

The notion of aspect is viewed differently in English and in Czech. In Czech, aspect is an obligatory lexical-grammatical category that refers to the wholeness and completion of the action expressed by the verb. Moreover, this category interferes with the category of tense and restrains some of its usages. On the other hand, in English the category of aspect is rather dubious, and there is not even general agreement on whether it exists in the language. The opinions range from the denial of its existence to ones in which the progressive and the perfect are considered aspectual categories.

A notion inseparable from the aspect is the Aktionsart that expresses more subtle modifications of the action. The Aktionsart represents a broader concept of aspectuality. In Czech, there is an aspectual pair of two verbs that differ only in the opposition of imperfectivity and perfectivity. The pair can be a basis for a group of semantically related verbs that differ in the Aktionsart, i.e. in some modification of action. However, the verbs from the group still express the basic aspectual distinction and are parts of other aspect pairs. Due to the inflectional nature of the language, Czech verbs are modified mainly by affixation to express different states of the action.

English being an analytic language, the English verb expresses modifications of the action mainly by other means than affixation. One of these means is a choice from the tense system. Other possibilities to modify the action are mainly syntactic: modification of the predicate by phasal verbs or adverbials/adverbial particles.

The aim of the present paper is to describe the English counterparts of the Czech aspectual pairs and groups with respect to the concept of Aktionsart. The description will be based on the material obtained from the parallel Czech-English corpus, selected on the basis of Czech verb forms.