TOWARDS A COMPARISON OF CONDITIONALS IN BULGARIAN, MACEDONIAN AND ALBANIAN

A study of conditional sentences in Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Albanian must examine not only the interaction of particles plus verb forms and the different meanings which those forms convey, but it must also examine changing norms and differences between colloquial and written styles since within the modal systems of these three languages, conditional sentences seem particularly subject to change. The current work does not attempt to provide an exhaustive study of conditionals; rather, my goal is to offer a framework for analysing and comparing conditional sentences to point to preliminary findings of such a comparison and to point to directions of future research. In comparing conditional sentences in Bulgarian and Macedonian special attention is given to the use of bi since it is here that changing norms are most evident. More detailed research is needed on the formation of conditional sentences in Albanian, therefore, only initial findings will be presented here.

Data for this paper were taken from the novels Baj Ganjo (henceforth designated BG), originally written in Bulgarian by Aleko Konstantinov and translated into Macedonian and Albanian, and the Russian novel Sud'ba Čeloveka (henceforth designated SC), 'The Fate of Man' by Sholokhov translated into Bulgarian, Macedonian, and Albanian 1. These two works were chosen because they contain a great deal of conversation and offer, therefore, the chance to examine both informal, colloquial speech and more formal narrative.

Throughout this paper the terms expectative, hypothetical, fulfillable, and unfulfillable will be used as follows:

1) Unfulfillable expectative conditions are those conditions which could or should have been fulfilled at some point in the past but which were not fulfilled. In both Macedonian and Bulgarian these conditions are usually formed with ako or da plus non-past in the protasis, i.e. the if-clause and ke/ste plus the so-called future-in-the-past in the apodosis, i.e. the then-clause. In Albanian these conditionals are usually formed with po or sikur 'if' plus an imperfect subjunctive or past perfect subjunctive in the protasis and a past conditional composed of do plus a past perfect subjunctive in the apodosis. The following examples show these correspondences:

   (BG 38)

2 Page numbers in the citations refer to the editions of the texts cited in the bibliography. Macedonian, Bulgarian and Albanian will be abbreviated respectively as M, B, and A.
B. Ako ne bëse gospodin Vasilaki da im pozamaže očite, nij sùvsem štijxme da se provalim
(BG 194)
A. Po tê mos ge [instead of literary norm tê ishe] zoti Vasilaki t'u zinte një çikë sytë, ne do ta kishim humbër fare nga turpi.
(BG 46)
If Mr. Vasilaki hadn't been there to distract them, we would have totally disgraced ourselves.

2. M. Da ni bëse kolipkata na drugo mesto, možebi i životot ke bëse poinakov.
(SC 10)
B. Da bëse kolipkata mi drugde, možbo i životot štešte da poturgne imaše.
(SC 15)
A. Po ta kishet upritur kasellen nèl ndonjë vend tjetër, ndofrua jeta ime do të kish qenë ndryshu.
(SC 14)
If our cottage had been in a different place, perhaps life would have turned out differently.

11) **Unfulfillable hypothetical conditions** are those in which a condition is expressed with a present tense verb to express an action which cannot be fulfilled at the moment of speech. In Macedonian and Bulgarian these conditions are expressed with *da* followed by an imperfective non-past or an imperfective imperfect in the protasis and *ke*šte plus imperfect or *bi* plus L-form in the apodosis, e. g.:

3. M. Da niz sam koj drug zbor, ke go reçev nego.
If I knew/lt. know/some other word I would say it.

Div I were / lit. am/ in his place, I would not let her live alone in Plovdiv.

11) **Fulfilled expectative conditions** are those in which a condition is expressed as a future possibility. The speaker does not cast doubt on the fulfillment of the condition. In both Macedonian and Bulgarian such conditions are most commonly formed with *ako* or *da* plus non-past in the protasis and *ke*šte plus non-past in the apodosis. In Albanian the most usual formation is *posikur* plus present subjunctive in the protasis and *do* plus present subjunctive in the apodosis, e. g.:

6. M. Zabite ke vi gi iskršam, ako ne go izberete Baj Ganjo.
(BG 15)
B. Zabite vi šte razkurtja, ako ne izberete baj Ganja.
(BG 260)
A. Do tju čulku dënëmbët një nga një, po tê mos zgjithi baj Ganon.
(BG 119)
I'll smash your teeth if you don't select baj Ganjo.

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IV) Finally, **fulfillable hypothetical conditions** are those in which the condition is conceivably fulfillable, but which the speaker presents as doubtful, unlikely, or hypothetical. They give the speaker's view that a future condition, while possibly fulfillable, may remain unfulfilled. In Bulgarian and Macedonian the most usual formation of these conditions is *ako/da* in the protasis and *bi* in the apodosis or *ako/da* in the protasis and *ke* plus non-past in the apodosis. In the latter formation, *bi* is not needed in the apodosis since the hypotheticalness of the condition has already been expressed in the protasis. In Albanian these conditions are usually formed with *posikur* plus an imperfect subjunctive in the protasis and a conditional / do plus imperfect subjunctive / in the apodosis, e. g.:

7. M. Grandissimo maestro Verdi! Ti nema, ti ne možeš da imaš neprijatelj! No ako pokraj očekuvanje bi se javil nekoj izrod, toj ke bude samiot Satana.

(BG 73)
B. Grandissimo maestro Verdi! Ti njamaš, ti ne može da imaš vragove! No ako, pače čajaniša, bi se javil najkoj izrod, toj te bude samjut satana.

(BG 224)
A. Grandissimo maestro Verdi! Ti s'ke dhe mund të kesh armiq. Po sikur të dihe ndonjë i kesaj fare, ky do të qe pa tjetër vetë djall.

(BG 80)

Great maestro Verdi! You don't have, you can't have enemies! But if unexpectedly some sort of monster did appear it would be Satan himself.

A summary of the most usual correspondences of particle and verb form as outlined above, are summarized in Table One:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfulfillable Expectative</th>
<th></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Protasis</td>
<td>Apodosis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M  ako/da + past</td>
<td>ke + imperfect; bi + L-form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B  ako/da/ako da + past</td>
<td>šte + imperfect; bi + L-form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A  posikur + imperfect subjunc.</td>
<td>do + perf perfect subjunc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pas/perfect subjunc.</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Unfulfillable Hypothetical</th>
<th></th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M  da + imperfective non-/ imperfect</td>
<td>ke + imperf.; bi + L-form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B  da + imperfective non-/ imperfect</td>
<td>šte + imperfect; bi + L-form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A  po + imperfect subjunctive</td>
<td>do + imperf. subjunctive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i.e. conditional)</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fulfiable Expectative</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M  ako/da + non-past</td>
<td>ke + non-past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B  ako/da + non-past</td>
<td>šte + non-past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A  posikur + pres. subjunc.</td>
<td>do + pres. subjunc.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
While more data must be compared, a preliminary comparison of Bulgarian and Macedonian shows a tendency for Bulgarian to use ako more frequently than Macedonian in the protasis of unfulfillable expectational conditions. Well over 2/3 of the conditions of this type collected here had Macedonian da but Bulgarian ako. In other words, Macedonian tends to make a sharper distinction between the use of da and ako for unfulfillable conditions and iterative conditions such as example 13 above, da for unfulfillable conditions, compare, for example:

   (SC 21)

B. Ako znaše, če rugatnjata mu ni dostavja samo udovolstve, toj njimaše da pucva po ruski, a na svojo ezik.
   (SC 31)

If he knew that his swearing only gave us pleasure, he would not have sworn in Russian, but only in his own language.

15. M. Da se pikneše nekoe morski čudožište vo toj moment vo sobata na našte sobesednici, teško ke možeše da go zgolemi parazitnata vpečatok čto go proizveda poslednite zborovi na baj Banjo.
   (BG 146)

B. Ako njakoe morski čudožište se umičkne v onzi moment v staja na našte suteseciti, to edva li bi moglo da uveliči poražajsteto vpečatlenje, koeto proizvedoza poslednite dumi na baj Banja.
   (BG 286)

If a sea monster had at that moment sneaked into our friends’ room it would have been difficult for it to increase the stunning impression which Baj Banjo’s last words produced.

When we turn to the expression of the apodosis we find a similar development in both Bulgarian and Macedonian. Changes in both languages concern the distribution in the apodosis of kelše plus imperfect or bi plus l-form. In the remainder of this paper we will focus on the use of bi and kelše in the apodosis of conditional sentences and the independent use of bi. Special attention must be given to these forms since it seems that it is here that the modal systems are changing most rapidly. As we will see below, bi is being used more widely in both Bulgarian and Macedonian, occurring in environs where the so-called future in the past, i.e. kelše plus perfective imperfect has been used.

It should be noted here that the so-called new Bulgarian conditional cited by Mateer and also in Bulgarian Academy Grammar composed of verbs suffixed with -vam, -jam or -am used in the apodosis in place of constructions with bi, e.g.

Kupuvam -go, ako mi go dadat na izvodna cena.
bind kupil -go, ako mi go dahat na izvodna cena.
I would buy it if thy gave it to me at a good (favorable) price.

has no counterpart in Macedonian and is considered by the Bulgarian Academy Grammar to be colloquial and non-literary, therefore we will not treat such constructions here.
In both Bulgarian and Macedonian bi is said to express 1) a hypothetical condition, i.e. one marked for doubt, etc. 2) a hypothetical future action outside of a conditional sentence, e.g. bi sakale edno kafece. I would like a cup of coffee.

Golub noted that the basic problem in the syntactic distribution of the moods in Bulgarian and Macedonian concerns the relationship between the conditional, i.e. keštite and the potential i.e. hypothetical/ bi, because, as he points out, the forms may be exchanged in some positions. Specifically, there is a neutralization of the opposition in the apodosis of irreal, i.e. past conditions. Golub states, the difference between Macedonian:

16. Da dojdeva porano, ke ja gledavte priredbata.
    bi se ja gledale priredbata.

If you had come earlier you would have seen the show.

is one of style, bi representing a more formal style.

The difference between bi and keštite is most clearly seen in the apodosis of a fulfillable condition where they may not be exchanged without changing meaning from expected to hypothetical. As we have shown above, keštite designates an expectative action, bi designates a hypothetical action.

Ako mi se javite ke dojdam
If you call me I will come.
Ako mi se javite bi došla.
If you were to call me I would come.

It is clear that the apodosis of a past unfulfilled condition is the primary position for the neutralization of bi and keštite, and therefore for the spread of bi since in a past context no distinction is made as to the degree of possibility that a condition would or could have been fulfilled in the past. Given that we have a similar phenomenon in both languages, i.e. the spread of bi to the apodosis of past conditions, the following questions arise, do Bulgarian and Macedonian make a clear distinction in style between bi and keštite, is there any way to predict which particle will be used, and finally, what is the relationship between Bulgarian and Macedonian in the use of bi outside of a conditional period.

From this preliminary comparison of Bulgarian and Macedonian data the following is evident. First, as expected a clear opposition is maintained between the use of keštite and bi in fulfillable conditions. The Bulgarian and Macedonian texts were consistent with one another in the selection of particle in this context as in, e.g. 6. and 7. above.

In hypothetical statements outside of conditions there was usually a correspondance in the use of Bulgarian and Macedonian bi, e.g.:

17. M. Taka gi iskrivi očite, što čovek od sproti nego bi mu gi videl samo belkite...
    (BG 104)

B. Taka si izkriji nadjasno očite, šoto čovek nasrešta mu bi vidjal samo belčite im...
    (BG 230)

He moved his eyes so far to the right, that a person opposite him would see only the whites.

18. M. Edniot došel od Bugarija, drugijet živij po Evropa, sekako bi imalo što da zboruvaat, bidejki sè treba da ima nekoja različka među zapad i našata tatkovina.
    (BG 65)

B. Ednijet došel od Bugarija, drugijet živij po Evropa, vse bi imalo kakvo da poprıkazav, poneje vse trjaba da ima niakoja različka među Zapada i našata tatkovina.
    (BG 217)

One had come from Bulgaria, the other lived in Europe, there must have been something to talk about, since there must be some difference between the west and our country.

There was a trend in the Macedonian translations to use bi more frequently for stylistic effect, for a more formal style, than occurred in the Bulgarian text. In numerous cases Macedonian used bi where a different type of expression occurred in the Bulgarian texts. The Albanian texts used an imperfect e.g.:

19. M. Gledam, dečinjata moj mi mavtaat, bi sakale da se nasmevnaat a ne im uspева.
    (SC 11)

B. Gledam, dečicata mi...maxat mi s růčé, iskat da mi se usmijnat, no nisto se izliza.
    (SC 17)

A. Ishin mbledhor grumbuli si jetime, tundnim douart, mendobeshin tē vinin bužen nē guz, po nuk je dilnin dot.
    (SC 16)

I look, my children wave at me with their hands, they want/ would like to smile, but they can’t.

20. M. Baj Ganjo sostavuva v um edna rečenica na germanski što bi trebalo da odgovara na našeto: kade e ona za glemata rabota?
    (BG 60)

B. Baj Ganjo sćinjavaše v uma si edna fraza po nemški, kojato da otgovara na našeto...de e ona za goluma rabota?
    (BG 213)

A. Baj Ganjo po formunte ne měndje njē frazē jerseymanisht qē, simbas tij, kšite kēte kuptim ne guhēn tonē: ku ēšte ai vēndi pēr nevojēn e madhe?
    (BG 68)

Baj Ganjo composed in his mind a sentence which would correspond to our: Where is the thing for a big job [i.e. number two]?

No examples were found in the comparative texts expressing a polite command, but from the handbooks it would appear that the use here of bi is fairly consistent.

As expected, most differences were found in the apodosis of unfulfillable conditions. While in the majority of cases where there was a discrepancy in the use of bi or keštite between the texts, Macedonian had bi where Bulgarian had keštite. While we may conclude that bi is perhaps used more freely in Macedonian than in Bulgarian both in the apodosis of unfulfillable
conditions and outside of conditionals, it must be stated here that perhaps the most interesting finding when comparing the texts is that the Bulgarian and Macedonian texts corresponded in particle choice in both protasis and apodosis in only twenty per cent of the examples. While both Bulgarian and Macedonian used bi in the apodosis of unfulfillable conditions, they did so in different sentences. Where Macedonian used da – bi, Bulgarian used ako – ste, in examples where Macedonian used da – ke, Bulgarian used da – bi. It is clear from this sample that while the languages are changing in similar ways, the speed of that change is not the same nor always in the same direction.

Further work must be done comparing conditionals in Bulgarian and Macedonian. This preliminary research shows, however, that similar distinctions are made in the two languages, i.e. that bi and ke/ste are distinct in fulfillable conditions, but not in unfulfillable conditions, bi is used in both languages to express hypotheticalness outside of conditional sentences, but Macedonian seems to use bi more freely, and finally, there is a tendency for bi to be used in the apodosis of unfulfillable conditions in place of ke/ste but there is not a one to one correspondence in usage. The choice of particle in the protasis is also worthy of more study, in particular what if any is the reason for differences in the choice of da or ako.

I have only just started to analyze conditional sentences in Albanian, therefore, little has been said about those conditions here. What appears to be the most fruitful area for comparative research is the relationship between the Albanian conditional, i.e. constructions with do plus imperfect or pastperfect subjunctive and Bulgarian and Macedonian bi. This shall become the topic of future research.

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