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Volha Artsiomava

THE GRAMMATICAL CATEGORY OF TIME AS A MEANS OF THE EXPRESSION OF TEMPORAL DEIXIS IN BELARUSIAN AND ENGLISH IN THE COMPARATIVE ASPECT

The article analyzes the grammatical category of time as a means of actualizing temporal deixis in Belarusian and English in typological aspect. It is revealed that the category of time represented by the verbal forms in Belarusian and English is not identical to the physical time model and has an indexical nature, where the point of reference depends on the congruence or divergence of the moment of perception and the time of the speech act. In the relative temporal model of the narrative mode of interpretation, there is a shift of the deictic personal center in the Belarusian language in contrast to the English language, where there is a shift of personal and temporal deictic centres together.

Keywords: temporal deixis, grammatical category of time, observer, speaker, perception, aspect, narrative mode of interpretation, secondary deixis.

The category of deixis is one of the fundamental problems of modern linguistics. Orienting the speech process to the speaker and listener (personal deixis) and relating the utterance to the spatio-temporal parameters of communication (spatio-temporal deixis), this category is a linguistic universality characterized by a variety of ways of expression. Traditionally, the means of temporal deixis representation in languages are adverbs of time whereas verbal forms, as a rule, are rarely recognized as actualizers of this type of indexality. However, the results of research of A. V. Bondarko [Bondarko 1987], O. N. Veselkova [Veselkova : 2004], V. B. Kashkin [Kashkin : 1991], A. A. Novozhilova [Novozhilova : 2006] prove the deictic character of the verbal category of time, since it implements «the temporal localization of an event or action directly or indirectly related to the real or imaginary *hic et nunc* “here and now” [Vremya], and «orientates them in accordance with a certain reference point, which can be called the axis (of orientation)» [Hatcher 1951 : 790].

As a rule, the reference point of temporal deixis is the moment of speech. There is another point of view according to which it is necessary to take into account both the speaker and the observer [Apresyan; Kravchenko 1996 : 75]. In this article we will analyze the grammatical category of time in Belarusian and English in terms of these pragmatic parameters in the comparative aspect. The factual material was

selected from Belarusian and English parallel corpuses of Russian National Corpus [RNC] and other Internet resources.

The verbal grammatical category is commonly identified as «a specific linguistic reflection of the objective time for the temporal localization of the event or state presented in the utterance, by contrasting temporal forms (verbal times) indicating simultaneity, precedence or succession of the event in relation to the moment of speech, situation or some other reference point» [Vremya].

In the Belarusian language, the grammatical category of time is closely related to the category of the aspect (imperfective, perfective). Y. D. Apresyan, comparing two statements *Я прочитал “Войну и мир в раннем детстве”* and *“Я читал Войну и мир в раннем детстве”*, makes the conclusion that the differences between them are determined not by the distance of the past event from the moment of speech, but by the speaker’s perception of the time of the action. When using the perfective verb *прочитал*, the speaker perceives the time of the event as the whole with the time in which he thinks of himself with keeping the result of the action in the present. When using the imperfective verb *читал*, the speaker perceives the time of the event as different from the time in which he thinks of himself [Apresyan : 281].

In the English language the use of 12 tenses (Past Simple, Past Continuous, Past Perfect, Past Perfect Continuous, Present Simple, Present Continuous, Present Perfect, Present Perfect Continuous, Future Simple, Future Continuous, Future Perfect, Future Perfect Continuous) depends on the oppositions *perfection / imperfection* and *progressiveness / non-progressiveness* [Hatcher : 1951].

In Belarusian and English verbs in the absolute use represent an action, event or phenomenon as preceding (past tense), simultaneous (present tense), or subsequent (future tense) to the moment of speech as the starting point of reference.

The past tense in the Belarusian language is represented:

1) synthetically by imperfective verbs in the past tense which express:

a) an action that occurred at a certain time in the past: *Учора ў дзевяць гадзін раніцы я збіраў грыбы каля Старой Яліны* (А. Якімовіч. Сем гісторый пра вожыка) [Yakimovich]. In English, this meaning is rendered by Past Continuous: “*What **were you doing** behind the curtain?*” he asked. “*I **was reading**.*” (Ch. Brontë. Jane Eyre) [NRC];

b) an action that began in the past and lasted until a certain point in the past: *Затым некалькі месяцаў **рабіў** шараговым шафёрам, пакуль ДАІ не адабрала правы* (В. Быкаў. Ваўчыная яма) [NRC]. In English, this meaning is expressed by Past Perfect Continuous: *There was a document up on the screen – maybe he really **had been working** and on the phone to America* (H. Fielding. Bridget Jones’s Diary) [NRC];

c) habitual, repeated actions in the past: *Я тут кожны дзень бяды якой чакала, ну, думаю, няўжо ж мне і далей будзе так шанцаваць?* (В. Быкаў.

Пакахай мяне, салдацік) [NRC]. In English this meaning is expressed by Past Simple or by the analytical constructions *used to / would + an infinitive*: *I usually **went** up there in the morning while Catherine **stayed** late in bed* (E. Hemingway. Farewell to Arms) [NRC]; *I **used to** write for the paper in college, I thought to myself, and hell, 'I even had an essay published in a monthly magazine once in high school* (L. Weisberger. The Devil Wears Prada) [NRC]; *On occasion I **would be driving** up or walking my dog – when he was alive – and I **would see** the kids climbing up there* (M. Connelly. City Of Bones) [NRC].

2. Perfective verbs in the past tense which express

a) a completed past action: *Кананок пабег на агнявую, а я вярнуўся ў вэстыбюль* (В. Быкаў. Пакахай мяне, салдацік) [NRC]. In English, this meaning is expressed by Past Simple: *I **ran** away. I thought that it would be best for them to not hear from me, to not even know about me* (M. Connelly. City Of Bones) [NRC];

b) consistent actions in the past: *Халодны восеньскі ліст **ynaй** мне на лоб, і я **прачнуўся** і **ўбачыў**, што непадалёку ад мяне стаяць двое, стары і юнак* (Л. Дайнека. След ваўкалака) [NRC]. In English, this meaning is expressed by Past Simple: *Finally, I **got up** and **went out** in the living room and **got** some cigarettes out of the box on the table and **stuck** some in my pocket* (J. D. Salinger. The Catcher in the Rye) [NRC];

c) a completed action that occurred in the past, but its result is evident at the time of speech: – *Я **купіў** раба. Яны тут не дорага каштуюць, – растлумачыў еўнух* (Л. Дайнека. След ваўкалака) [NRC]. In English, this meaning is expressed by Present Perfect: – *Look here, I have bought this bonnet* (J. Austen. Pride and Prejudice) [NRC]. The specific temporal duality of Present Perfect semantics is predetermined by two temporal plans, «which are connected in some way with the preceding and the subsequent» [Bondarko 1987: 195]. It leads to differences in the explanation of its meaning, which is either interpreted as a past tense [Leech 1974 : 30; McCoard 1978 : 151] or the action preceding the moment of speech [Matthews 1987 : 171];

d) analytically with the auxiliary verb *быць* in the past tense and the perfective form of the verb in the past tense for expressing the action that took place before another action in the past: ***Hanicaў быў** я табе і тое таксама, як Кароль Я. М. **раіў** мне, Што кароль Сцяпан яму пра тое падарожжа **paйў*** [Peregrynatsyya Mikalaya Kryshafa Radzivila]. In English this meaning is expressed by Past Perfect: – *Just as I **had written** the last word, a Kafir **came up** my avenue of orange trees, carrying a letter in a cleft stick, which he **had brought** from the post* (H. R. Haggard. King Solomon's Mines) [NRC].

Traditionally, the present tense is similar to the time of the action or state at the time of speech. In A. V. Kravchenko's opinion, such an "egocentric" model of temporal relations in the language reflects the wish of some researchers to identify

objective physical time model with the grammatical one and has significant shortcomings, since this point coincides not with the moment of speech, but with the moment of observation [Kravchenko 1992]. The necessity to take into account the observer as well is implied by the term *present*, formed from the participle of the verb *praesense* with the meaning "to be seen, be at hand" [Present]. In the Belarusian language, the actual present is expressed by imperfective verbs in the present tense (Зараз я **пытаю**, ці не ведаеце вы чалавека, мянушка якога «Лікол», проста «Лікол»? (У. Караткевіч. Дзікае паляванне караля Стаха) [NRC]), in English – by Present Continuous: *I **am asking** if you believe in God* (D. Brown. Angels and Demons) [NRC]. According to H. Marchand, «the progressive form expresses one particular action observed in the dynamic process of its development» [Marchand 1955 : 47]. Thus, in addition to the coincidence of the observer's and the speaker's spaces, there is a convergence of the time of observation of the situation and the time of speech. This temporal and spatial congruity forms the basic progressive meaning of the present actual tense.

At the same time, the explicitness of the «reference to the observer» explains the aspectual unmarkedness of Present Simple and allows this form to act in the general meaning when the situation is not the object of immediate physical perception [Hatcher 1951 : 259]: *"I patrol past it [the sculpture] everyday," the guard said* (D. Brown. Angels and Demons) [NRC]. This meaning in Belarusian is expressed by imperfective verbs in the present tense: *Жыву я з табой трыццаць гадоў і кожны дзень разгадваю новую загадку* (І. Шамякін. Атланты і карыятыды) [NRC]. The imperfective forms signify:

a) actions that began in the past and continue at the moment of speech : – *Я больш як дваццаць год чакаю...* (У. Някляеў. Лабух) [NRC]. In English language this meaning is expressed by Present Perfect Continuous: *Something I **have been doing** a lot these last days* (J. Fowles. The Collector) [NRC];

b) events that took place in the past, when the speaker wants to give vividness and clarity to the narrative (Praesens Historicum): *І тут **чыем** з-за гары шорах нейкі* (А. Адамовіч. Я з вогненнай вёскі...) [NRC]; *Then the bones **come up**, he **reads** it in the paper and **puts** two and two together. We **show up** and he **starts** confessing before we **re** three feet in the door* (M. Connelly. City Of Bones) [NRC].

Praesens Historicum means that the speaker takes the position of the observer with a switch to another time mode in order to present the imagined situation without changing the event line. There are two points of view on the contradiction between the form of Praesens Historicum and its semantics. According to the first point of view, the form Preseans Historicum, being formally present, has the meaning of the past, when the speaker wants to convey the previous events for the listener to become their participant or observer. According to the other point of view, Praesens Historicum performs the deictic function of referring to the imaginary events (deixis

ad Phantasma) [Bühler 1982], when the speaker is brought to the past and becomes the subject of observation.

The future tense expresses the action that will take place after the moment of speech. In the Belarusian language, the future is expressed:

1) synthetically by perfective verbs which denote:

a) a completed future action with the semantics of result:– *Я веру, доктор, прыдзецас, і вы будзеце спецыяльна пасылаць хворых на Месяц, дзе мы пабудуем санаторыі і лячэбніцы* (М. Гамолка. Цытадэль неба) [NRC]. In English, this meaning is expressed by Future Simple (*"What matter? We **will build** another windmill. We will build six windmills if we feel like it* (G. Orwell. Animal Farm) [NRC]) or Future Perfect (*By the time you read this I **will have left** you* (M. Lee. Fugitive Bride) [NRC]);

b) a future timeless action with a generalized meaning in proverbs: *Не плюй у калодзеж – давядзеца вады **напіцца***. In the English language this meaning is expressed by Future Indefinite: *Chickens **will** always **come** home to roost*;

2) analytically by the combination of the future tense form of the auxiliary verb *быць* and the imperfective infinitive of the main verb which express actions that will occur at some point of time in the future: – *Заўтра я **буду** **насіць** залатыя порты [Порты — адзенне] князя Рагвалода Свіслацкага* (Л. Дайнека. Меч князя Вячкі) [NRC]. In English, this meaning is expressed by the Future Continuous form: *'I suppose it should go over the desk where, Thon Taddeo –" (Why does he pause like that whenever he says it, Dom Paulo wondered irritably.) "– **will be working**."* (W. M. Miller, Jr. A Canticle For Leibowitz) [NRC].

The relative time model of verbs correlates with another point of reference, different from the moment of speech. In English there are special forms for expressing relative time. This feature is reflected in the rules of sequence of tenses in compound sentences: when the verb-predicate of the main clause is used in one of the past forms (Past Simple, Past Continuous, Past Perfect, Past Perfect Continuous), the verb in the subordinate clause must be in one of the past tenses (Past Simple, Past Continuous, Past Perfect, Past Perfect Continuous) or in the future form from the point of view of the moment in the past (Future-in-the-Past) [Vasil'yev]: *Well, my father looked in his drawers and **said** that Arthur **had taken** clothes* (M. Connelly. City of Bones); *Vernet **said** he **would take** us a safe distance out of the city* (Dan Brown. The Da Vinci Code) [NRC].

Some researchers believe that the existence of relative tenses cannot be viewed as a mere mechanistic transformation from direct speech to indirect one, since an utterance with direct speech out of the context cannot have a one-to-one correspondence with the form of this utterance with indirect speech [McKay 1978 : 9], especially in the media, where the relevance of the information reported is of paramount importance, and sequence of tenses rule is almost never used [Leitner

1986 : 197]. In the deictic concept, the relative verb tenses of the English language are the sphere of the narrative mode of interpretation [Paducheva] or secondary deixis with the location of the mental subject in the imaginary situation: *As soon as I **saw** him I **understood** that the Monkey and the Tarkaan **had set him** there to slay any who came in if he were not in their secrets ...* (C. S. Lewis. The Chronicles of Narnia. The Last Battle) [NCR]. In this example, the subordinate clause with indirect speech contains three deictic elements: *him*, *there* and the Past Perfect verb *had set* as the grammaticalization of the deictic center shift in relation to another deictic center taken as the given point of reference, expressed by the verb *saw* in Past Simple. In the Belarusian language indirect speech is characterized by the shift of the personal deictic from the 1st person to the 3d with verbal temporal deictic elements remaining unchanged: *Я зразумеў, чаго яна баіцца* (І. Шамякін. Сэрца на далоні) [NRC].

Thus, the category of time represented by the verbal forms in Belarusian and English is not identical to the physical time model, has an indexical and subjective nature, where the point of reference depends on the congruence or divergence of the moment of perception and the time of the speech act. In the relative temporal model in narrative mode of interpretation, there is a personal deixis shift in Belarusian whereas in the English language the temporal deictic centre expressed by verbs is shifted as well.

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Abstract

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Background. The article analyzes the grammatical category of time as a means of actualizing temporal deixis in Belarusian and English in the typological aspect. Traditionally, the reference point of temporal deixis is the moment of speech. Nevertheless, it is important to take into account both the speaker and the observer.

Purpose. The purpose of the research is to carry out the comparative analysis of the grammatical category of time in Belarusian and English in terms of the speaker and the observer, as well as to reveal universal characteristics and national and specific features.

Methods. The research is based on the contexts selected from Belarusian and English parallel corpuses of Russian National Corpus and Internet resources.

Results. It has been revealed that the category of time represented by the verbal forms in Belarusian and English is not identical to physical time model, has absolute and relative uses and is characterized by the indexical nature, where the point of reference depends on the congruence or divergence of the moment of perception and the time of the speech act. Belarusian and English verbs in the absolute use represent an action, event or phenomenon as preceding (past tense), simultaneous (present tense), or subsequent (future tense) to the moment of speech as the starting point of reference. The relative time model of verbs correlates with another point of reference, different from the moment of speech. In the English language there are special forms for expressing relative time. This feature is reflected in the rules of sequence of tenses in compound sentences: when the verb-predicate of the main clause is used in one of the past forms, the verb in the subordinate clause must be in one of the past tenses.

Discussion. The existence of relative tenses is not a mere mechanistic transformation from direct speech to indirect one, since an utterance with direct speech out of the context cannot have a one-to-one correspondence with the form of this utterance with indirect speech, especially in the media, where the relevance of the information reported is of paramount importance, and sequence of tenses rule is almost never used. In the deictic concept, the relative verb tenses of the English language are the sphere of the narrative mode of interpretation or secondary deixis with the location of the mental subject in the imaginary situation which is accompanied by the shift of personal and temporal deictic centres of the utterance in contrast to the Belarusian language with the shift of the deictic personal center only.

Keywords: temporal deixis, grammatical category of time, observer, speaker, perception, aspect, narrative mode of interpretation, secondary deixis.