Polish Tense and Aspect in Narrative Context:
An Analysis of Written Text

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Abstract: The traditional view of Slavic aspect describes it as a binary perfective-imperfective opposition, and previous models of the role aspect plays in narrative function have reflected this simple division. Unfortunately, such a binary division cannot account for the functions of certain perfective verbs in past-tense narrative and fails to adequately describe narrative function in present-time. Using excerpts from written text, we show how a tripartite system better accounts for the connection between aspect and narrative function.

0.   Introduction: Aspect as a Binary Opposition

In this paper, we examine the use of tense/aspect (hereafter T/A) forms in a particular narrative context, specifically written text. The idea of tense, of course, needs little introduction, while anyone dealing with Slavic languages is well aware of the concept of aspect, and it has been the topic of many research papers over the years.

While tense communicates something about the time characteristic of a verb, aspect can be defined, in very broad terms, as a grammatical category or form that expresses the way an activity or event is perceived. A typical dictionary or grammar of Polish (e.g. Schenker 1973, Stanisławski 1969, Swan 2003, 2007) provides a simple binary division of aspect, with most verbs occurring in *niedokonany-dokonany* (imperfective-perfective) pairs. The two aspects are seen as having meanings in opposition to each other, and some of the semantic oppositions often associated with the aspect forms can be seen in Table 1 (following page).

If, for example, you were to look up the single English verb "to write" in an English-Polish dictionary, you would find two distinct lexemes: the imperfective (imprf) *pisać* and the perfective (prf) *napisać*. An example of both aspect forms used in a single, relatively short utterance illustrates some of the binary oppositions listed in Table 1.

(1)   **Pisałem**   i **pisałem**,   a jakoś   nie
        I wrote **(PA IMPRF)** and I wrote **(PA IMPRF)** but somehow   not
        mogłem   tej pracy **napisać**.
        I could   this work   write **(INF PRF)**
        *'I **wrote** and I **wrote**, but somehow I couldn't **complete** this work.'*

The imperfective *pisałem* 'I wrote' is repeated (no doubt for effect) in the past tense, while the perfective *napisać* 'to write' (translated as 'complete' in context) occurs in the infinitive. The speaker, a friend of one of the authors of this paper, was having trouble completing a paper he had started and was quite discouraged. From the context, he was clearly expressing attempted action vs. completed action, process vs. outcome, and failure vs. success in his use of the aspect forms.

(2)   Table 1: Imperfective vs. perfective

Imperfective	Perfective
change of state not necessary or not occurring	change of state
attempted action	completed action
process	outcome
repetitive	single occurrence
extension in time	momentariness
activity (state)	event
failure	success

2.   A Narrative Approach

The semantic description of the aspect forms as a binary opposition is useful to some extent in explaining aspect choice in examples such as that in (1), but it is also quite limited, in that it deals with aspect in isolated clauses or sentences. For a non-native speaker unfamiliar with Slavic aspect, it does not provide systematic guidelines for making the choice between aspects. This is where looking at aspect in narrative context comes into play.

An approach to narrative organization made by Hopper (1979) gives a start in this direction for Russian. He divides text into foreground and background, which provides a natural fit for the binary division of Slavic aspect; perfective verbs are used in foregrounded clauses and imperfective in backgrounded clauses. However, the longest data sample he supplies for Russian is limited to a mere three clauses. Thus the paper works only to provide evidence for the foreground/background dichotomy.

When we examined longer texts in Russian and Polish, we noticed examples of clearly backgrounded clauses (often subordinated in some way) which contained perfective rather than the expected imperfective verbs. There were also cases of imperfective verbs in what appeared to be foregrounded clauses. Also, even without these apparent exceptions, while the binary division of labor fits most of the distribution of aspect for past time narratives (admittedly the most common type), it falls apart when narratives are told in present time. There is no way to match perfective with foreground and imperfective with background in present-time narratives.

3.   A Tripartite Model

Owing to the concerns with a binary description of narrative structure, we posit a tripartite model of aspect use in narrative which accounts for those obviously backgrounded events containing perfective verbs in past-time narrative and which also relates aspect and narrative function in both past- and present-time narrative. Table 2 shows the three narrative functions along with the unmarked finite verb forms associated with each function in the two narrative times.

(3)   Table 2: Unmarked T/A forms in narrative

Narrative Time	PLOT	Temporal Background (TB)	Pragmatic Description (PD)
Past	Past Perfective (pa prf)	Past Perfective (pa prf)	Past Imperfective (nonpa imprf)
Present	Non-past Imperfective (nonpa imprf)	Past Perfective (pa prf)	Non-past Imperfective (nonpa imprf)

The PLOT and Pragmatic Description (PD) functions parallel closely the foreground and background division seen in Hopper's model, but we have introduced a third function, Temporal Background (TB), which has the past perfective, though not signaling PLOT function.

In addition, some guidelines we establish in our description are summarized below (taken from Bogdan and Sullivan 2009):

a. Each clause in a narrative has a function which tells how that clause contributes to the narrative and how it should be understood in narrative context.
b. There are three narrative functions in Polish narratives: PLOT, pragmatic description (PD), and temporal background (TB).
c. Each narrative function in each narrative time is normally communicated by the T/A form on the finite verb(s) in the clause.
d. These T/A forms are the unmarked choices for the given clause function.
e. Any deviation from these T/A forms represents a marked use of tense or aspect.
f. Such marked usages are at the discretion of the author and are, therefore, unpredictable.

4.   Past-time Narrative

In the present study we expand the scope of application of the T A N (Tense-Aspect in Narrative) hypothesis in two ways. First, we include adjectival and adverbial participial phrases, showing that they contribute to narrative structure in ways compatible with our system. We also add analysis of a portion of play dialogue taken from Mrożek (1975), showing a complex narrative-within-narrative structure that parallels the oral narrative in Bogdan and Sullivan (2009).

4.1. A Plot Segment

In sections 4.1 and 4.2 we examine stretches of text excerpted from Herling-Grudziński's *Zapiski Sowieckie*, discussing the verb forms and the narrative functions they play in the text.

(4)   Od   chwili gdy   w   naszej celi **zjawił się**   maleńki,
from   moment when   in   our   cell appear **(PA PRF)** small

czarny "Jewriej"   z   Grodna   i   ***obwieściwszy***   nam,   że
dark   "Hebrew"   from   Grodno   and   having informed **(PRF)**   us   that

"Niemcy **wzięli**   Paryż",   **zapłakał**   gorzko,   **ustał**
Germans   tale **(PA PRF)** Paris   cry **(PA PRF)**   bitterly   cease **(PA PRF)**

na barłogach szept   patriotyczny   i   **skończyły się** rozmowy   polityczne.
on pallets   whispering patriotic   and end **(PA PRF)**   conversations   political

*'After a small dark "Hebrew" from Grodno **appeared** in our cell and, **having informed** us, "The Germans **have taken** Paris," **cried** bitterly, the patriotic whispers on the pallets **ceased** and political conversations **ended**.'*

The five verbs and one past participle in (4) are the verbal elements in the six clauses that make up a plot portion of the narrative. With the exception of *wzięli* 'have taken' in the quoted clause, the finite verbs represent events in the story that occur in the order given. Two verbs, *zjawił się* 'appeared' and *zapłakał* 'cried,' however, are coordinated with the i 'and' (in this case showing a sequence of two events) in the subordinate clause beginning with *od chwili gdy* 'from the moment when.' These TB verbs set the stage for the final two verbs, *ustał* 'ceased' and *skończyły się* 'ended,' which are the PLOT events here.

As mentioned above, *wzięli* 'have taken,' is in quoted text. The quoted material is rather clearly a TB clause; the Germans having taken Paris obviously occurred prior to the prisoner's appearance in the cell, although the clauses occur in reverse order. This shows the temporal displacement often seen with TB events. *Obwieściwszy* 'having informed,' a past active participle, is a TB verbal, preceding and subordinated to another TB verbal, *zapłakał* 'began crying.' Unlike many TB verbals, it is not out of temporal order, but Herling clearly thought it was not central to the plot line, possibly because it involves an event that happened off-stage. In previous work (Sullivan and Bogdan 2002, 2003), we dealt almost exclusively with finite verbs and infinitives, but participles and verbal nouns also show aspect and play a part in defining narrative structure.

(5)   Figure 1: Example of PLOT and TB interaction in past time narrative
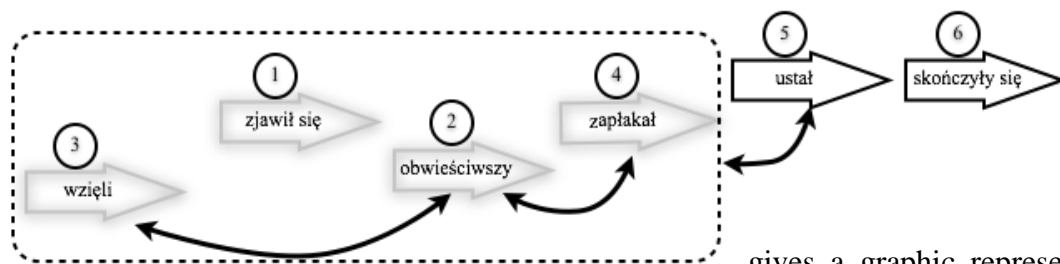

Figure 1   gives a graphic representa-

tion of the interplay between the events depicted in the narrative. The right-pointing arrows represent change-of-state events. The blurring of the first four events indicates that they are TB and not PLOT (or foregrounded) events. The numbers represent the order the verbals occur in the narrative, while the position on the left-right axis gives their (very) approximate sequencing along the storyline. The curved, double-sided arrows point to relatively direct relationships between events or groups of events. Finally, the positioning along the vertical axis vaguely represents subordination.

A two-dimensional representation can go only so far in showing the relationships. For example, the two PLOT verbs could possibly be (and probably are) simultaneous rather than sequential, as sometimes happens with the coordinating *and* in PLOT clauses. Events 1 and 4 in the TB section, on the other hand, almost certainly have to be sequential. The prisoner probably appeared in the cell before he started crying.

All five of the finite verbs are past perfectives, which is the unmarked T/A form for both PLOT and TB. The author makes the distinction between the two functions clear with devices such as subordination and quotation. This is quite a complex sentence and one more likely seen in written than oral material. This is to be expected since, for example, someone producing an oral narrative would have to indicate a direct quotation in some way other than quotation marks.

4.2.   A Descriptive Segment

The passage in (4) contains PLOT and TB, but no PD clauses. In (6), we can see some descriptive clauses coming into play.

(6)   a. W celi, do której **skierowano**   mnie po   **odczytaniu**   wyroku (pięć lat),
           in   cell to which taken **(PRF)**   me   after   reading **(PRF)**   sentence five   years

           w   bocznym skrzydle   więzienia witebskiego, **zetknąłem się**   po
           in   side   wing   prison   Vitebsk   come into contact **(PA PRF)**   for

           raz   pierwszy z   więźniami   rosyjskimi.
           time   first   with   prisoners   Russian.

           Na drewnianych pryczach **leżało**   kilkunastu   chłopców   w   wieku
           on   wooden   bunks   lie **(PA IMPRF)** several   boys   at   age

           od   lat   czternastu do szesnastu.
           from   years   fourteen   to   sixteen.

           [*A series of past imperfectives follow, forming a typical PD stretch.*]

       b. Our translation [DRB & WJS]:
           '*In the cell to which I **had been taken** after the **reading** of my sentence (of 5 years), in a side-wing of the Vibetsk Prison, I **came into contact** with Russian prisoners for the first time.On wooden bunks **were lying** a number of boys aged fourteen to sixteen.*'

       c. Joseph Marek's (1987) translation:
           '*After a sentence of five years' imprisonment **had been read out** to me, I **was taken** to a different cell, in the side-wing of the Vitebsk prison, to wait for my transport. There, for the first time I **came into contact** with Russian prisoners.*'

As mentioned earlier, in our description of narrative, we deal mainly with finite forms of the verbs; however, the passage in (6), provides two more examples of ACTS that are not represented by finite verbs, but which are still perfective and play a role in the narrative development. The general structure of the passage has one finite PLOT verb, *zetknąłem się* 'came into contact,' leading into an extended stretch of clauses describing the cells, all containing past imperfective PD verbs like *leżało* 'were lying.'

Prior to the PLOT clause, however, we see clauses with the non-finite verb forms *skierowano* and *odczytaniu*, which we translated as a pluperfect passive and a verbal noun in (6b). A translator can take a different track with regard to verbals, in some ways rewriting the story to suit their interpretation of the events. For example, when Joseph Marek (1987) translated the passage into English, as given in (6c), he reanalyzed both the past impersonal verb *skierowano* 'directed' and the verbal noun *odczytaniu* 'reading' as the passives 'was taken' and 'had been read.' These verbals, while not finite verbs, still show aspectual differentiation—they are both perfectives—and the translation of the latter into 'had been read' reflects this. The translator chose to use 'was taken' for *skierowano*, but 'had been taken' could just as easily have been used here, especially when taking into consideration the perfectivity of the verb stem. In any case, the subordination and temporal displacement of these verbals indicates a non-PLOT function. The perfectivity of the forms indicates a TB role here, and both Marek's and our translations reflect this.

(7) Figure 2: Example of PLOT, TD, and TB interaction in past time narrative
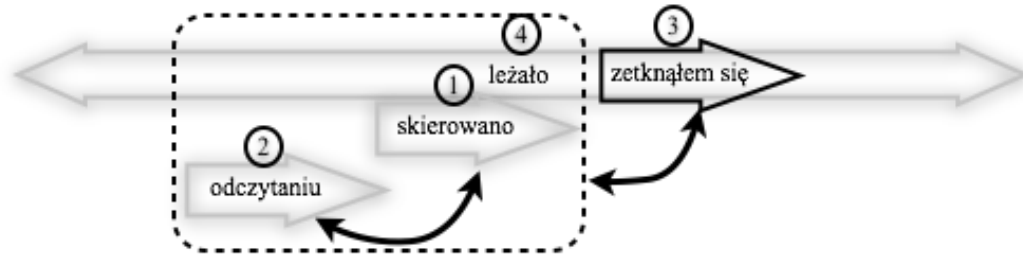
We see in Figure 2 how the PLOT and TB events and the states and activities interact in this narrative stretch. The introduction here of the two-headed arrow to represent the fourth verbal indicates the extension in time, or activity nature, of that clause. Again, the two-dimensionality makes it difficult to adequately represent simultaneity or overlap, but we have attempted to show how the activity represented in the TD clause (Number 4) could easily have extended backward in time to a point prior to all the events portrayed here. Most certainly it began before the PLOT event in Number 3, unless all the prisoners in the cell suddenly lay down the moment the door opened to admit the protagonist.

Also, note that, as with the earlier narrative stretch portrayed in Figure 1, the order of the verbals in the narrative does not have to correspond on a one-to-one basis with the sequence in which the events actually occurred in the story.

4.3.   Present in Past

The Herling-Grudziński story is told in past time, but in (8) and (9) we see a relatively long stretch consisting almost completely of non-past imperfectives, marking a departure from the typical past-time narrative. The author goes into a long description of the situation with juvenile delinquents in the Soviet Union.

(8)   Małoletni przestępcy   **są**   plagą więzień sowieckich   ale
         underage   criminals   be (**NONPA IMPRF**) plague prisons   Soviet   but
         nie **spotyka**   ich **się** prawie nigdy w obozach   pracy.
         NEG   meet (**NONPA IMPRF**) them REFL   almost never in camps   work
         *'Juvenile delinquents **are** the plague of Soviet prisons but they **are** almost never **seen** in work camps.'*

A series of non-past imperfectives follow (9), leading to the final sentence of the paragraph:

(9)   **Żyją**   z   kradzieży towarów
         they live (**NONPA IMPRF**) from   theft   goods
         ze   składów państwowych i   nierzadko **kradną**   z powrotem to,
         from stores   government   and often   steal (**NONPA IMPRF**) back   that
         co   przed chwilą **sprzedali**,   *szantażując*
         which before while   they sell (**PA PRF**) blackmailing (**IMPRF**)
         nieostrożnych nabywców   groźbą donosu.
         careless   purchasers threat informing
         *'They **live** off of stolen goods from government stores and often **steal** back that which they **had** just*
         ***sold**, **threatening** to inform on the purchasers.'*

With one exception, to which we return below, these are clearly PD clauses in the non-past imperfective, as are those of the other clauses in the segment.

One interesting exception to the non-past forms stands out in this portion of the story. The past perfective *sprzedali* 'had sold' shows a marked deviation from the other verbs. This is a clear case of a TB clause occurring in a present-time passage. Not only does the T/A form stand out, but the verb is subordinated to and temporally prior to the main verb in the clause, *kradną* 'they steal,' showing the non-iconic order mentioned above.

5.   Present-time Narrative

In (8) and (9), we saw a portion of non-past description (PD) in a past-time narrative. In (10) we turn to a discussion of a short excerpt from Edward Stachura's *Jasny pobyt nadrzeczny* 'A bright stay on the river,' a story told in present time. If you go back to Table 2, you will recall that, for a present-time narrative, the non-past imperfective is the unmarked T/A form for verbs both in PLOT and in PD, while the unmarked form for TB verbs remains the same as it was for TB in past-time narrative, the past perfective. An analysis of a longer passage can be seen in Bogdan and Sullivan (2009).

(10) a. **Posuwam się** wolno wśród krzaków i drzewek,
I advance (**NONPA IMPRF**) slowly among bushes and trees
bo **widzę** przez nie jakieś wielkie drzewa
because I see (**NONPA IMPRF**) through them some big trees
o sto metrów i szum wody **słyszę** rosnący.
about 100 meters and noise water I hear (**NONPA IMPRF**) growing
'I push my way slowly through bushes and saplings, because through them I see big trees of some sort a hundred meters off and I hear the growing sound of water.

b. To [jest] na pewno ta wielka siedziba z młynem.
this **[is (NONPA IMPRF)]** no doubt that large seat with mill
It is surely that large settlement with a mill.

c. Z prawej strony brzeg **podnosi się** w pochyłość, wysoką skarpę.
from right side bank rise (**NONPA IMPRF**) in slope high escarpment
'On the right side the bank slopes up to a high escarpment.'

d. **Idę** lewym brzegiem, ale **przejdę** na tamten,
I go (**NONPA IMPRF**) left bank but I cross (**NONPA PRF**) onto that
bo na moim **robi się** gęstwina niemożebna i
because on my become (**NONPA IMPRF**) thicket impossible and
nie chcę hałasować, **przedzierając się** przez nią.
NEG I want (**NONPA IMPRF**) make noise force through (**NONPA**) through it
'I am walking on the left bank, but I am about to cross over to the other bank, because on my side the thicket is becoming unbearable and I do not want to make a lot of noise by forcing my way through it.'

e. **Podwinąłem** jeszcze wyżej spodnie i **przechodzę**.
I roll up (**PA PRF**) still higher pants and I cross (**NONPA IMPRF**)
'I have rolled up my pants higher still and I cross.'

f. **Powinny** tu być raki.
should (**NONPA**) here be crawfish
'There should be crawfish here.'

g. Woda **podmyła** brzegi i korzenie drzew tuż przy brzegu
water wash away (**PA PRF**) banks and roots trees here at bank
rosnących **tworzą** bardzo dla raków odpowiednie nory.
growing create (**NONPA IMPRF**) very for crawfish suitable burrows
'The water has undercut the bank and the roots of the trees growing right on the bank make very suitable burrows for crawfish.'

The passage begins with a PLOT clause containing the non-past imperfective *posuwam się* 'I move forward,' wherein the protagonist is walking along a river bank. The other two verbs in (10a) are also non-past imperfectives, *widzę* 'see' and *słyszę* 'hear' in coordinate clauses, but we assign them to PD based on their state-like aktionsart and their two clauses being subordinated to the first one with *bo* 'because.' They could also have been given in reverse order without chang-

ing the scene described. They were probably given in this order to describe nearer scenes before more distant ones.

More description follows in (10b) and (10c). Strictly speaking, (10b) does not contain a verbal, but the introductory *to* can be used without the copula. The *podnosi się* 'rises' does not indicate any movement along the story line, but rather a description of the landscape the protagonist is proceeding through.

The first two verbs in (10d), *idę* 'I am walking' and *przejdę* 'I am about to cross,' are both verbs of motion, which would normally be unremarkable PLOT verbs, but, while the first occurs in the unmarked non-past imperfective, the second is a non-past perfective. It is perfectly reasonable to consider the former a run-of-the-mill PLOT verb, but the markedness of the latter needs to be considered. As it is talking about what the protagonist intends to do in the immediate future, it is both plot-like and description-like. The actual crossing of the river occurs later, in (10e), and is represented by the expected non-past imperfective *przechodzę* 'I cross.' There are also two PD clauses, *robi się* 'is becoming' and *nie chcę* 'I do not want,' in (10d). The first describes the surroundings and the second, the internal state of the protagonist. The clauses they are found in are also subordinated with the *bo* 'because.'

In the previous paragraph we already mention the *przechodzę* 'I cross' PLOT verb. Before this, however, we see a past perfective *podwinąłem* 'I have rolled up.' This is the first instance of TB seen here. The two acts are in sequence; however, the rolling up of the pants has been done in preparation of the crossing, making it peripheral. Stachura could have made both verbs part of the plot line by using the non-past imperfect for each as indicated below.

(10')   e.   **Podwijam**   jeszcze wyżej spodnie i   **przechodzę (nonpa imprf)**.
             I roll up **(NONPA IMPRF)**   still   higher   pants   and   I cross **(NONPA IMPRF)**
             'I roll up my pants higher still and I cross.'

Returning to the passage again, (10f) and (10g) fulfill the PD role in the discourse, but the first verb in (10f), *podmyła* 'has undercut,' is a past perfective, in this case a TB clause providing a resultant state in the general description. *Powinny* 'there should be,' in (10g) is a modal rather than a finite verb, but still describes the surroundings, or rather what the surroundings should be.

6.   Complex Uses of T/A Forms

In this section, we give a brief discussion of a different form of literature, a screenplay containing a fairly extensive portion which is almost completely narrative in structure. (11) lists some of the verbs appearing in *Emigranci* by Sławomir Mrożek. Along with the English gloss, the list indicates the T/A form for each verb. Also, indentation has been used to divide up the story into subsections; for example, the verbs at the first level of indentation represent the lead-in to the story followed by the five subsequential PLOT verbs that move the story forward.

(11) a. byłem 'I was' (pa imprf)
      b. wypiłem 'I drank' (pa prf)
      c.   telefonują ' people were calling' (nonpa imprf)
      d   nie telefonowałem 'I did not call' (past imprf)
      e.   myślę 'I am thinking/I think' (nonpa imprf)
      f   będę telefonował 'I am going to call' (future)
      g. postałem 'I stood' (pa prf)
      h.   kupują 'they are buying' (nonpa imprf)
      i.   czytają 'they are reading' (nonpa imprf)
      j.   nie czytałem 'I did not read' (past imprf)
      k.   myślę 'I am thinking/I think' (nonpa imprf)
      l.   będę czytał 'I am going to read' (future)
      m. postałem 'I stood for a short while' (pa prf)
      n.   [mówię 'I say/I said' (nonpa imprf)]
      o.   kupują 'they are buying' (nonpa imprf)
      p.   nie kupiłem 'I did not buy' (past imprf)
      q. postałem 'I stood' (pa prf)
      r.   myślę 'I am thinking/I think' (nonpa imprf)
      s.   pójdę 'I will go' (nonpa imprf)
      t.   [wpuszczają 'they let you in' (nonpa imprf)]
      u. poszedłem 'I went' (pa prf)

The portion in (11) begins fairly early in the play. One of two participants informs his interlocutor that he had been at the train station earlier that day using the past tense *byłem* 'I was' in (11a). The verbs in (11b) *wypiłem* 'I drank", (11g) *postałem* 'I stood,' (11m) *postałem* 'I stood,' (11q) *postałem* 'I stood,' and (11u) *poszedłem* 'I went,' all at the first level of indentation, are all past perfectives indicating acts performed by the narrator as the story progresses. They are all sequential PLOT verbs. The protagonist has a drink, stands for awhile in three different places in the station, and then finally walks out onto the platform.

The indentation pattern suggests a certain pattern among the PLOT clauses. The first three of these PLOT clauses are followed directly by a clause or clauses with non-past imperfective verbs. These, (11c), (11h), (11i), and (11o), form description (PD) about what the people around the protagonist are doing along each step of the plotline. Note that a call for backchanneling (11n), marked by square brackets, does come between (11m) and (11o). The narrator wants to make sure his flat mate is listening to him. Remember that this is a play.

Each of these three brief descriptions of what is going on around the protagonist is followed by a verb in a negative clause—(11d), (11j), and (11p)—which represents an action that the narrator did not take, i.e., that he did not take part in what those around him were doing. The first two are past imperfectives; the imperfective being the aspect often found with the negative. It appears, however, that the event-like nature (aktionsart) of *kupić* 'to buy' influences the choice of the perfective in the third negative clause, (11p) *nie kupiłem* 'I did not buy.' In any case, however,

the past tense distinguishes them from the non-past clause(s) about other people which directly precede them. They are, on the other hand, not moving the plot forward and are included with the description about others that precedes them.

So far, all of the clauses about the narrator's ACTs, both those completed and those not taken, have been in the past tense, the unmarked tense for past-time narrative. There are, however, other clauses about the narrator, which are in the non-past or even the periphrastic future.

The non-past imperfective first person singular *myślę* 'I am thinking/I think,' occurs three times, in (11e), (11k) and (11r). Each instance leads into descriptions of the narrator's internal state of mind, followed by a subordinated clause representing either a rhetorical question in the periphrastic future, in (11f) and (11l), or, in the case of (11s), a decision to act, found in the non-past perfective.

The use of the non-past (and future) in this passage leads to some interesting conjecture. Using it for backchanneling or generalizations, as in (11n) and (11t), or in subordinated clauses is nothing unusual. On the other hand, having it—in (11c), (11h), (11i), and (11o)—represent ACTs by participants other than the narrator, in some respects, resembles the way T/A forms are used in Japanese to indicate speaker's perspective (Iwasaki 1985), but analysis of more text is needed to determine whether something like this is actually occurring in Polish. Also, we find interesting Mrożek's use of tense here to distinguish between the narrator's acts and internal states. In any case, tense here is being used in a rather unusual way, perhaps something seen more in screenplay than in other forms of discourse.

Another thing to keep in mind is the interplay between lexical aspect (aktionsart) and aspect use in a narrative context. A few paragraphs earlier, we discussed how the event-like nature of *kupić* 'to buy' could possibly be overriding the normally expected imperfective in the negative clause (11p). We see the reverse situation with the three instances of *postałem* 'I stood for a short while' in (11g), (11m), and (11q). The verb *stać* 'to stand' has a stative nature and often occurs in the imperfective. In this case, however, the clauses it is found in are PLOT clauses, and narrative function overrides aktionsart. Narrative structure still plays a role, even in complex uses of T/A forms such as what Mrożek has shown us here.

7. Final Remarks

Below are some general statements derived from our model (taken from Bogdan and Sullivan 2009).

a. TB clauses have past perfective verbs.
b. PD clauses have imperfective verbs.
c. Clauses in past-time narratives have past tense verbs.
d. Clauses in present-time narratives have non-past tense verbs.
e. Verbs in plot clauses differ maximally (i.e. in both tense and aspect) between past- and present-time narratives.

The use of the terms "verb(s)" and "clause(s)" reflects that fact that previous models relating T/A forms and narrative function have concentrated on finite verbs. In our analyses above, we have

shown that T/A forms can be expanded to other forms of verbals and that phrases such as participial phrases also play a role in narrative structure.

It must be remembered that the statements above are guidelines and not rules written in stone, intended rather to give a non-native speaker of Polish some principles and advice to use when making or trying to figure out aspect choice. Normally the narrative function performed by a clause or phrase a verbal is in will determine the T/A choice, but, as we have seen, there are semantic (communicative) considerations that can override the choice. In general, however, PLOT, PD, and TB portions of a narrative are easy to determine.

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