SOCIAL AND EDUCATIONAL ENVIRONMENT

TRANSLATION OF SERBIAN PREFIXED VERBS INTO ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN GASTRONOMY TERMINOLOGY

Mihaela LAZOVIĆ

Abstract: This paper is a contrastive analysis of prefixed verbs in contemporary Serbian language and their translational equivalents in English and Romanian. The paper analyses the translation equivalents of Serbian prefixed verbs and determines which syntactical and morphological means have been used to translate the prefixed verbs in the other two languages. Furthermore, the study attempts to establish whether the prefixes modify the distinctive features of base verbs and whether a change in verbal aspect and/or Aktionsart has occurred.

The research conducted for this study is based on Serbian corpus which consists of 100 prefixed verbs and their translational equivalents in English and Romanian. Serbian verbs with prefixes represent a starting point in this study because the verbal aspect and telicity are morphologically expressed in Serbian.

Since prefixation has both lexical and grammatical function, it affects the meaning of verbs as well as the verbal aspect. The analysis has shown that the correlation between the lexical meaning (Aktionsart) and grammar (aspect) is often realized via the distinctive feature [goal], i.e. semantic category named telicity. Hence, this paper analyzed the link between verbal aspect, telicity and prefixation and examined the presence of certain distinctive features with prefixed verbs in order to determine the aspect.

Furthermore, this paper offers some solutions to the problems of how to translate Serbian prefixed verbs into English and Romanian both in the infinitive and in the context.

Key words: prefixes, translational equivalents, verbal aspect, context, infinitive

1. INTRODUCTION

The idea for this paper emerged from the fact that when faced with Serbian prefixed verbs, gastronomy and hospitality students in general have difficulties translating them into English. More often than not, they seek a prefixed verb in English as well, and failing to find it they do not know how to translate Serbian prefixed verbs. This paper attempts to facilitate this process and offer solutions to this translational problem.

On the other hand, the study of verbal prefixes is significant because prefixation has both lexical and grammatical function in the Serbian language, thus it affects the meaning of verbs as well as the verbal aspect. The analysis has shown that the correlation between the lexical meaning (Aktionsart) and grammar (aspect) is often realized via the distinctive feature [goal], i.e. semantic category named telicity. The research conducted for this paper has shown that Serbian prefixed verbs include the notion of telicity and are perfective, as oppose to their base verbs i.e. non-prefixed verbs which are imperfective.

Hence, this paper analyses the link between verbal aspect, telicity and prefixation and examines the presence of certain distinctive features with prefixed verbs in order to determine the aspect.

1.1. The Corpus

The research conducted for this study is corpus based. The corpus consists of 100 Serbian verbs with prefixes and their English and Romanian translational equivalents. In addition, the analysis included the base verbs onto which the prefixes were added.

The selection of prefixes was based on their frequency. The corpus includes contemporary Serbian prefixed verbs. Thus, archaic verbs as well as provincialisms and dialects were not incorporated in the corpus. The corpus consists of verbs which are found in monolingual and bilingual dictionaries together with the prefix. The corpus consists of Serbian verbs with the following prefixes: *do-, za-, iz-, na-, od-, po-, pre-, pro-, s(a)-, u-*. The analyzed prefixed verbs were taken from: *Rečnik srpskohrvatskog književnog jezika*. The Serbian prefixed verbs have been translated into English and Romanian. The translation equivalents were taken from the following dictionaries: *Dicționar român-englez, Dicționar englez-român, Veliki hrvatsko-engleski rječnik, Veliki englesko-hrvatski rječnik*, *Srpsko-rumunski, Rumunsko-srpski rečnik*, *DEX (Dicționarul explicativ al limbii române)*, *M. Webster, English Language and Culture, Oxford Advanced English Dictionary*.

The central part of the study is a contrastive analysis of Serbian prefixed verbs and their translational equivalents in contemporary English and Romanian. The aim of the research is to determine the existing correlations between the analyzed prefixed verbs and their translational equivalents with respect to verbal aspect and Aktionsart. Namely, the study attempts to determine whether the use of prefixes modifies the distinctive features of base verbs and whether a change in verbal aspect and/or Aktionsart has occurred.

Furthermore, the paper studies the translation equivalents of prefixed verbs and determines which syntactical and morphological means have been used to translate the prefixed verbs in the other two languages.

1.2. Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

The category of aspect is most often connected with Slavic languages since there aspect is morphologically expressed via prefixes. For this reason, the starting point of this research is Serbian.

Numerous Serbian linguists (Belić 1924, Grubor 1953, Riđanović 1976) agree that in Slavic languages, verbal aspect is morphologically expressed by the use of prefixes. Furthermore, in Serbian linguistic literature, aspectual meanings are conceived as a grammatical issue, while Aktionart is a lexical i.e. semantic category (Riđanovic 1976:7).

Babić (1986:477) points out that prefixed verbs are perfective since imperfective verbs are rendered perfective if a prefix is added to them. On the other hand, if a prefix is added to a perfective verb it stays perfective.

Similarly, Novakov (2005:81) argues that base verbs onto which prefixes are added almost always differ in Aktionsart from their prefixed counterparts. The prefix alters the distinctive feature [goal] and introduces the final segment of the situation. He also points out that, in Serbian, the connection with the grammatical category of aspect is achieved via the distinctive feature [goal] (Novakov 2005:85). Namely, verbs with the distinctive feature [+ goal] present the situation as a single whole (perfective aspect) while verbs with the distinctive feature [– goal] present the situation as a structure (imperfective aspect). Thus, prefixation in Serbian has both a lexical and a grammatical function and as such it influences both verbal semantics and aspect and the connection between these two categories is achieved through telicity.

This study starts from the typological definition of aspect as a category which makes it possible to view and present a situation as a single whole (perfective aspect) or as a structure (imperfective aspect) (Comrie 1976:3, Novakov 2005:140). By analogy, all three languages distinguish: perfective aspect (Serbian prefixed verbs, English non-progressive forms, Romanian perfective forms) and imperfective aspect (Serbian non-prefixed verbs, English progressive forms, Romanian imperfective).

The semantic category of telicity represents the basis for lexical, i.e. semantic classification of verbs and verb phrases into activities, states, achievements and accomplishments (Aktionsart). Each of the four types of the verb situation was defined according to three distinctive features: *stativity, duration* and *telicity*.

Based on the semantic characteristic of telicity, situations can be divided into telic and atelic. Telic situations tend towards a specified goal, thus they have a natural endpoint, while atelic situations do not tend towards a goal and do not have an endpoint (Comrie 1976:44, Declerck 1979:761-793, Brinton 1988:54, Novakov 2005:115, Rothstein 2004:1).

2. VERBAL PREFIXATION IN SERBIAN

In Serbian, prefixes play a very important role in the process of perfectivization since they influence the verbal aspect in the sense that they render the imperfective verbs perfective.

The Serbian prefixes relevant for determining the verbal aspect are: *do-, za-, iz-, na-, od-, po-, pre-, pro-, s(a)-, u-,* etc. (Klajn 2002:205-286, Novakov 2005:61-86).

The analysis has proven the hypothesis that the Serbian prefixed verbs denote perfectivity, while their base verbs are imperfective. The base verbs onto which the prefixes are added are usually activities.

Prefixation primarily alters the feature [goal] i.e. it introduces the final segment or a natural ending of a situation.

Thus, in Serbian, the link between grammatical category and verbal aspect is realized by the distinctive feature [goal]. Consequently, the lexical feature [goal] can be directly linked to verbal aspect in the sense that a situation which tends towards a goal can be perceived as a whole (perfectivity), and a situation which does not tend towards a goal as a structure (imperfectivity). For example:

(1) *skuvati* (*ručak*) / *to cook* (*lunch*) / *a găti* (*prânzul*)

In the example (1) the situation tends towards a specified goal – *cooked lunch*, thus the situation is perfective.

On the other hand, the absence of a goal denotes a situation which can last without any limitation or boundary. Such a situation can be interrupted at any time without changing the features of the situation itself. The absence of a goal allows the situation to be presented as a structure, for example:

(2) *kuvati* / *to cook* / *a găti*

Therefore, prefixes modify both telicity and aspect in Serbian. Due to the fact that Serbian prefixed verbs indicate the feature [goal] at the lexical level, it is not necessary to introduce other lexical means, as is the case in English and Romanian.

The analysis of the Serbian part of the corpus has proven that prefixation has both a lexical and a grammatical function. Thus, it influences both verbal semantics and aspect, and the link between verbal meaning and grammar is realized via the distinctive feature [goal].

Translation of Serbian prefixed verbs was rather challenging due to the fact that different syntactic constructions had to be introduced in order to translate Serbian prefixed verbs into English and Romanian. The analysis of the corpus had shown that Serbian prefixed verbs are very rarely translated by prefixed verbs (examples 3-6), most often they are translated by verbal phrases with direct objects and adverbials (examples 7-12). Furthermore, in English some translational equivalents are phrasal verbs (examples 13-16). Prefix *re-* in Romanian as well as in English introduces iterative meaning (examples 3).

Correspondingly, the English prefix *en-*, and Serbian prefix *za-*, the Romanian prefix *în-* have a telic meaning (examples 5, 13). The Serbian prefix *pre-* in (4) indicates that the situation is overdone, or done more than enough, and it is translated by a prefixed verb is English as well, and in Romanian a construction V+Adv. was used. The Romanian prefix *de-* and the English prefix *un-* indicate a situation contrary to the situation denoted by the base verb (examples 6). The corpus has shown that Serbian prefixed verbs are more frequently translated by prefixed verbs into Romanian than into English language, as it can be seen from examples (3-6, 13).

(3) *Pregrupisati* (*to regroup / a regrupa*)

(4) *Presoliti* (*to oversalt / a săra prea mult*)

(5) *Zaokružiti* (*to encircle / a înconjura*)

(6) *Odviti* (*to unwind / a desfășura, derula*)

(7) *Dokuvati* (*to cook more until ready / a termina de gătit*)

(8) *Dotrčati* (*to come running / a veni în fugă*)

(9) *Zapevati* (*to begin to sing / a începe să cânte, a întona un cântec*)

(10) *Odbraniti* (*to defend successfully / a reuși să apere*)

(11) *Pobesneti* (*to become furious / a se înfuria*)

(12) *Pobacati* (*to throw away one by one / a arunca unul după altul*)

(13) *Zagrejati* (*to warm up / a încălzi*)

(14) *Izgoreti* (*to burn down / a arde complet*)

(15) *Izbaciti* (*to throw out / a da afară*)

(16) *Nabrati* (*to pick up enough / a astrânge destul*)

3. TRANSLATION OF SOME SERBIAN PREFIXED VERBS INTO ENGLISH AND ROMANIAN – GASTRONOMY TERMINOLOGY

In Serbian, verbal aspect and telicity are morphologically expressed by means of verbal prefixes. Therefore, aspectual and semantic distinctions are visible in the infinitive which is not the case in English and Romanian where different syntactic means are used to express verbal aspect.

In order to illustrate the richness of the Serbian language when prefixed verbs are concerned the table 1. offers all the derivations of the base verb *kuvati (to cook / a găti)* in the Serbian language and their translational equivalents in English and Romanian.

Table 1.

VERB	ENGLISH	ROMANIAN
KUVATI	to cook	a găti
Skuvati	to finish cooking	a termina de gătit
PROkuvati	to boil	a fierbe
DOkuvati	to cook more until ready	după fiert ii mai laşi puţin să clocotească
PREkuvati	to overcook	a fierbe prea mult
RASkuvati	to overboil	a răsfierbe
NAkuvati	to cook a big quantity of food	a găti o cantitate mare de produse alimentare
ZAkuvati	start boiling / bring to the boil	a începe să fiarbă
Ukuvati	to boil / cook in	A fierbe/ a găti în
ISkuvati	boil out /	A scoate (o pată de ulei) prin fierbere (de pe o haină)
	boil away /	A fierbe un lichid până se evaporă (a se evapora prin fierbere)
	boil off	În chimie – a scoate impurităţile prin fierbere (boil off impurities)

The table 1. shows that Serbian prefixed verbs are very rarely translated by prefixed verbs (*raskuvati / to overboil / a răsfierbe*), most often they are translated by verbal phrases with direct objects (*nakuvati / to cook a big quantity of food / a găti o cantitate mare de produse alimentare*) and adverbials (*dokuvati / to cook more until ready / după fiert ii mai laşi puţin să clocotească)*, Serbian prefixed verbs are sometimes translated with the construction *start / finish and V+ing* (*skuvati / to finish cooking / a termina de gătit, zakuvati / start boiling / a începe să fierbe*). Furthermore, in English some translational equivalents are phrasal verbs (*ukuvati / cook in, iskuvati / boil out / away / off*). The research also shows that, Romanian translational equivalents of Serbian prefixed verbs are often descriptive (*dokuvati / to cook more until ready / după fiert ii mai laşi puţin să clocotească, nakuvati / to cook a big quantity of food / a găti o cantitate mare de produse alimentare, iskuvati / boil out / a scoate (o pată de ulei) prin fierbere (de pe o haină) / boíl away / a fierbe un lichid până*

se evaporă (a se evapora prin fierbere) / boil off / în chimie – a scoate impurităţile prin fierbere (boil off impurities))

Furthermore, the analysis of the corpus has shown that Serbian prefixed verbs (*skuvati, prokuvati, dokuvatim, prekuvati, raskuvati, nakuvati, zakuvati, ukuvati, iskuvati*) and their translational equivalents are perfective since imperfective verbs (*kuvati*) are rendered perfective if a prefix is added to them.

Similarly, base verbs (*kuvati*) onto which prefixes are added differ in Aktionsart from their prefixed counterparts (*skuvati, prokuvati, dokuvatim, prekuvati, raskuvati, nakuvati, zakuvati, ukuvati, iskuvati)*. Namely, in the examples *kuvati* / *skuvati* the prefix – *s* alters the distinctive feature [- goal] into [+ goal] and introduces the final segment of the situation, thus the situation is completed and the goal has been reached. In such a way, in Serbian, the connection with the grammatical category of aspect is achieved via the distinctive feature [goal].

Thus, prefixation in Serbian has both a lexical and a grammatical function and as such it influences both verbal semantics and aspect and the connection between these two categories is achieved through telicity.

The analysis has proven the hypothesis that the Serbian prefixed verbs denote perfectivity, while their base verbs are imperfective. The base verbs onto which the prefixes are added are usually activities, while prefixed verbs are achievements or accomplishments.

As it was previously mentioned, in the Serbian language, verbal aspect is morphologically expressed by means of verbal prefixes. Therefore, aspectual and semantic distinctions are visible in the infinitive which is not the case in English and Romanian. Translation wise, the matter is further complicated when Serbian prefixed verbs are used in the context. For example:

> (17) *Maja je sinoć <u>skuvala</u> večeru.*
> *Maia <u>cooked</u> dinner last night.*
> *Maia <u>a gătit</u> cina a seară.*

As oppose to:

> (18) *Maja je sinoć <u>kuvala</u> večeru.*
> *Maia <u>was cooking</u> dinner last night.*
> *Maia <u>gătea</u> cina a seară.*

In the examples (17 and 18) the perfective verb *kuvala / was cooking / gătea)* and its imperfective pair *skuvati (cooked / a gătit)* are used in the context which greatly influences the translation of the Serbian prefixed verb into English and Romanian. The above examples show that Serbian prefixed verbs can be translated with English non-progressive forms and Romanian perfective forms while Serbian non-prefixed verbs, or base verbs are usually translated with English progressive forms and Romanian imperfective.

On the other hand, the analysis has shown that the direct object affects verbal semantics and influences the translation of the prefixed verbs into English and Romanian. In fact, the very presence or absence of the direct object has an impact on the verbal semantics, as well as the type of the verb situation (Aktionsart). For example:

(19) *On je jeo.*
       He was eating.
       El mânca.

(20) *On je pojeo sendvič.*
       He ate a sandwich.
       El a mâncat un sandviş.

Sentences (19) denote activities. Thus, the lack of the direct object excludes a goal and implies imperfectivity. On the other hand, the existence of a direct object entails a goal in sentences (20) rendering the situations perfective.

The analysis had shown that in addition to the presence or absence of the direct object in a sentence, the very structure of the noun phrase functioning as the direct object has an impact on the type of the verb situation. Moreover, the structure of the direct object has a great influence on the translation of the whole sentence. For example:

(21) *On je pio vodu.*
       He was drinking water.
       El bea apă.

(22) *On je popio tri čaše vode.*
       He drank three glasses of water.
       El a băut trei pahare de apă.

Sentences (21) indicate situations which do not tend towards a goal. The direct object realized as an uncountable noun *apă / water* renders the situation imperfective. On the other hand, in sentences (22) the direct object (*three glasses of water* / *trei pahare de apă*) denotes a final point, or a goal which was actually reached and after which the situation could not be continued. Thus, sentences (22) are perfective situations, while sentences (21) are imperfective.

Based on the analysis, it can be argued that perfective aspect can be indicated by Serbian prefixed verbs, English non-progressive forms and Romanian perfective forms (examples 20, 22) and imperfective aspect by Serbian non-prefixed verbs, English progressive forms and Romanian imperfective (examples 19, 21).

4. CONCLUSION

This study has shown that prefixes express aspectual meanings in all three languages.

The analysis of Serbian prefixed verbs and their translational equivalents in English and Romanian involved many difficulties because the prefixation influences the verbal aspect as well as the meaning of verbs. Consequently, it is not always easy to differentiate the semantic and grammatical level, or to determine the domain of aspect, on one hand, and Aktionsart, on the other. This research has proven that the change in aspect and verbal semantics brings about a change in Aktionsart as well. Thus, some prefixes introduce additional meanings to the base verb which alters the verbal aspect and Aktionsart. Namely, the research for this paper has proven that prefixation primarily alters the feature [goal] i.e. it introduces the final segment or a natural ending of a situation.

In Serbian, verbal aspect and telicity are morphologically expressed by means of verbal prefixes. Therefore, aspectual and semantic distinctions are visible in the infinitive which is not the case in English and Romanian where different syntactic means are used to express verbal aspect. For example:

(23) *kuvati (to cook / a găti)* vs.

(24) *dokuvati (to cook more until ready / a termina de gătit)*

This is the reason why Serbian prefixed verbs represented the basis for this research.

The analysis has shown that the primary function of Serbian prefixes is to perfectivize the base verb.

The contrastive analysis of the translational equivalents has shown that Serbian prefixed verbs are very rarely translated into English and Romanian by prefixed verbs, most often they are translated by phrases with or without modifiers like adverbials, direct objects, catenative constructions consisting of phase verbs like *begin / a începe / početi*.

On the other hand, the context can influence the translation of the Serbian prefixed verbs and their base verbs in the sense that they can be translated by non-progressive or progressive forms in English and perfective and imperfective verbs in Romanian respectively. To be more precise, in the Serbian language, perfectivity i.e. the completion of a situation can be expressed by prefixes while in English and Romanian it can be expressed by English non-progressive forms and Romanian perfective forms. On the other hand, imperfectivity i.e. incompletion of a situation can be expressed by Serbian non-prefixed verbs while in English it can be expressed by progressive forms and in Romanian by imperfective forms.

On the other hand, the research has proven that verbs like *eat* have perfective meaning when their direct objects have definite, quantified or

numerical determiners and have imperfective meaning when the same objects are a mass noun or a bare plural.

Moreover, the research conducted for this paper has shown that perfective aspect can be indicated by Serbian prefixed verbs, English non-progressive forms, Romanian perfective forms and imperfective aspect by Serbian non-prefixed verbs, English progressive forms, Romanian imperfective.

The analysis has proven the hypothesis that the Serbian prefixed verbs denote perfectivity, while their base verbs are imperfective. The base verbs onto which the prefixes are added are usually activities. Prefixation primarily alters the feature [- goal] into [+ goal] i.e. it introduces the final segment or a natural ending of a situation.

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