

ЗБОРНИК

Реферати од Втората македонско-
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**PERSPECTIVES OF THE FUTURE TENSE
IN THE MACEDONIAN LANGUAGE,
VERBAL TENSE OR MOOD**

Whether the future tense is a mood or a tense has been widely discussed in linguistic literature. The possible interaction amongst the grammatical categories of tense, aspect and mood has raised interesting questions concerning the type of future meaning which can be encoded grammatically or which can be implied semantically in a given context. In this paper I will examine the semantics of the Macedonian verb, in particular those imperfective and perfective verb forms subordinated to the particle *ke* which have traditionally been subsumed under broader discussions on tense and aspect. I will make some general introductory remarks about the types of tenses and moods which will be relevant for this discussion and hope in the end to present a preliminary model which will account for the systematic selection of tense and aspect forms by the speaker of Macedonian. Such a model must capture adequately the relationship between grammatical form and the meanings which that form may entail for the speaker in various contexts. I will concentrate on the use of *ke* plus the perfective and imperfective forms of the verb 'to be' though other forms will be cited where relevant and additional supporting evidence will be provided by comparing parallel forms subordinated to the particle *ga*.

King, writing about English, notes that the most prevalent approach to the semantic characterization of tense forms in English has been to delineate the uses attributable to a particular form, present tense forms used to designate panchronic or gnomic events, habitual occurrences, future events, etc. The future has often been considered outside the scope of tense. In my own work to date on Macedonian as well as in that of scholars working cross-linguistically the future has been recognized as being at the point of intersection between a tense, designating an action as occurring after the

speech event, and a mood denoting non-actual, expectative events. Some typical descriptions of the future are:

Chung and Timberlake: [the future is] a semantic category where tense and mood merge. In practice many languages do not distinguish morphologically between future tense and potential (*irrealis*) mood. Where a difference is made, the future tense is used for events that are presumed to be certain to occur, and the *irrealis* mood for events that are potentially possible but not presumed to be certain.

Similar formulations are seen in Fleischman's work on Romance and Fielder's work on Bulgarian.

Nonetheless, whether the future is a tense or a mood, it has been assigned meaning in English and Macedonian such as future prediction, willingness, iterated events, etc.

While some of meanings of these-called future tense seem to be parallel in meaning to events which occur before the speech event, there is always present a modal, hypothetical nuance. This difference has been cited by various authors, for example, Leech states that: "although the will/shall construction provides English with its nearest approximation to a 'neutral' or 'colourless' future, one ought not to describe it as a 'future tense' on a par with the Past and Present tenses" and Quirk, et al. state: "There is no obvious future tense in English corresponding to the time/tense parallel for present and past".

This leads us to the next question, namely what is *tense*. It has long been known that there is not a one-to-one correspondence with tense form and time in the real world and that languages vary in the grammatical inventory of tenses. As Binnick writes: even at the very beginning of grammatical study, the conflict between the notional three "times" (tenses) and actual number of tenses marked in verbs proved a challenge. (p.9). Given the mutability of real world time and the selection of a tense to encode an action placed in time, one must ask if there are predictable parameters for tense selection. King, again writing on English states: Every speech act has a now associated with it. As far as communicator is concerned, Time of Communication (TOC) is basic time from which all other time/reality is viewed. This is the speaker's present. A sharp distinction must be drawn between real world phenomena (such as real world time) and linguistic phenomena. The present tense is used for any situation which the speaker wishes to associate with and include within the perspective of the TOC. Meaning of present tense form is tied to the temporal perspective with which the speaker associates the reported situation. Specific real time reference is ignored, but what is important is that the situation is viewed as belonging to the speaker's present. In essence, it is a statement of fact which is considered valid at the moment of communication and will continue to be valid as

long as the situation obtains. When the present tense form is used for a future occurrence, the speaker is simply bringing that which is planned for the future into the realm of the present. It is a statement about a situation intended for the future, but viewed as part of the present, i.e. included within the present temporal perspective. Compare this with Fleischman who says that when the speaker chooses a present tense for future time "the future situation is viewed by the speaker as growing out of or somehow in relation to the present world-state, it expresses the speaker's subjective view of the situation at the moment of utterance thus, 'a going future the proximity in time is not at issue since one can say – *in twenty years I am going to China*. What is relevant is the speaker's willingness to commit to a future world with such vividness that it has present relevance. A situation belonging to the past in real time may also be brought or 'pulled into the present perspective of the speaker: *Dad tells me that you want to quit school. Columbus discovers America in 1492*. A present tense form then has grammatical meaning of PRESENT TEMPORAL PERSPECTIVE, i.e. included in and viewed as a part of the TOC.

Both Fleischman and King sees the major dichotomy for the speaker between present versus others – i.e. definite strategy is involved in which the speaker first of all includes the situation within the present perspective of excludes the situation from it. If it is excluded then it must be included with the appropriate non-present perspective, i.e. past or future. Invariant meaning of the future is "removed from the present perspective and associated with the future perspective" Since the real world future is not verifiable fact, the future perspective on a situation in every case involves prediction. Since the future is the domain of prediction, it is not surprising that the future tense is found in contexts of present supposition:

The class will be over by now.

That'll be John at the door.

Which is simply the reverse of removing a situation from the future (predictive) perspective and associating it with the present (factual perspective as in *The train leaves sharply at noon*. Thus the verbal system exploits to the fullest the basic opposition between present as fact and future as prediction but in so doing does not undermine the grammatical meaning of tense as temporal perspective.

In Macedonian there is no future tense. The Future is formed by an invariant particle *ke* which forms syntactic constructions with verbs of the perfective or imperfective aspect, constructions which convey various types of time reference and modality. What is relevant for the discussion here is the relationship of the present and future perspective and how the choice of aspect and tense codes an event as belonging to the present or future. In my pursuit of relevant data in both English and Macedonian I have frequently

met native speakers who insist that the future tense is parallel to the past, that they perceive the reality and inevitability of future prediction. It must be remarked, however, that instead of placing events along a time line extended from the past into the future, the speaker maps events onto a grid according to temporal and modal perspective. The grammaticalization of this opposition is most evident in the contrast between the use of *ke* with the to verb *to be* imperfective *sum* vs perfective *бугам* and, consequently, this opposition will be the centre of discussion here. In the literature this contrast has been seen as colloquial versus literary (see for example Casule) or, as a context of free variation, for example, in his doctoral work on *ke* in Macedonian, K. Koneski says: "The form *ke bidam* is understood also as imperfective and leads to a neutralization of the aspectual opposition of the forms *ke bidam-ke sum*. Due to this fact we understand the parallel use of the two forms with the same meaning". If we examine a number of examples, however, we can begin to see that pragmatically there is a distinction made between these two forms and that the causes for aspect selection are connected to the speaker's view the reality or temporal distance of an event. Let us look at a number of examples:

- 1) Најарно ќе е да му јават на мајорот што живее кај нив.
- 2) Синот ќе е некаде кон Грчко, или можеби на север кон Српско.
- 3) Грешин, ситуацијата моментално не ќе е така.
- 4) Тоа ќе е околу сто години, ако умеам да преценим.
- 5) Тој ќе е малку постар за мене. Може дедо да ми биде.
- 6) Ама што ќе ти сум јас. – вели жената – лјубил си ја твојата револуција.
- 7) Што ќе ни е трета црква, рекоа кога веќе имаме две.
- 8) Кој ќе е надвор сега?

Native speakers will only accept the use of the imperfective verb here since in all instances these sentences are temporally part of the TOC. If this is the case, we do not have *e/bide* as stylistic variants. Rather, we have an aspectual opposition in which the imperfective includes the event as present and more actualized than the corresponding perfective. One could argue, that the above sentences with the imperfective of *sum* could also occur without the *ke* in order to signify present relevance. This is true, however, a modal nuance is lost. These examples with *ke sum* are all highly charged emotional statements in which the speaker chooses to distance the fact from the present temporal point of view. The future particle *ke* may be used here to cast doubt on a present fact or to offer the speaker's view that the fact is somehow doubtful or based on supposition rather than known fact. Fleischman proposed three parameters according to which speakers chart an

event referential, textual and expressive. If we look at the above examples according to the three parameters included in Fleischman's model – referential, textual and expressive, then we see that referentially they are perhaps syntactically future due to the presence of the expectative particle *ke* but in the discourse of textual component they are present and the expressive component places these actions as contemporaneous with the speech event but high on what I will term here the projected or suppositional scale. This scale can be strengthened, i.e. actions can be placed yet further up on the suppositional axis with the use of *ga* together with *ke*:

- 9) Јас не ќе сум филозоф а затоа не можам многу да научам од книгите.
- 10) Од каменјето излегуваа песни, шумот на водата се престори во мелодии. Ќе да е глупо, но можеа да се препознаат армоники, виолини, пијана и други инструменти.
- 11) Ќе да е писано, да ми го скуси животот тој проклетник.

The perfective aspect has been shown in other contexts, contexts such as iterated events, and in subordination to various words, i.e. temporal subordinators, to tend toward modal meaning. The imperfective is used in the protasis of hypothetical conditions and in other contexts in subordination to the particle *ga*, to specify an action which is unfulfillable at the present moment. The Macedonian system is enriched by this ability to locate a hypothetical action in present time, e.g. Би требало да е Јана; Да си жив и здрав; И пак оној шепот. Ти не треба да си тука. So what we have in Macedonian is *ke* interacting with both aspects. Thus the imperfective of *buge*, *e*, is clearly real, present, but marked by speaker doubt.

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Зузана ТОПОЛИЊСКА

ПОГЛЕДИ ЗА ИДНОТО ВРЕМЕ ВО МАКЕДОНСКИОТ ЈАЗИК – ГЛАГОЛСКО ВРЕМЕ ИЛИ НАЧИН

(Резиме)

Професорката Кристина Крамер ни прати еден подолг текст којшто за жал не можеме да го претставиме тука во целост. Решивме да Ви го прераскажам тука во најкратки црти.

Во текстот станува збор за тоа како се рефлектира категоријата глаголски вид во зоната и во начинот на употреба на конструкциите кои пренесуваат информација за идни настани. Во центарот на вниманието на авторката е македонската опозиција: *ке е* насприма *ке биде*.

Авторката прво не потсетува на познатата дилема која е доминантната компонента на она што го викаме футур: модалната или темпоралната. Натаму, таа се повикува на теоријата на Флајшман и Кинг кои зборуваат за „сегашна темпорална перспектива“ што автоматски ја внесува во текстот формата на сегашно време, за да се сосредоточи најпосле врз една функција на македонското *ке е*, а којашто му е туѓа на *ке биде*. Се работи за искажување на претпоставка за настан што се случува истовремено со моментот на зборувањето. А еве дел од примерите што авторката ги експерпирала од македонски текстови:

1. Синот *ке е* некаде кон Грчко или можеби на север кон Српско.
2. Грешиш, ситуацијата моментално не *ке е* така.
3. Тој *ке е* малку постар за мене. Може дедо да ми биде.

4. Од камењето излегува песна, пумот на водата се престори во мелодии. *Ќе* да е глупо но можеа да се препознаат армоники, виолини, пијана и други инструменти.
5. *Ќе* да е писано, да ми го скуси животот тој проклетник.

Авторката завршува со констатацијата дека несвршениот вид од глаголот биде носи информација за настан сместен во сегашноста, но истовремено обоен со неисгурност на зборувачот во однос на неговата фактивност.