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The paper deals with the specific features of the tense-aspect system in Ossetian (the data of Kudar patois, Iron dialect is used). Ossetian is one of the very few languages (together with Slavic and Samoyedic) that have a derivational category of aspect. Perfective verbs are opposed to the imperfective ones. Perfective verbs are derived from imperfective verbs by means of preverbs *a-*, *aer-*, *aerba-*, *ba-*, *ny-*, *ra-*, *s-*.

There are three tense grams in Ossetian: Present, Future and Past; imperfective (unprefixed) and perfective (prefixed) verbs have different aspectual interpretations in each of them. Past and Future forms of prefixed verbs have perfective or habitual interpretation and cannot have progressive interpretation. Present forms of prefixed verbs have only one, habitual, interpretation. All tense-forms of unprefixed verbs have both progressive and habitual interpretations. A perfective interpretation of Past and Future forms is impossible for these verbs.

There are some formal tests that reveal the difference between imperfective and perfective verbs. For example, a classical Vendlerian test of combining a verbal phrase with 'for time X' and 'in time X' circumstances has been used. Perfective verbs can be accompanied with 'in time X' and cannot be accompanied with 'for time X' and, vice versa, imperfective verbs can be accompanied with 'for time X' and cannot be accompanied with 'in time X'. Also, only imperfective verbs can be combined with the phasal verbs 'begin' and 'finish'.

Verbs of motion are an interesting exception of this system: prefixed verbs of motion have unusual aspectual behaviour. The main meaning of preverbs combined with these verbal stems is spatial. In Present forms prefixed verbs of motion can have a progressive interpretation (the other prefixed verbs cannot have it). In Past and Future forms prefixed verbs of motion, nevertheless, have a perfective interpretation and not progressive. Only the forms with a special imperfective derivational affix *-caej-* can have a progressive interpretation in these tenses. This affix can also be used in Past and Future forms of some other prefixed verbs, but in this case *-caej-* forms have just conative interpretation, not neutral imperfective one.

The unusual aspectual behaviour of verbs of motion will be mainly discussed in the paper.