



The interpretation of the event and verbal morphology. The example of Bulgarian language and the evidential paradigms.

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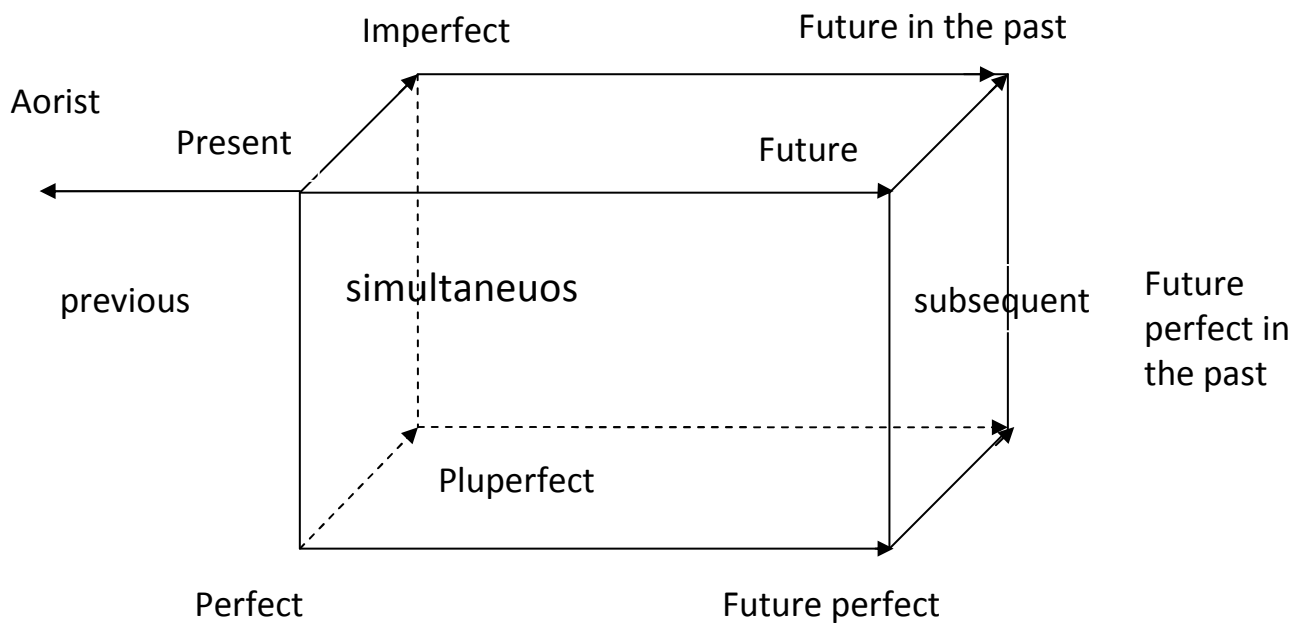
Aim: The poster wants to describe how verbal morphology is deeply related to the mental operations the manner in which the native speaker applies on the event, and how the distinctive signs are not only temporal (time axis) but also connected with the speaker's interpretation.

Subject: evidential paradigms in Bulgarian language.

Research Methods: theoretical description and analysis of situational practical uses (native and non-native speakers).



Bulgarian verbal system (Gerdžikov's view)



Bulgarian language has developed an evidential system based on four members (Indicative, Reportative, Dubious and Conclusive) through which cognitive states of the speaker are grammaticalized (Nicolova 2008). Evidential forms are derived from the respective tenses in Indicative mood: for past tenses the *-l perfect* is added together with auxiliary verb 'to be' (Gerdžikov 1984: 237). The most frequent uses of these forms are in past tenses in the third person.



For example: čete – čel e; četeše – četjal e; beše čel – bil e čel; šteše da čete – štjal e da čete; šteše da e čel – štjal e da e čel.

One of the most widely used evidential forms is the Conclusive Aorist, this is due to his narrative function:

az sām nosil, -a, -o	nie sme nosili
ti si nosil, -a, -o	vie ste nosili
toj e nosil	te sa nosili
tja e nosila	
to e nosilo	

The conclusive, also defined as presumptive modality, is used to transfer non-witnessed (non-confirmative) information, presupposition or information obtained from third person.

Here are some typical uses of conclusive forms in situational contexts:

(1)

"You've arranged your room very well, but when you return, you see that your things are not in the right places. What do you think? "

„Някой е влизал (e vlizal); Брат ми се е върнал (se e vǎrнал) и ми е пипал (e pipal) нещата; Съквартирантът ми се е прибрал (se e



pribral) от лекции, търсил е (tärsil e) явно нещо и е разхвърлял (e razhvǎrljal) нещата ми.”

“Someone came in; my brother was back and touched my things, my roommate came home from lectures, obviously it was looking for something and he spread out my stuff everywhere.”

(Aleksova 2003: 63)

(2)

„В чекмеджето на масата има няколко тубички с лекарства. Но памук не видях никъде.

Значи той го е носел (e nosel) със себе си.”

“There are several tubes with medicines in the table drawer. But I didn’t see the cotton anywhere. So he had carried it with himself.”

(Nicolova 2008: 355).

It is clear from the examples quoted above, that speakers are giving personal assumption about the event.

Other typical uses of Conclusive forms are (examples with glosses):

(3)

Явно	съм	си	изгуби-л-∅	ключ-ове-те.
javno	AUX.PRS.1sg	REFL	verb-AOR.CONL.sg-m	ključ-pl.m-DET.pl



Obviously, I lost my keys.

(Aleksova 2003)

(4)

Изглежда, че е пристигна-л-а.

verb-PRS.3sg CONJ AUX.PRS.3sg verb-AOR.CONCL.sg-f

It seems the she's arrived.

Видя-х ѝ палто-то на закачалка-та.

verb-AOR.1sg CL.f.sg.IO palto-DET.n.sg PREP zakačalka-DET.f.sg

I saw her coat on hanger.

(Aleksova 2003)

(5)

Личи, че си е взе-л-∅ изпита - цялата

къща е разхвърляна.

verb.PRS.3sg CONJREFL AUX.PRS.3sg verb-AOR.CONCL.sg-m [...]

Clearly, he passed the exam, the house is a chaos.

Сигурно е има-л-о много гост-и.

ADV AUX.PRS.3sg verb-AOR.CONCL.sg-n ADJ gost-pl

Surely there were many guests.

(Aleksova 2003)



But it's also possible to find forms in the first person singular, when the speaker wants to emphasize a physical, but unconscious, participation in the event.

(6)

„Мълчах (...), но по някое време вероятно **съм заспал** и без малко **съм щял да падна**, ако майка ми не се бе присегнала да ме задържи”.

(Nicolova 2008: 355)

“I was silent (...), but suddenly I probably fell asleep and I would have fallen if my mother hadn't reached out her hand to keep me.”

We can identify some typical markers for this kind of construction: *znači, sledovatelno, verojatno, može bi, edva, bez sãmnenie*, etc. (it means, therefore, probably, maybe, certainly, etc.)

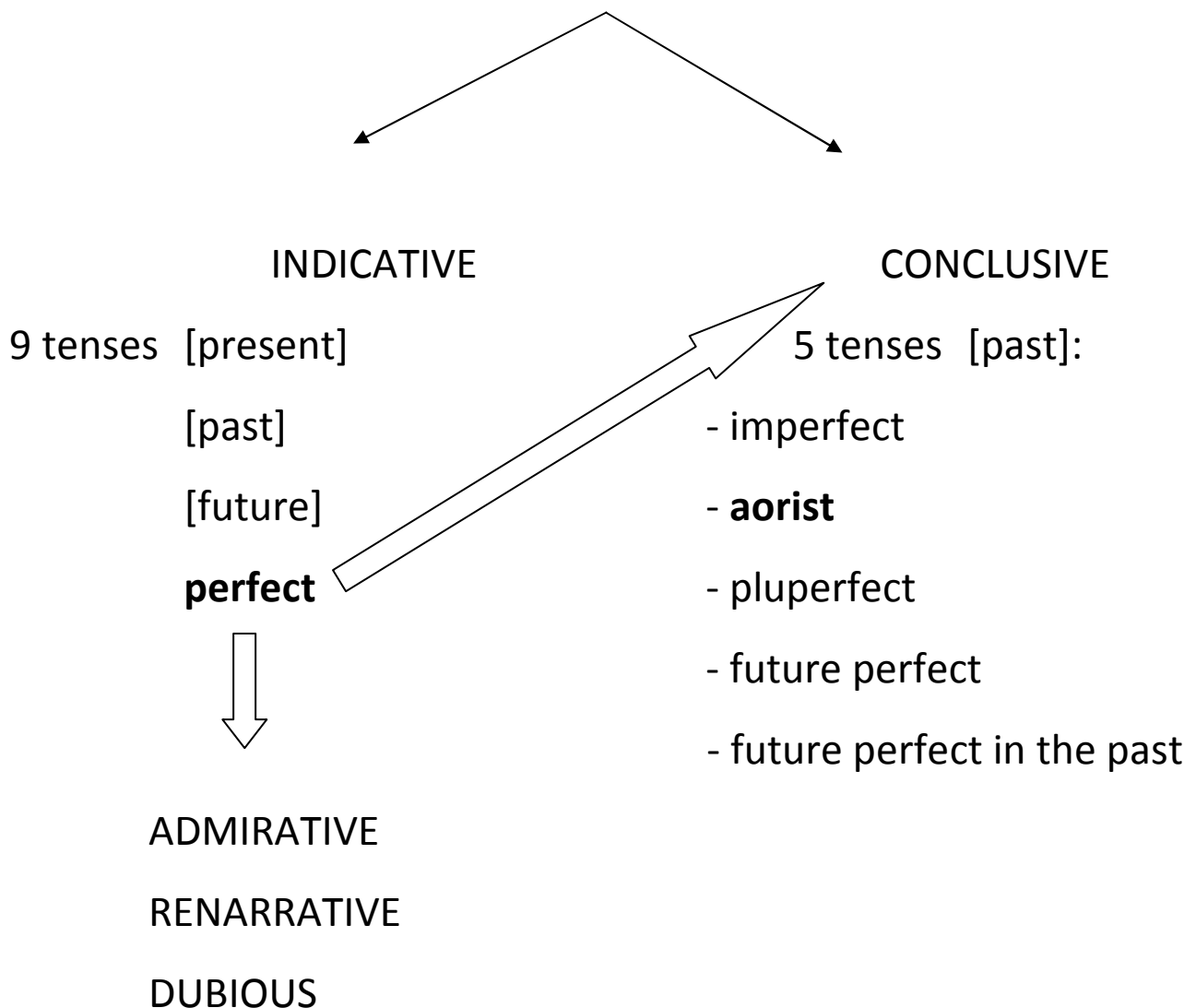
It is possible to classify evidential forms also by semantic signs (semantic oppositions).

- subjective information (Indicative, Conclusive): someone's information (Renarrative, Conclusive)
- information from personal experience : information from universal experience



- direct information (Indicative) : procured information (Conclusive, Renarrative, Dubious)
- way of obtaining information (Nicolova 2008: 334)

HYPERMOOD ACTUAL SPEECH REALIS I (Nicolova)





From the table below we can understand that, Indicative Perfect was the basis for the formation of Evidential paradigms in Bulgarian language. The evidential forms have evolved from non-witnessed use of indicative perfect with an enlargement of semantic signs which are typical for perfect. In Indicative mood the speaker always shows a direct awareness of the information through personal evidence or universal experience and makes an assumption.

These assumptions are valid for indicative past-oriented tenses (speaker's personal experience or universal experience for historical context), for present-oriented tenses (they can have a sign [+ witness] or [- witness]), future-oriented tenses (implementation of action was sure) (Nicolova 2008: 351-352).

So in Bulgarian, moods and verbal morphology are not only time-oriented but, we would say, they share information with the event and the subject's interpretation.

Subjectivity is the distinctive sign that belongs to all forms of Conclusive. When the speaker conveys the information he generates a conclusion, a presupposition, a conjecture, an assumption accepted by all, etc. through both direct or indirect evidence (respectively marked [+subjectivity] [+witness], [+subjectivity] [-witness]).

It would appear that the evidential forms are not directly related to the veracity of the statement but rather to the source of information. The meaning of conclusive forms is not only identified by the subjective



presupposition, but it also depends on the relationship between the subject and the information concerned to the event which is formulated as well by the point of view on the situation and the source of information.

PARADIGM'S STRUCTURE (1,2,3 sg.) vs. PRACTICAL USES

TENSE	INDICATIVE	CONCLUSIVE	REPORTATIVE	DUBIOUS
Present	četa, četeš, čete	četjal sām,	četjal sǎ,,	bil sām četjal,
Imperfect	četjah, četeš, četeše	četjal si, četjal e	četjal si, četjal	bil si četjal, bil četjal
Aorist	četoh, čete, čete	čel sām, čel si, čel e	čel sām, čel si, čel	bil sām čel, bil si čel, bil čel
Perfect	čel sām, čel si, čel e	bil sām čel, bil si čel, bil e čel	bil sām čel, bil si čel, bil čel	NOT PRESENT (because of <i>bil</i> form in the Reportative mood)
Plusquamperfect	bjah čel, beše čel, beše čel			
Future	šte četa, šte četeš, šte čete	štjal sām da četa, štjal si da četeš,	štjal sām da četa, štjal si da četeš,	štjal sām bil da četa, štjal si bil da četeš, štjal bil da čete
Future in the past	štjah da četa, šteše da četeš, šteše da čete	štjal e da čete njamalo e da četa	štjal da čete njamalo da četa,	njamalo bilo da četa



		njamalo e da četeš njamalo e da čete	njamalo da četeš njamalo da čete	njamalo bilo da četeš njamalo bilo da čete
Future perfect	šte sām/bāda čel, šte si/bādeš čel, šte e/bāde čel	štjal sām da sām/bāda čel, štjal si da si/bādeš čel,	štjal sām da sām/bāda čel, štjal si da si/bādeš čel,	štjal sām bil da sām čel štjal si bil da si čel
Future perfect in the past	štjah da sām/bāda čel, šteše da si/bādeš čel, šteše da e/bāde čel	štjal e da e/bāde čel njamalo e da sām čel njamalo e da si čel njamalo e da e čel	štjal da e/bāde čel njamalo da sām čel, njamalo da si čel, njamalo da e čel	njamalo bilo da sām čel njamalo bilo da si čel njamalo bilo da e čel

The formation of new morphological paradigms (sometimes is very complicated and not all in use) is imposed by the need of verbal system to cover all possible combination from different temporal point of view.

If we consider, for example, the uses of Conclusive forms we can see that the speaker shows his involvement and faithfulness about the given information (Gerdžikov 1976, Aleksova 2010).

So signs [+ subjectivity] [- witness] (or [- non-renarrative]) may occur with the following uses:

- speaker who has not witnessed the action, makes inference, example: From the steps of the apartment it was clear that the thieves were three; (7) *От стъпките в апартамента се разбира, че крадците са били (sa bili) трима;*



- speaker presents statement which is universally known, eg. Young aristocrats used to play piano. (8) *Младите аристократки са свирели (sa svireli) на пиано;*
- speaker uses someone's words as its own statement, eg. These lands, as reported by Herodotus, were inhabited since ancient times; (9) *Тези земи, както свидетелства Херодот, са били (sa bili) заселени още от древността;*

If the speaker is direct witness of the event, then forms have also signs [+ subjectivity], [+ witness]. Examples:

- speaker was a witness, but wants to emphasize personal validation and that this is a subjective experience. eg. In my childhood, my grandmother took care of me and I lived with her until I was seven years old. (10) *В детството ми баба ми се е грижела (se e grižela) за мене и аз съм живял (săt živjal) при нея до седмата си година;*
- in questions and in subordinate clauses where the speaker gives an uncertain assumption. If it was so or it wasn't so, I cannot figure it out...
(11) *Дали е било (e bilo) така, дали не е било (ne e bilo) така, не мога да го разбера...*



Anyway it's not possible to define a tense-level rule for the right uses of these forms, but only situational rules characterized by some adverbial markers too.

Such a model like the Bulgarian, can give us a very interesting example for that how historically and synchronically evolves a verbal system and how the structure of grammar is deeply related to the mental operations the native speaker applies on the event.

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