pair, and by means of a prefix that is then called “empty”; supposedly “emptied” of lexical meaning that is. We will return to this a little later.

First we will have to answer the question how we may know whether a prefixed perfective, especially as a secondary imperfective is lacking, should be considered as the “pure” aspectual opposite of a given base simplex. This question was actually already answered above (in 1), when we first mentioned the “Maslov Criterion”.

### 3 Which prefix...?

This question is one we can confirm to be daunting. Learners of Polish, and probably of other Slavic languages as well, are often at a loss when they are in need of a perfective verb and looking to form one by means of a prefix; which prefix should be selected as “empty”? This question is especially acute as one soon finds out that virtually all verbal prefixes can actually occur “empty” and

form what we term a prefix-pair. There are many to choose from. It seems to be true though, that certain prefixes are more likely to be applicable as “empty” prefix than others. We will address this matter later in this chapter.

A major problem concerning the “empty” prefixes is their seemingly arbitrary distribution. The answer to the question as to why and in which possible cases a certain prefix is selected to form a compound as perfective member of a pure aspectual pair with a certain verbal simplex (with a certain meaning) is complex. It is, certainly at this stage, impossible to set out clear-cut rules according to which this mostly still productive process can be given a degree of predictability nor is it our aim to do so. There are, however, a few considerations and facts that might give an indication as to the potential emptiness of prefixes and that can shed at least some light on the semantic and other considerations that play a role during the derivational process under scrutiny. In the following we would like to touch upon some of these while presenting some of the cases in point.

Our guiding principle is however, that prefixes are never really empty, but may appear so under certain circumstances. First we will have a look at the verbs that undergo this kind of prefixation, then we will turn to other matters.

The problems of ‘assigning’ aspectual pairs only really arises when we are dealing with prefix-pairing and the base verbs that we call dual verbal lexemes after Proeme (1983: 397). Other verbs are either perfectiva tantum, imperfectiva tantum or clearly terminative (perfective) verbs with suffixed (imperfective) partners. In chapter II 5.3 we have set out our own model for this and the verbs we classed as (d<sup>+T</sup>) need to be addressed here. This is the group of simplex, imperfective verbs, which do not have the terminativity inherently marked in them, but rather ‘acquire’ it through context. We need to proceed and have some examples at hand, so here is a complete list of the “official” (listed in dictionaries, e.g. that of Dunaj) prefixed forms of *czytać* ‘read’.

perfective	imperfective	approx. meaning
<i>doczytać<sub>p</sub></i>	<i>doczytywać<sub>i</sub></i>	‘read till end’
<i>odczytać<sub>p</sub></i>	<i>odczytywać<sub>i</sub></i>	‘decypher, read aloud’
<i>poczytać<sub>p</sub></i>		‘read a while’ <sup>11</sup>
<i>przeczytać<sub>p</sub></i>		‘read through’
<i>szczytać<sub>p</sub></i>	<i>szczytywać<sub>i</sub></i>	‘check text against original’
<i>wyczytać<sub>p</sub></i>	<i>wyczytywać<sub>i</sub></i>	‘get knowledge from reading’
<i>zaczytać<sub>p</sub></i>	<i>zaczytywać<sub>i</sub></i>	‘damage by reading’

The following derivations with a complex morpheme of verbal prefix as well as reflexive pronoun *się* were also found in Dunaj.

<i>doczytać<sub>p</sub> się</i>	<i>doczytywać<sub>i</sub> się</i>	‘read into’
<i>zaczytać<sub>p</sub> się</i>	<i>zaczytywać<sub>i</sub> się</i>	‘concentrate on reading’
<i>naczytać<sub>p</sub> się</i>		‘read till saturation’
<i>rozczytać<sub>p</sub> się</i>	<i>rozczytywać<sub>i</sub> się</i>	‘read a lot about sth’
<i>wczytać<sub>p</sub> się</i>	<i>wczytywać<sub>i</sub> się</i>	‘make effort to read’

Compared with some other verbs (e.g. *pisać<sub>i</sub>* ‘write’), *czytać<sub>i</sub>* combines with relatively few prefixes. What is clear though, is that most derived meanings form secondary imperfectives. As we discussed a little earlier, the lack of a secondary imperfective to a prefixed verb is often taken as a characteristic of “pure” aspectual partners. As far as we are concerned the lack of a secondary imperfective partner can only really be an initial signal, for there are many perfectiva tantum, also with prefixes and so theoretically they could belong to this group. Here, neither *poczytać<sub>p</sub>*, *przeczytać<sub>p</sub>* nor indeed *naczytać<sub>p</sub> się* have secondary imperfectives. The former is of course delimitative and therefore appears only in perfective aspect. It has not formed a secondary imperfective. *Naczytać<sub>p</sub> się* represents the saturative Aktionsart, which expresses a very specific situational change with a very pronounced and dominant contrast between situations X and Z. For that reason it is not obvious to present it in an imper-

fective, homogenising fashion, and so remains limited to perfective aspect. *Przeczytać<sub>p</sub>* is generally seen as the “pure” perfective counterpart of *czytać*, which implies that the prefix is “empty”. As we have tried to demonstrate in paragraph 5 of chapter II, this does not necessarily mean that a processual transformative secondary imperfective cannot be formed when needed although the status in the case of this particular verb is unclear.

#### 4 Semantic correlation

We will begin by stating yet again that in our view prefixes are never really “empty”, i.e. devoid of lexical meaning and so merely fulfilling the role of marker of perfectivity. True, in prefix-pairs (such as *pisać* : *napisać<sub>p</sub>* ‘write’) they may seem bereft of their lexical meaning, when by that we mean the lexical semantic part that seems to motivate the use of a certain prefix in non-“empty” derivation (such as *przepisać<sub>p</sub>* : *przepisywać* ‘copy, rewrite’ from *pisać* ‘write’. In fact, from our point of view the notion “empty” which is often explained as “devoid of lexical meaning” is confusing. But it is true that there is a semblance of “emptiness”. Although we demonstrated in chapter II paragraph 4 that occasionally secondary imperfectives can be formed in addition to a prefix-pair “when the need arises”, we have also shown that usually a couple like *czytać* : *przeczytać<sub>p</sub>* ‘read’ can justifiably be called an aspectual pair. We will now endeavour to analyse and clarify the choice of prefix along the lines set out by Barentsen (2003: 386) for Russian *писать* : *написать<sub>p</sub>* ‘write.’ Let us start with a translation into Polish of the example sentences from Barentsen.

- (1) *On napisał<sub>p</sub> literę Z na tablicy.*  
 he<sub>NOM</sub> on-wrote<sub>p</sub> letter\_Z<sub>ACC</sub> on blackboard<sub>LOC</sub>.  
 ‘He wrote the letter Z on the blackboard.’
- (2) *On napisał<sub>p</sub> słowo „aspekt”.*  
 he<sub>NOM</sub> on-wrote<sub>p</sub> word\_“aspect”<sub>ACC</sub>.  
 ‘He wrote the word “aspect”.’

- (3) *On napisał<sub>p</sub> artykuł.*  
 he<sub>NOM</sub> on-wrote<sub>P</sub> article<sub>ACC</sub>.  
 ‘He wrote an article.’
- (4) *On napisał<sub>p</sub>, że przyjdzie.*  
 he<sub>NOM</sub> on-wrote<sub>P</sub>, that come<sub>P-3-SG</sub>.  
 ‘He wrote that he would come.’

If we substitute the perfective verb in any of these examples for the imperfective *pisal<sub>i</sub>*, the sentences would differ only in aspect and so no difference of lexical meaning can be detected. This is possible as the act of writing in each of these examples resulted (or was aimed at resulting) in ‘a text being present ‘on’ the carrier in question’. (In (1) this is specified as *na tablicy* ‘on the blackboard’, in the other examples there is no explicit mention of the carrier but it is common sense that a carrier would still be present in all of these cases). The lexical meaning of the prefix *na-* then, comes very close to the concept connected with ‘writing (down)’ something. In this respect we must add, that the prefix in question, like the preposition *na* from which it stems, has a central meaning of ‘on’ as well. In conjunction with *pisac<sub>i</sub>* then, this prefix merely emphasises the situational change that is closest to the action of writing something down itself. As such it is no surprise that when one wants to reverse this situation into an imperfective one, it suffices to deprefix compound *napisac<sub>p</sub>* back to *pisac<sub>i</sub>*.<sup>12</sup> This idea gains credibility when we realise that the formation of *\*napisywac<sub>i</sub>* does not occur.<sup>13</sup> We could say that the XYZ-scheme presented by the prefix in this case is sucked out of the prefix as it were, as it is already present in the base-simplex *pisac<sub>i</sub>* in conjunction with the various objects and other sentential extensions. And so, we see yet again what we already wrote in chapter II paragraph 2.3(1): the conjunction of object and dual verbal lexeme is important for the introduction of terminativity into a situation and hence for the morphological “behaviour” of verbs vis à vis aspect.

As this thesis is on verbal prefix *prze-*, we would like to add the same consideration for aspectual pair *czytać<sub>i</sub> : przeczytać<sub>p</sub>*, which is also often reckoned to be a near prototypical prefix-pair like *pisać<sub>i</sub> : napisać<sub>p</sub>*. Here too we can analyse a relation between the naturally perceived resulting state and the lexical semantic meaning of *prze-*. After all, whichever kind of text is involved, reading it entails a ‘passage through’ resulting in having gone through once the action is completed. And so we think we are justified in applying the term SEMANTIC REDUPLICATION to describe this phenomenon.

Here is an attempt to schematise things somewhat and show our steps of reasoning, and in doing so, we continue both the present issue as well as that raised in chapter II, paragraphs 2.3.(1) and 4. And so, if *czytać* ‘read’ is a dual verbal lexeme, we must distinguish between these two sentences.

- (5)     *On czytał<sub>i</sub>.*  
           he<sub>NOM</sub> read<sub>I-PRET</sub>.  
           ‘He read.’ / ‘He was reading.’
- (6)     *On czytał<sub>i</sub> „Pana Tadeusza”*  
           he<sub>NOM</sub> read<sub>I-PRET</sub> “Pan\_Tadeusz”<sub>ACC</sub>.  
           ‘He read “Pan Tadeusz”.’ / ‘He was reading “Pan Tadeusz”.’

Example (5) is clearly atterminative, in example (6) the verb is used in a (potentially, see chapter II 2.3.(1)) terminative situation rendered so by the discrete direct object. Without further context only situation (6) can be rendered perfective using the prefix *prze-*.

- (7)     \**On przeczytał<sub>p</sub>.*  
           he<sub>NOM</sub> through-read<sub>P-PRET</sub>.  
           ‘He has read.’

- (8) *On przeczytał<sub>p</sub> „Pana Tadeusza”.*  
 he<sub>NOM</sub> through-read<sub>P-PRET</sub> “Pan\_Tadeusz”<sub>ACC</sub>.  
 ‘He has (finished) read(ing) (the entire) “Pan Tadeusz”.’

And so here is an inventory of the material.

α	PRZE-	
	['through']	
	⇒ [+ term]	
β	CZYTAĆ	
	['read']	
	[- term]	
	[Ipf]	
γ	CZYTAĆ	„PANA TADEUSZA”.
	['read']	[“Pan Tadeusz”]
	[- term]	⇒ ['through'] ⇒ ([+ term])
	[Ipf]	

As the action of reading naturally implicates a passage through the (text/letters/pages etc of the) book, the notion ‘through’ is present as soon as this kind of discrete object is present and with it comes the potential to implicate terminativity. We have put ([+ term]) between brackets as we rather think that the terminativity is potential and needs to be actualised as we discussed in II 2.3.(1), showing that if the focus is on the direct object (e.g. “What was he reading?”) as a spatially / temporally limited (discrete) entity, we realise the terminativity, whereas if it is on the verb (e.g. What was he doing?”) we do not. The consequence as to where exactly an aspectual pair can be formed on this basis can be formulised as follows.

	pair
$\alpha + \beta$	no
$\alpha + \gamma$	yes

The perfective situation can be paraphrased like this.

$\alpha$		$\gamma$		$\alpha\gamma$
[‘through’]	+	[‘through’]	=	[‘through’]
[+ term]		[+/- term]		[+ term]
		[ipf]		[pf]

And we shall stick to this here but we do need to remark that if (6) is the answer to the question “What was he doing”, which it can be, it can again not be perfectivised and we would have to assign it to  $\beta$ . This is the gliding scale principle we also discussed in chapter II, paragraph 4.

This is then truly object dependent terminativity. As the perfective verb in this kind of pairing is always accompanied by an object (or other terminative complement) this issue surrounding dual verbal lexemes could also be viewed in a reversed manner. Starting from the perfective situation (8), the terminativity is presented as a clear element of meaning, an element of meaning which correlates to the core lexical semantic meaning of the prefix, but which is not necessarily absent as soon as the prefix is lacking, such as in the imperfective situation (6). As it is there anyway, albeit less clear and only implied, the unprefix verb nevertheless suffices in the implied terminative situation. However, as we have seen in chapter II 4, sometimes the unprefix imperfective does not suffice. After all, the secondary imperfective *przeczytywać* crops up in totally grammatically correct situations, when one feels the need to emphasize the terminativity by expressing it explicitly, either as terminal iterativity or as intraterminality. Compare in this respect the terminal iterative example (9) and intraterminal example (10), which appeared as numbers (88) and (84)

respectively in chapter II.

- (9) *Witam wszystkich, przeczytywała<sub>i</sub> to forum dość dokładnie przez ostatni tydzień i zdecydowałam<sub>p</sub> się, biore od wczoraj ...*

greet<sub>I-1-SG</sub> all<sub>ACC-PL</sub> through-read<sub>I-FEM-PRET-1-SG</sub> this\_forum<sub>ACC</sub> quite accurately  
through last\_week<sub>ACC</sub> and decided\_self<sub>I-FEM-PRET-1-SG</sub>, take<sub>I-1-SG</sub> from yesterday

Greetings to everybody. I have been reading (through) the [messages on this - rg] forum quite accurately throughout the last week and I took a decision, from yesterday I am taking part. ...

- (10) *Ostatnio przeczytuje<sub>i</sub> ponownie Kirsta.*

lately through-read<sub>I-PRES</sub> again Kirst<sub>ACC</sub>.

Lately I am reading (through the entire) Kirst again.

It is then a matter of which imperfective verb can suffice in a given imperfective terminative situation. For dual verbal lexemes it would seem that the unprefixed candidate comes first as long as exposed, explicit terminativity is not needed. This derivational direction would also make sense considering that, in a broader perspective and also historically, as we discussed via the quote from Galton and further reference to the same publication above, perfectivity is first and foremost connected with terminativity. Terminative imperfectivity is very specific and as such plays a key role in establishing the terminativity parameter in Slavic languages.

Concluding, we return to the basic principle under discussion here: the dual verbal lexeme and its pairing. The study of semantically motivated derivation by means of prefixes is complicated by the fact that some prefix-pairs seem to have been formed a long time ago and often the correlate is obscured not least by lexicalisation. The two verb pairs discussed in this paragraph seem to be rather ancient and they seem to function as pairs in all modern Slavic languages, which rather confirms the age, but not all examples of this age are so clear.

This leads us to some further, related reflections.

#### 4.1 Frequency

Surely every scholar of Polish (and other Slavic languages for that matter) has noticed that certain prefixes (especially *z(e)-/s-/ś-*) crop up more often in prefix-pairs than others. In comparison, others have a meaning that is so distinct, that they hardly ever assume the role of empty prefix (*do-*, *od(e)-*, *nad(e)-*, *pod(e)*, *przed(e)-*). We have found a way to quantify these phenomena, albeit rather tentatively.

The new Polish-Dutch dictionary, which will be published by Pegasus (and we will refer to it here as *Pegasus*) in the near future and in the compilation of which the present author was involved, will indicate prefix-pairs, as has recently become the accepted way in Polish lexicology. The entries for the prefixed perfective members will refer to the relevant imperfective non-prefixed equivalents in much the same way employed by Dunaj (1996). Our native Polish editors were given a high degree of liberty to suggest perfective equivalents to imperfective verbs and the other way around for the main entries as well as for examples. Not all of the solutions have been accepted in the final version; all of them were scrutinised several times as well as checked against especially Dunaj (1996), but also against other modern dictionaries, and at this stage too, the role of native informants was considerable. Additionally, material was drawn from and checked against our (at that time growing but still quite modest) Polish text corpus. In this way we think we may have compiled a quite reasonable and fairly accurate, representative list of suggestions for prefix-pairs that function as such in most of the contexts. The count we will present presently is based on this material.

The following table shows the total number of occurrences as empty prefix for prefix-pairs included in *Pegasus* (which boasts a total number of some 35,000 entries, 9,834 of which are verbs). Of course this is only a medium sized corpus and by no means all potential prefixed verbs are included, but it may nevertheless be of some use and even give a general indication of the frequency with which the various prefixes occur in this function.

III SOME THOUGHTS ON EMPTINESS

1. prefix	2. occurrences		3. ratio	4. %
	a. "empty"	b. all <sup>14</sup>		
<i>do-</i>	0	101	-	0.00
<i>na-</i>	34	136	1 : 4	25.00
<i>nad(e)-</i>	0	23	-	0.00
<i>o- / ob(e)</i>	51	320	1 : 6.2	19.60
<i>od(e)-</i>	2	240	1 : 120	0.83
<i>po-</i>	140	266 <sup>15</sup>	1 : 1.9	52.63
<i>pod(e)-</i>	1	78	1 : 78	1.28
<i>prze-</i>	21	254	1 : 12	8.33
<i>przed(e)-</i>	0	4	-	0.00
<i>przy-</i>	3	131	1 : 43.6	2.29
<i>roz(e)</i>	3	222	1 : 74	1.35
<i>u-</i>	126	378	1 : 3	33.33
<i>w(e)</i>	6	140	1 : 23.3	4.29
<i>wy-</i>	160	528	1 : 3.3	30.30
<i>w(e)z-</i>	0	29	-	0.00
<i>z(e)-/s-/ś-</i>	519	868	1 : 1.6	62.50
<i>za-</i>	199	576	1 : 2.9	34.48
total	1268	4293 <sup>16</sup>	1 : 3.3	30.30

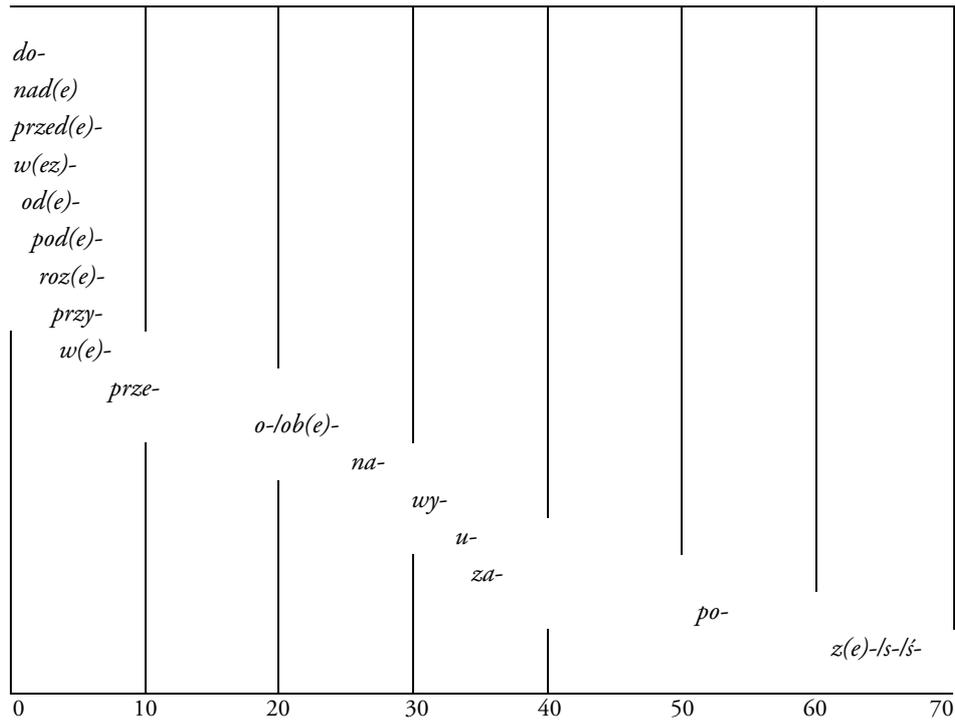
It should be noted that in *Pegasus*, as in Dunaj (1996) and most of the other more recent dictionaries, a choice was made not to present verbs as prefix-pairs when the individual members of the pair govern different sentence cases.

Compare for instance (11) and (12) below:

- (11) *Polacy bronili<sub>i</sub> miasta przed wrogiem.*  
 Poles<sub>NOM</sub> defended<sub>i</sub> city<sub>GEN</sub> against enemy<sub>INSTR.</sub>  
 ‘The Poles defended // were defending the city against the enemy’
- (12) *Polacy obronili<sub>p</sub> miasto przed wrogiem.*  
 Poles<sub>NOM</sub> defended<sub>p</sub> city<sub>ACC</sub> against enemy<sub>INSTR.</sub>  
 ‘The Poles (have successfully) defended the city against the enemy’

The verbs *bronic<sub>i</sub>* ~ *obronic<sub>p</sub>* ‘defend’ were then disqualified as a pure aspectual pair even though they do function as such in spite of the syntactic divergence presented by the genitive and accusative cases in the respective sentences. Only Bańko (2000: I 126) mentions *obronic<sub>p</sub>* in his article for *bronić*.<sup>17</sup> Admittedly it probably does not really hold true to deny such verb pairs the status of prefix-pair on purely semantic grounds. This concerns only quite small groups of verbs and therefore it does not spoil the statistics too much.

Ultimately then, the table seems to corroborate what we thought about the frequency in which the individual prefixes occur: there is a great variety in frequency and the semantically more distinct prefix meanings occur less frequently. To conclude this section we have projected the frequency percentage data onto the table on the next page. It shows quite clearly that prefixes on the left of the table occur less frequently as empty prefix whilst those on the right can be called empty in more than half of the compounds formed with them.



#### 4.2 More recent formations

Newly borrowed verbs seem to remain bi-aspectual for a good few years after borrowing (cf. Kudlińska (1988)). At some point a perfective counterpart is established, usually for this class of verbs by means of a prefix. The selection of prefix is not random as can be illustrated by such pure aspectual pairs as *transportować* : *przetransportować*<sub>p</sub> ‘transport’ and *eksportować* : *wyeksportować*<sub>p</sub> ‘export’.<sup>18</sup> In these there is a clear correlation between the meaning of the newly adopted prefix (*prze-* approx. ‘through’, *wy-* approx. ‘out of, from’) and the meaning of the base verbs, pretty much along the lines set out in paragraph 4 above. A formulaic expression of the latter should clarify this point.

<i>WY</i> <u>prefix</u> [+ 'WY'] [+ Term]	+	<i>EKSPORTOWAĆ</i> <u>simplex</u> ['Q <sup>(“wy”)</sup> '] [+ Term] [- pf]	==>	<i>WYEKSPORTOWAĆ</i> <u>compound</u> ['Q <sub>(wy)</sub> '] [+ Term] [+ pf]
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Q = the meaning of the simplex, which in this case includes an element (“wy”)

Here too one could dub this semantic reduplication of the selected prefix and a semantic element already present in the simplex.

Other relatively new prefix-pairs of this type that appear in *Pegasus* are: *eksmitować* ‘evict’, *ekspediować* ‘dispatch’, *eksploatować* ‘exploit’, *eksponować* ‘exhibit’, *emigrować* ‘emigrate’, *emitować* ‘emit’, all of which form aspectual pairs with perfectives with prefix *wy-*.

Of course where a prefix has a less distinctive meaning, its description needs to be rather more accurate than can be attempted here in order to establish whether there is in fact reduplication with part of the meaning of the simplex (Q). Therefore we will restrict ourselves to providing further examples of the semantically less ambiguous prefixes, which necessarily have a lower ratio in the table above. Although less clear than the above examples, one could think of the following to belong to this group: *izolować* : *odizolować<sub>p</sub>* ‘isolate’ (*od-* approx. ‘from’); *dziurkować* : *przodziurkować<sub>p</sub>* ‘punch a hole’ (*prze-* approx. ‘through’); *drenować* : *wydrenować<sub>p</sub>* ‘drain’; *eliminować* : *wyeliminować<sub>p</sub>* ‘eliminate’; *lansować* : *wylansować<sub>p</sub>* ‘launch’ (all with *wy-* approx. ‘out of, from’).

### 4.3 Analogy

Continuing along the same line of thought we need to consider the (frequent) occurrence of entire groups of verbs whose respective meanings can be described as similar and so all following as a group the line set out in paragraph 4 and 4.2. Quite how far this similarity can be stretched to function within the model we

propose remains to be seen but a case can surely be made for analogy in the formation of prefix pairs of which the simplex imperfective member was borrowed at a later stage than the prototype prefix-pair whose prefix might be said to be adopted. Such a model would suggest a diachronic process and occasionally this can actually be supported. According to Bańkowski (2000: I 25) the aspectual pair *badać<sub>i</sub> : zbadać<sub>p</sub> / przebadać<sub>p</sub>* ‘research, investigate’ (with two “pure” perfectives!<sup>19</sup>) is attested to already function as prefix-pair at the turn of the 17th/18th century. Semantically related verbs, which were actually attested in later periods, went on to form the following prefix-pairs: *analizować<sub>i</sub> : zanalizować<sub>p</sub> / przeanalizować<sub>p</sub>* ‘analyse’; *egzaminować<sub>i</sub> : przeegzaminować<sub>p</sub>* ‘examine’ and *testować<sub>i</sub> : przetestować<sub>p</sub>* ‘test’. More often though, it is not possible to establish the actual chronology. It is therefore usually also not possible to establish which of the semantically resembling verbs in a particular group is in fact the prototype. In our essentially synchronic study that does not really matter and we can suffice with simply registering some of these analogically formed groups of prefix-pairs. From our dictionary corpus we have selected some further strings of semantically related prefix-pairs, which have an empty prefix in common:

NA-

*malować<sub>i</sub> : namalować<sub>p</sub>* ‘make a painting’;

*pisać<sub>i</sub> : napisać<sub>p</sub>* ‘write’;

*rysować<sub>i</sub> : narysować<sub>p</sub>* ‘draw / make a drawing’;

*szkicować<sub>i</sub> : naszkicować<sub>p</sub>* ‘sketch / make a sketching’;

O-

*znakować<sub>i</sub> : oznakować<sub>p</sub>* ‘mark / label / brand’;

*stemplować<sub>i</sub> : ostemplować<sub>p</sub>* ‘mark with a stamp’;

*pieczętować<sub>i</sub> : opieczętować<sub>p</sub>* ‘mark with a stamp’;

U-

*malować<sub>i</sub> : umalować<sub>p</sub>* ‘apply lipstick’;

*szminkować*<sub>i</sub> : *uszminkować*<sub>p</sub> ‘apply lipstick’;  
*puścić*<sub>i</sub> : *upuścić*<sub>p</sub> ‘powder (ones face)’;

WY-

*tłumaczyć*<sub>i</sub> : *wytłumaczyć*<sub>p</sub> ‘explain’;  
*klarować*<sub>i</sub> : *wyklarować*<sub>p</sub> ‘clear up / explain’;

ZA-

*abonować*<sub>i</sub> : *zaabonować*<sub>p</sub> ‘subscribe to a magazine’;  
*prenumerować*<sub>i</sub> : *zaprenumerować*<sub>p</sub> ‘subscribe to a magazine’.

The above are all exclusively prefix-pairs. Often though, imperfective simplexes have a perfective prefixed counterpart that shares that prefix with an aspectual pair in which the prefix is present in both imperfective and perfective members and where the prefix’s lexical meaning is quite clear. Such is the case with *ekscytować*<sub>i</sub> : *podniecać*<sub>i</sub> : *podniecić*<sub>p</sub>, which recent verb<sup>20</sup> must have been modelled on the aspectual pair *podniecać*<sub>i</sub> : *podniecić*<sub>p</sub>, that has exactly the same meaning. Compare the following examples from the dictionary corpus:

PRZY-

*szykować*<sub>i</sub> : *przyszykować*<sub>p</sub> ‘ready’ | *przygotowywać*<sub>i</sub> : *przygotować*<sub>p</sub> ‘ready’;

O-

*tynkować*<sub>i</sub> : *otynkować*<sub>p</sub> ‘plaster’ | *osmarowywać*<sub>i</sub> : *osmarować*<sub>p</sub> ‘smear’;

ROZ-

*plątać*<sub>i</sub> : *rozplątać*<sub>p</sub> ‘cleave’ | *rozdzielać*<sub>i</sub> : *rozdzielić*<sub>p</sub> ‘separate’;

W-

*pakować*<sub>i</sub> : *wpakować*<sub>p</sub> ‘pack’ | *wsadzać*<sub>i</sub> : *wsadzić*<sub>p</sub> ‘put into...’;

WY-

*korkować*<sub>i</sub> : *wykorkować*<sub>p</sub> ‘die’  
(informal) | *wymierać*<sub>i</sub> : *wymrzeć*<sub>p</sub> ‘die’;

<i>selekcjonować</i> : <i>wyselekcjonować</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘select’	<i>wybierać</i> : <i>wybrać</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘choose’;
<i>prasować</i> : <i>wyprasować</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘iron / press’	<i>wygładzać</i> : <i>wygładzić</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘smooth out’;
<i>startować</i> : <i>wystartować</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘start / depart’	<i>wyruszać</i> : <i>wyruszyć</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘depart’;
ZA- <i>sygnalizować</i> : <i>zasygnalizować</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘signal’	<i>zaznaczać</i> : <i>zaznaczyć</i> <sub>p</sub> ‘mark’.

#### 4.4 Multiple choice

Sometimes one imperfective simplex pairs with more than one prefixed perfective compound. The prefixes in such cases vary. It does not happen all that often, but this phenomenon is entirely omitted by Młynarczyk (2004) and that does not seem right either, although it would not change her model all that much. Włodarczyk (1997: 67 a.f.) after Czochralski (1975: 43) speaks of ALLOGRAMS to designate the different ‘pure’ perfective forms that are associated with a single imperfective verb. Włodarczyk eloquently states that these allograms usually have a complementary distribution and it is the context, which provokes the use of a particular form. The choice is made along the lines of the following criteria:

- a. the imperfective verb is polysemic and each of the perfectives corresponds to a separate meaning;
- b. the different perfectives differ slightly in “modalité d’action”, i.e. in Aktionsart;
- c. the different perfectives are distinguished by slight stylistic nuances.

At the end of her chapter about this issue Włodarczyk states furthermore that certain variant perfective forms should be seen as true synonyms.

We would like to discuss a few examples. First there are those cases in which the choice could be related to properties of the direct object involved and so we

would have a specialisation of the meaning of the imperfective simplex in the perfective compound: this corresponds to Włodarczyk's type a. A clear case is presented by *malować<sub>i</sub>* 'paint', which has as many as three perfective counterparts:

1. *pomalować<sub>p</sub>*, when the object is something like *ścianę* 'a wall'. A wall can be said to have an expanse which involves us being busy and having to spend a while doing the painting, before we can complete painting the expanse. Also, the wall is not felt to be a "carrier" of information presented by the paint job, but rather the affected object.

2. *namalować<sub>p</sub>*, when the object is for example a painting. We may treat this as analogy with *napisać<sub>p</sub>* 'write', *narysować<sub>p</sub>* 'draw' which we saw earlier. As we already noticed for *pisać<sub>i</sub>*, obviously the resulting state of *malować<sub>i</sub>* painting, is that the picture, which holds information (unlike paint on a wall) is applied on-to the carrier (canvas, paper etc.). This image is the effected object. It is then not the fact that the paint is on the carrier (such as would be the case with *pomalować<sub>p</sub>* above), but the painting (with its information).

3. *umalować<sub>p</sub>*, when the object is for instance *usta* 'mouth' and we should think of a translation more like we already gave above – 'put on lipstick'. Here too is an analogy, this time with verbs such as *upudrować<sub>p</sub>* 'powder (one's face)' and *uszminnować<sub>p</sub>* 'apply lipstick' we presented earlier. The prefix *u-* is often used for actions that involve applying or doing things to (some)one's body. The perceived meaning of *u-* is then, much like the corresponding preposition 'at, close to'. This is also present in the resulting state of the action 'applying lipstick'; the lipstick is not applied on-to a cloth or carrier, but onto, usually, (some)one's body. There may also be a connection with a related group of verbs prefixed with *u-*, which all imply some kind of (aesthetic) improvement and include examples *ulepszać<sub>i</sub>* : *ulepszyć<sub>p</sub>* 'improve' and *upiększać<sub>i</sub>* : *upiększyć<sub>p</sub>* 'embellish, decorate, adorn'.

With all of the above the Poles could probably have chosen different prefixes, but the fact is, they did not and they must have considered the indicated

differentiated notions per type of direct object (and so, type of painting).

A further interesting example is presented by *tłumaczyć*<sub>i</sub>, which has two distinct meanings, each of which would apply to a certain category of direct object, which can be present but also left out of the context and merely implied. This verb then has two perfective counterparts.

1. *wytłumaczyć*<sub>p</sub> 'explain', which is semantically analogous with *wyklarować*<sub>p</sub> 'clarify'. The choice of the prefix must be motivated by the notion that when we explain something we metaphorically bring it out of the darkness that surrounds it.

2. *przetłumaczyć*<sub>p</sub> 'translate' is harder, but like *przeczytać*<sub>p</sub> 'read' it involves text, which is passed through as one translates as well as metaphorically replaced (cf. chapter I paragraph 2.3.1). When the Z-stage is reached we would have passed through the metaphorical space presented by the text and / or 'replaced' it into another language.

A slightly more complex case is presented by *żegnać*<sub>i</sub>, which has two perfectives, one per meaning: 1. *pożegnać*<sub>p</sub> 'leave, greet upon leaving' and 2. *przeżegnać*<sub>p</sub> 'to bless somebody with the sign of the cross'. In the first there would probably be the same idea of expanse of the action as it probably involves some kind of ritual, whilst in the second meaning there is a passage through the sign of the cross. This example is listed by Włodarczyk (1997: 68) as is *bić*<sub>i</sub> with perfectives *wybić*<sub>p</sub> 'ring / toll' (of a clock for the hour etc.), *zbić*<sub>p</sub> 'hit' (e.g. a dog in punishment) and *ubić*<sub>p</sub> 'beat up / whip' (cream, eggs etc.). She also comments that *bić*<sub>i</sub> : *zbić*<sub>p</sub> function as aspectual pair in the meaning 'to break' (a glass etc.). Her last example of this kind is *dusić*<sub>i</sub> with perfectives *zadusić*<sub>p</sub> / *udusić*<sub>p</sub> 'smother, strangle' (e.g. a chicken) and *udusić*<sub>p</sub> 'braise' (mushrooms and such like).

In these examples then we are in fact dealing with polysemic imperfective simplexes and monosemic perfective compounds. There are surely more examples but the ones we provide here clarify the issue sufficiently and things could be summed up on the basis of our first example as in the following table.

ipf	three meanings	pf
<i>malować</i>	{ 'paint' (a wall)	<i>pomalować</i>
	{ 'paint' (a picture)	<i>namalować</i>
	{ 'paint' (a mouth)	<i>umalować</i>

Włodarczyk's type b touches on the problem of Aktionsarten. It is not our intention to go into that matter, but we will mention the one example given by Włodarczyk (1997: 69, 70): *brudzić*<sub>i</sub> 'soil' with perfectives *zabrudzić*<sub>p</sub> (which the author does not specify and so probably is seen by her to be the 'pure' aspectual partner), *ubrudzić*<sub>p</sub> "marked by intensity", *pobrudzić*<sub>p</sub> 'soil in various places', *wybrudzić*<sub>p</sub> "marked by distributivity", *zbrudzić* "marked by totality".

Włodarczyk's type c includes perfective variants, which differ stylistically. Her example is *milknąć*<sub>i</sub> 'be silent' with neutral perfective counterpart *zamilknąć*<sub>p</sub> and the stylistically more elevated *zmilknąć*<sub>p</sub>. We would ourselves hesitate to speak of aspectual pairs in these cases, as the prefixed perfective compounds have an additional ingressive meaning.

Other examples do not involve different kinds of the same event or stylistically differentiated perfective variants such as in the above examples, which would often require quite different translations into English per meaning variant. Here monosemic imperfectives rather seem to be endowed with synonymous perfectives, usually two, and both formed on the principle of semantic reduplication (as outlined in this study), but with different prefixes nevertheless. (This group includes the examples that Włodarczyk does not specify other than as "true perfective synonyms".) Our main example of this type is *tyć*<sub>i</sub> 'gain weight'. It has two possible perfectives (although Dunaj and Bańko provide only the first, even though native speakers confirm the second as does Labenz 2004: 18): *utyć*<sub>p</sub> and *przytyć*<sub>p</sub>. Now, it does not take a huge leap of the imagination to see the first of these in the light of the prefix meaning outlined for *umalować*<sub>p</sub> above: the event has an effect on the body, bringing something (there other than here an aesthetical improvement) to it. As *przy-* typically

also signifies an arrival of say P to Q, the same can be pictured for weight ‘coming’ to the body.<sup>21</sup> This can be put into a table as follows.

ipf	one meaning	pf
<i>tyć</i>	‘gain weight’	{ <i>utyć</i> <i>przytyć</i>

Włodarczyk’s examples in this section include two, which according to Śmiech (1971: 28) are regional variants. These are *palić* ‘light / kindle’ with perfectives *zapalić<sub>p</sub>* and *napalić<sub>p</sub>* and *gotować* ‘prepare’ (a meal) with *ugotować<sub>p</sub>* and *zgotować<sub>p</sub>*. Less clear examples of this model that are not regional variants are *badać* : *zbadać<sub>p</sub>* / *przebadać<sub>p</sub>* (for the latter form see also chapter I paragraph 2.1.6) ‘research, investigate’, *reperować* : *zreperować<sub>p</sub>* / *nareperować<sub>p</sub>* ‘repair’ and *całować* : *pocałować<sub>p</sub>* / *ucałować<sub>p</sub>* ‘kiss’, the last of which could of course be explained away like *umalować<sub>p</sub>* above, but the others of which are less easy. We think this is on account of the rather indistinct prefix meaning.

The ambiguity as to the choice of the actual prefix selected for “empty” duty in these cases does not alter the principle presented here. We are dealing with base simplex meanings that can be semantically reduplicated in more than one way, something which is especially likely as prefix meanings are often quite unspecific.

### 5 *Prze-*

In addition to the examples we already mentioned, the following compounds with prefix *prze-* could be considered as “pure” aspectual opponents to their derivational base simplexes on the grounds set out above. The related *prze-*meaning is indicated with reference to the variant meaning (paragraph numbers in chapter I.

pf compound	approx. meaning	<i>prze</i> -reference
<i>przeanalizować</i>	'analyse'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1</sub>
<i>przebadać</i>	'research'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1</sub>
<i>przeczytać</i>	'read'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1</sub>
<i>przedefilować</i>	'pass (by) in a parade'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1.1</sub>
<i>przedestylować</i>	'distill'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1</sub>
<i>przedziurkować</i>	'punch a hole'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1.3</sub>
<i>przeegzaminować</i>	'examine, take exam'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1/2</sub>
<i>przefaksować</i>	'fax'	<i>prze</i> <sub>3</sub>
<i>przefiltrować</i>	'filter'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1.2</sub>
<i>przekoziółkować</i>	'turn over'	<i>prze</i> <sub>3.2</sub>
<i>przeliterować</i>	'spell'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1</sub>
<i>przetestować</i>	'test'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1</sub>
<i>przetransformować</i>	'transform'	<i>prze</i> <sub>3</sub>
<i>przetranskrybować</i>	'transcribe'	<i>prze</i> <sub>3</sub>
<i>przetransponować</i>	'transpose'	<i>prze</i> <sub>3</sub>
<i>przetransportować</i>	'transport'	<i>prze</i> <sub>3</sub>
<i>przetłumaczyć</i>	'translate'	<i>prze</i> <sub>1/3</sub>

## 6 Concluding remarks

To sum up and conclude, here are our parameters concerning what we have termed "prefix-pairs".

1. The problem of so-called "empty" prefixes concerns dual verbal lexemes in terminative situations.
2. In prefix-pairs the imperfective is a simplex and forms the base for its perfective partner, a prefixed compound.
3. The ultimate test for "partnership" is the "Maslov Criterion".
4. Usually a case can be made for semantic reduplication between prefix

meaning and an element of the meaning of the simplex or object or their juxtaposition.

5. The choice of prefix is not wholly arbitrary, nor is it always immediately entirely obvious. Also, even when semantic reduplication is the case, it is not in all cases unequivocal as the “pairs” with two (more or less) synonymous perfectives with different prefixes illustrate. This is due to the fuzzy (for often highly polysemous) semantics of prefixes.

6. The prefix is never really empty of lexical semantic properties. The lexical semantic quality “terminativity” is always maintained, even if some of the distinctive lexical semantic elements of the prefix are drained. We cannot maintain then the notion of “emptiness” of lexical meaning for such prefixes as this most important, even systemic notion is still present and is in fact this, which fulfils the first condition for perfective verbs, i.e. that they be (explicitly) terminative.

