Competition between ZA- and V- Prefixes for IN-PATH Description in Russian.

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Russian like most other Slavic languages is considered a "satellite-framed" language from the perspective of cognitive typology, with the main verbal stem usually expressing the manner of motion, while the path is indicated by "satellites" e.g., verbal prefixes (Talmy 1985, 2000; Hasko 2010; Iakovleva 2012; Pavlenko & Volynsky 2015; Filipović 2007), see (1):

(1) Paren'	vbežal	v	besedku.
guy.SG.NOM	IN-run-PST.SG.M	into	gazebo

'A/the guy ran into the gazebo.'

However, Russian verbal prefixes have numerous verb-class-specific lexical meanings, and grammatical functions of perfectivization resulting in their complex functionality and distribution. Moreover, the same motion event can be expressed by different prefixes depending on the intention and/or perception of the speaker, see (2):

(2) Drug	zabežal	v	besedku.
friend.SG.NOM	IN-run-PST.SG.M	into	gazebo

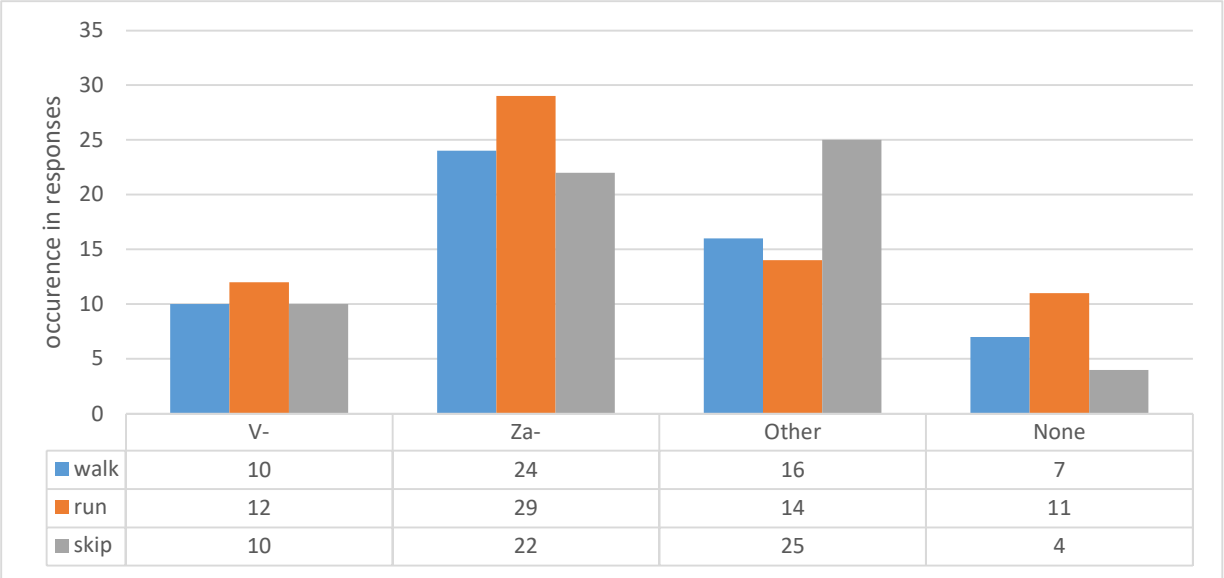
'A/the friend ran into the gazebo.'

Examples (1) and (2) show the competition existing between two verbal prefixes used in Russian motion event descriptions: V- has the meaning of moving inside the boundary of the landmark, whereas ZA- has the meaning of crossing a relevant boundary or the orientation point of the landmark (Janda 1985; Sokolova&Lewandowski 2010). The present research investigates the use and distribution of two Russian verbal prefixes ZA- and V- for describing IN-PATH in the motion event descriptions based on the results of a video stimuli-based elicitation experiment[1]. The experimental video contained 52 clips that demonstrated motion events incorporating different combinations of three different factors: Manner-Path-Deixis. 20 native Russian speakers, aged between 15-47 years participated in this study. The data collection was conducted in 2014 in Khabarovsk, Russia. In the present study only the results of nine clips containing the scenes of walking, running, and skipping into a gazebo from three deictic perspectives: venitive, andative, and neuter are compared, thus, the data set for the analysis included 180 utterances.

Figure 1 shows the distribution of V- and ZA-prefixes use across three types of IN-PATH motion scenes. The results demonstrate that ZA- prefix is preferred over V- prefix. In addition to ZA- and V- prefixes, other prefixes were used with U- (away), POD- (to/towards), and PRI- (to/towards) among the most frequent ones. The alternative prefixes did not express IN-PATH but rather were used to indicate the deictic aspects of the events with U- used mostly in the andative scenes, while POD- and PRI- were used mostly in the venitive and occasionally neuter scenes.

Overall, the results demonstrate the experimental data suggesting that for Russian speakers the boundary crossing is more salient than the movement directed inside the landmark and provide the empirical support for the previous research based on native speakers' intuition and literary corpora. The polysemous and polyfunctional nature of the ZA- prefix might be one of the factors contributing to its higher frequency as it contains initiating and purpose-oriented meanings (Janda 1986; Sokolova&Lewandowski 2010) even if they are not existent or explicit. Moreover, depending on the speaker's position, other prefixes could be used to prioritize the expression of the deictic aspect, which in its turn raises the question of whether the verbal prefix is the prioritized slot for path expression in Russian or should the prepositional phrases be considered as the main means for the expression of the path as, for example, in English. Therefore, a further investigation into the use, distribution and competition between the two prefixes ZA- and V- can provide a fine-grained differentiation of their functions for motion event descriptions.

[1] This project is a part of the NINJAL project "An empirical and typological study of the grammar and semantics of predicates" led by Prof. Yo Matsumoto



	V-	Za-	Other	None
walk	10	24	16	7
run	12	29	14	11
skip	10	22	25	4

Figure 1. Distribution of prefix use across the three manner types of the motion events.

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