

Q. I am interested in your opinion—should examples such as the following be taken to indicate that *сходить* does not ASSERT the subsequent return?

Экзаменатор **сходил** в приёмную комиссию, **вернулся** и сказал, что ему разрешили дать мне ещё задачи.

A. Lenore Grenoble, in her 1986 dissertation “A Contrastive Analysis of Verbs of Motion of Russian and Polish,” devoted many pages to the prefix C-. I mostly agree with her, except I believe that s-perfective (Grenoble’s term), verbs like *сходить*, *съездить* etc., is the real pair for one of the meanings of non-unidirectional VOM (she claims that it is “procedural or Aktionsart or способ действия”, p. 95). Different meanings have different pairs, and they should not be conflated.

Let us examine the four main meanings of non-unidirectional VOMs and their counterparts:

Я вчера ходила в обувную мастерскую. — Вчера я **сходила** в обувную мастерскую, поставила набойки. (single round-trip) — Yesterday I went to the cobbler shop / Yesterday I went to the cobbler shop and got the heels fixed.

Я полгода ходила на курсы немецкого языка. — Я полгода **походила** на курсы немецкого, потом бросила. (multiple round-trips) — I went to the German courses for six months. / I went to the German courses for six months and then quit.

На работу я ходила по улице Строителей, а возвращалась по проспекту Стачек. — ??? (repetitive in one direction) — I used to go to work by Builders’ street and return by Strike Ave.

Вчера я ходила по парку. Он ходил под ее окнами. — Вчера я **походила** по парку и пошла домой. Он **походил** под ее окнами, но не зашел. (non-directed motion) — Yesterday I

walked around the park. He walked under her windows. / Yesterday I walked a bit around the park and went home. He walked under her windows, but did not go in.

As we can see, s-perfective is appropriate only for a single round trip action. The fact that it can serve only one of the meanings should not prevent it from being a perfective counterpart.

Grenoble (p. 101) maintains that s-perfective makes two assertions: 1) make it “to GOAL and return to START; and 2) complete this trip within a short period of time”. The first point should be modified both from the point of view of semantics, and from the point of view of narration and cohesion: one has to keep track of the location of the Figure (the person who is moving) at various points of the narration. The return to the start is by default, not as a necessary part of the definition. This is true of imperfective non-unidirectional verbs as well (as noted by N. Bernitskaïa). We can imagine a dialogue of two people meeting at a clinic:

— Что ты здесь делаешь? — What are you doing here?

— Ходила к врачу. — I went to the doctor.

The second speaker hasn't returned to the starting point yet. But of course from an educational point of view as well as statistically, *ходил(а) к врачу* is most likely a round trip. The same is true for s-perfectives. Lenore's second point is more important. Consequently, I would paraphrase her definition: **completing** the trip in the short amount of time and **departing** from the goal.

Let us take a look at some examples:

На радостях выпили они с Верой бутылку "Крымской ночи", наговорились всласть, **сходили** погулять по улице Ленина, обсуждая во время прогулки новые моды, **навелись** в театр и, **вернувшись** домой, завалились спать. [Вячеслав Пьецух. Шкаф (1997)] — To

celebrate he and Vera drank a bottle of “Crimean Night”, talked to their heart’s content, went for a walk on Lenin street, discussing during the walk the new fashion, stopped by the theater and upon returning home went to sleep.

After they went-s-pf for a walk, they did not return home but went to the theater, therefore the return should be specified. Or for example:

Кстати, знаешь, он за бугор **съездил**^p, пожил^p там и **вернулся**^p, тошно, говорит.
[Марина Полетика. Однажды была осень (2012)] (за бугор means ‘abroad’) — By the way, do you know, he went abroad, lived there for a while and returned, he said it’s nauseating.

So **съездил** specifies his accomplishing the trip abroad, and **пожил** means that he lived there for some time. Narratively speaking, we know both actions are over, but we do not know where the protagonist (Figure) is located until there is the statement **вернулся**; now we know he is back.

There are other examples that only specify the perfective quality of s-perfective without bringing the Figure back to the starting point:

После обеда сыграли в кинг. Часов в 17.30 поднялась стрельба из пулеметов и АГС. Посвистела мина, взорвалась где-то неподалеку. **Сходил** к дежурному, узнал, что фильма сегодня не будет. **Пошел** на виллу, когда зашел, стрельба возобновилась. Грохнуло пару взрывов. **Зашли** в коридорчик. [Г. А. Киреев. Дневник (1985)] — After dinner we played the card game “King”. Around 17:30 artillery and AGS firing started. A mine whistle and blew up not far away. I went to the officer on duty, found out that there would not be a film tonight. I went to the villa, when I got inside the firing started again. There were a couple of loud explosions. We went into a small corridor.

Полагался ему отгул. Я дал. Я к рабочему человеку справедливо отношусь. **Обошел** я все пивные, магазины, на пристань **сбегал**, в ресторан даже **пролез** — нигде Вальки не было, а стало уже смеркаться. В сумерках я снова **подошел** к клубу. Церковь белела на темном небе, над входом надпись зажглась из электрических лампочек, а на ступеньках чернела толпа ребят, только огоньки папирос мерцали. Я **подошел** к ребятам и затесался в их толпу. [Василий Аксенов. Пора, мой друг, пора (1963)] — He earned a comp day, I gave it to him. I am fair towards working people. I went around to all the beer bars, groceries, went to the dock, even managed to get to the restaurant, Valka was nowhere to be seen, yet it started to get dark. At dusk I went to the club again. The church was like a white spot on the dark sky, over the entrance the sign made out of electric lamps lit up, and on the steps one could only see a dark crowd of guys, only the tips of their cigarettes flickered.

В начале марта он [Арафат] отправился по миру. Он побывал в США, в странах Евросоюза, совершил поездку в Египет. Через Турцию отправился в Россию, а оттуда — во Вьетнам, Индию, Японию. **Слетал** в Судан, потом к Нельсону Манделе в ЮАР и снова **вернулся** в Азию, где посетил Китай и Казахстан. За 45 дней Арафат **облетел** 50 государств. [Вячеслав Белаш. Организатор освобождения Палестины // «Коммерсантъ-Власть», 1999] — In the beginning of March, he [Arafat] set out around the world. He visited the US, the European Union countries, traveled to Egypt. He went to Russia via Turkey, and from there to Vietnam, India, and Japan. He flew to Sudan, then to Nelson Mandela in the South African Republic and again returned to Asia, where he visited China and Kazakhstan. In 45 days he flew to 50 countries.

Now let us take a look at the example in the question:

Экзаменатор **сходил** в приёмную комиссию, **вернулся** и сказал, что ему разрешили дать мне ещё задачи.

Without **вернулся** the sentence is ambiguous: did he tell the commission that he is allowed to give more problems to solve, or did he repeat what the commission told him upon returning from the commission? Both are possible and we would have to guess based on the context.

Compare the next two examples:

Петя **сходил** до нас на разведку, **сказал**, что все нормально. [А. В. Нор. Дневники спелеоподводника (1990)] — Petya went on a reconnaissance trip before us, and said that everything is normal.

In this case, Petya first returned from his reconnaissance and then said that everything is normal.

Писцов **сходил** к директору **сказал**, что ученики собрались, а учителей нет ни одного инспектор тоже не будет, директор выдал такой приказ «А велеть им собраться завтра в девять часов, а я не стану экзаменовать их без математиков». [К. А. Березкин. Дневник (1949)] — Pistsov went to the director and said that the pupils have gathered, yet there is not a single teacher, the inspector will not come either, and the director gave the following order: “Order them to gather tomorrow at 9 o’clock, I won’t start examination without the mathematicians.”

Unlike the previous example, Pistsov told the director at the destination that there are no teachers, then presumably left or returned.

Sometimes another dative noun or pronoun or an adverb of place is added to disambiguate two readings:

Николай **сходил** на собрание и **сказал** поучение **там**. [архиепископ Николай Японский (Касаткин). Дневник (1911)] — Nikolai went to a meeting and gave a sermon there.

So, a little redundancy is only beneficial.

One more point on s-perfectives. Grenoble (p. 103) examines an example with **сходили** and its paraphrase with **ходили**:

Мы **сходили** в магазин и вернулись с костюмом, а Левка лежал и молчал. (Алексеев. Люди Флинта) — We went to the store and came back with a suit, and Levka was lying [there] and keeping silent.

Her claim is that had it been Мы **ходили** в магазин и вернулись с костюмом, there would have been a “semantic difference” (not quite true) and it would have “denote[d] a longer trip” (not true). In fact, the difference is pragmatic, and it lies in the **intent** and **expectation**: the s-perfective indicates a targeted visit to the store and an expectation on the part of the interlocutor or the reader about the trip to the store and the purchase. And indeed, the wider context confirms this. The previous chapter ends with a long dialogue where the 1st person narrator refuses the money:

— Ну, счастье твое, — сказал мне Петрович. — Расписывайся давай...

— Не возьму я этих денег, — угрюмо сказал я.

...

— Возьмет, — уверенно сказал Крис, встал и подошел ко мне. — Он у нас дитя смышленное, считать умеет. Сорок плюс двадцать — уже шестьдесят. Да плюс двадцать Левкиных — восемьдесят. **А ты без костюма ходишь**, сообразил?

— Не возьму... — нерешительно повторил я.

— Смотри-ка, еще уговариваем болвана! — Крис вложил в мою руку авторучку. — **А я здесь такие костюмчики видел, каких в Москве и в помине нет.** «Модекс» с коричневым отливом. Прелестная вещичка...

Я подписал — и презирал себя целый вечер.

“Well, you’re in luck,” Petrovich told me. “Come on, sign...”

“I won’t take this money,” I said glumly.

...

“He will take it,” Kris said firmly, got up and walked up to me. “He is a smart kid, he can count. Forty plus twenty is already sixty. And plus twenty of Levka’s is eighty. And you are walking around without a suit, got it?”

“I won’t take...” I repeated indecisively.

“Look at him, we have to talk this dummy into it!” Kris put a pen in my hand. “And I saw such suits here the likes of which you cannot find in Moscow. “Modex” with a brown sheen. A charming piece...”

I signed, and despised myself the whole evening.’

As we see, the narrator did eventually take the money, and in the next chapter he went and bought the suit. But this trip to buy the suit was probably not shorter than a trip to the store to buy beets for a traditional herring dish with beets in the next example:

Я с тоской подумал, что Светлана сейчас делает селедку под шубой... Стоп. А ведь и впрямь делает, утром **ходила в магазин** за свеклой. [Сергей Лукьяненко. Новогодний Дозор (2014)] — I was thinking longingly that Svetlana is now preparing dressed herring... Wait. She is indeed making it, in the morning she went to the store to get beets.

However, the statement about the trip to the store to buy a suit exhibited a pragmatic contract, as I call it; the protagonist was expected to go buy a suit and he did just that (similarly to students who do their assignments — прочитали текст, написали сочинение), while the statement about the beets did not. There was no prior expectation that Svetlana would go to the store to buy beets.

Bernitskaïa, Natalia. “Винни Пух ходил в гости к Пятачку. Вернулся ли он домой? Problème de l’aller-retour”, in V. Beliakov et Ch. Bracquenier (dir.), *Contribution aux études morphologiques, syntaxiques et sémantiques en russe*, Presses Universitaires du Midi, 2017, p. 43-56.

Israeli, Alina. “Discourse analysis of Russian aspect: accent on creativity.” *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 4 (1), 1996: 8-49.

Easy blunder corner.

ПОКА and the problems it causes.

Part III

Unfortunately, Part I and Part II did not exhaust Offord’s mistakes.

Elsewhere (*Modern Russian*, Bristol Classical Press 1993) Offord makes another mistake: “The conjunction пока is always followed by an imperfective verb, пока не, on the other hand, must be followed by a perfective.” (399) Thus, he creates a false dichotomy: пока + imperfective vs. пока не + perfective. It seems to me to be an attempt (very common in the past) to make Russian grammar fit English patterns.

His examples are:

(3) Пока он читал¹ газету, мы слушали¹ радио. (400)

(4) Мы сидели¹ у него долго, пока не принесли^Р протоколы наших допросов. (400)

But one can also say:

«Если ждать от мужчины, **пока он прочтет^Р** в ресторане меню от корки до корки, можно состариться и помереть с голоду». [Иржи Грошек. Легкий завтрак в тени некрополя (1998)]

Offord's example (4) can be easily changed to make it a repetitive action, similar to the following example:

В долгие тюремные сумерки, **пока не приносили¹** лампы, мое воображение неумоимо работало. [В. М. Чернов. Перед бурей. Воспоминания (1953)]

There is a fairly common type of <пока + perfective>, let us call it “by the time the result of V^Р is achieved”, where the other clause emphasizes how much time or effort it took to achieve the perf. result expressed by V^Р:

Денег не хватило. Карточки не принимают. Полгорода обегал, **пока нашел^Р** исправный банкомат. Вернулся, а жена уже официанта полюбила. Крепко. [В. Я. Тучков. Русский холод. Надуманное // «Волга», 2016]

Знаешь, **сколько** я на это **времени убил^Р, пока понял^Р**? Пять лет. [Сергей Эйгенсон. Дима и Василий Алексеевич // Интернет-альманах «Лебедь», 2003.07.07]

Or something unexpected happened on the way to the result:

Вот даже сейчас, всего полчаса тому назад, когда писал этот текст, прошелся по комнате — мелькнула фраза, а **пока дошел^Р до стола — потерял^Р**. [Виктор Розов. Удивление перед жизнью (1960-2000)]

Метров 200 я прошел^р по ложной петле, пока разобрался^р что к чему. Здорово запутал меня заяц. [Александр Галанин. Дневники и размышления о прожитом. Дневник 1 (1962-1963)]

Also, Offord should have added that *пока не* has to mean ‘until’, because it may also mean ‘not yet, no result for now’: Пока не звонил^і, пока не знаю^і.

Offord is not alone; Prof. Beard’s “Interactive grammar” (<https://www.alphadictionary.com/rusgrammar/poka.html>) has a number of instructive mistakes:

Митя спокойно спал, [*] **пока** профессор **не прочитал^р** лекцию. — Mitya slept peacefully until the professor finished lecturing.

This implies that Mitya waited for the professor to finish his lecture in order to wake up. But this is not the only problem with this sentence: прочитал, прочитал лекцию, and профессор are also problematic. Let us compare with a correct sentence:

Посетители выставки не отпускали его [Маяковского], **пока он не прочитал^р** им несколько своих произведений. [В. В. Полонская. Последний год (1938)]

In this sentence the visitors held him **until** he had read several poems. When/as soon as he had read the poems, they let him go. This is not the case with the professor deliberately (not forcibly) giving a lecture which is a precondition of his departure. (There could have been a case when a famous visitor is prevented from leaving until he gives a talk. But this is not what Prof. Beard meant in this example.)

Another reason why прочитать *лекцию* by a professor for whom it is a regular academic activity is problematic is because the lecture begins and ends at a set time; typically, the lecture does not end at a random time when the lecturer finishes the topic, as might be with a guest

lecture. So прочитать лекцию does not have a logical end (except with some very skillful lecturers); usually it ends when the clock runs out. So, if one waits for the end of the lecture he/she is waiting for a certain moment, not the end of the event per se. Compare it with the following example where *reading* comes to its natural end:

Я села в старое кресло и не встала, **пока не дочитала**^P до конца. [Н. Л. Трауберг. Сама жизнь (2008)]

Prof. Beard's most egregious mistake appears in exercise #5 on that same page: He tags the correct sentence *Давай подождём, пока магазин откроется.* as incorrect. This is due to the assumption that *ждать* acts like any other verb in this context, which is not the case. Verbs of waiting and expectation usually do not require the particle НЕ (see exceptions below):

Встал на асфальт, **жду, пока** он спустится по другому тросу. [Аркадий Стругацкий, Борис Стругацкий. Пикник на обочине (1971)]

...Мы с Мишей не согласились **дождаться, пока** вода в бассейне согреется. [Евгения Ярцева. Справедливая примета // Журнал «Кукумбер», 2008]

Note: *Ждать, пока не* is possible, but it usually means 'wait [for an unnamed A] until B [did something]', as in the next example; he was waiting for the door to open until he heard the old woman's hoarse voice:

Поднялся на второй этаж, там одна дверь, надавил на звонок и **ждал, пока не** послышался старческий женский хрип: [Анатолий Салуцкий. Немой набат // «Москва», 2019]

In the case of baking, the reasoning is slightly more complicated:

Перемешайте всё и поставьте в тепло. **Ждите, пока** опара **не** увеличится вдвое. Затем добавьте 50 г сливочного масла, размягчённого в тепле или микроволновке, но не расплавленного, и 50 г сметаны. [Е. Клещенко. Пирожки // «Кот Шрёдингера», 2017]

The goal is not doubling of the size; unlike an open store or water in the pool getting warm, doubling in size is the benchmark moment when you can start adding ingredients to the dough.

(To be continued)