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Grammatical Gaps and Lexical Gaps - Aspect and the Lexicon in Macedonian

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From a typological point of view, Russian and Macedonian are arguably at opposite ends of the Slavic aspectual continuum, although in certain specific features Bulgarian surpasses Macedonian in its differentiation from Russian (e.g. in its preservation of the imperfective aorist; cf. Friedman 1993). In this paper, I examine three systematic grammatical differences between Russian and Balkan Slavic aspect impacting on non-corresponding usages as well as problematic lexical phenomena.

1. Macedonian is unique among the Slavic languages in having developed an active perfect construction using the verb 'be' and the old past passive participle, e.g. *jadem sum* 'I have eaten' (literally 'I am eaten'). The model appears to be Balkan Romance (see Gołąb 1984:135), although in popular perception Albanian is also implicated (Hendriks 1976:225-26). This construction, however, is limited syntactically (definite direct objects are excluded) and semantically (it is used primarily with verbs of motion and eating, although some others are also acceptable, e.g. *pee* 'sing', *spie* 'sleep'). Moreover, it is quite differently represented in the literary language and in the dialects whence it originated. Thus, for example, a dialectal sentence such as *toj ne je den ispit úšte* 'he didn't take the exam yet' (Hendriks:226) is unacceptable to educated speakers from southwestern Macedonia either as standard or as colloquial at the local level. On the other hand, we have a gradient of acceptability in the following sentences: *konjite se napieni voda* [best] - *konjite se pieni voda* [OK] - **konjite se pieni/napieni vodata*. In general, these constructions are most common and acceptable with perfective or biaspectual intransitive verbs.

Next in the order of acceptability are perfective transitives with an indefinite object followed by imperfective transitives with an indefinite object. Definite direct objects appear to be unacceptable in such constructions. As such, they are in complementary distribution with the use of intransitives as causatives, which require definite (and hence reduplicated) direct objects, e.g. *go spijam deteto* 'I put the child to sleep', *go umram chovekot* 'I kill the person' but **spijam dete*, **umram chovek*. Cf. also the following differences involving time reference: *Jas ne sum napien pivo* 'I have drunk beer' with a specific reference such as *sega* 'now' is completely acceptable, whereas with an indefinite time reference such as *nikogash* 'never' it sounds strange. Moreover, there is also a sense that these constructions are inappropriate with verbs perceived as high-style literary. Thus for example, *chuknati sme* 'we have toasted' (literally 'we clinked') is acceptable but *nazdraveni sme* (describing the same act but with the participle from the literary verb meaning 'toast one's health') is perceived as weird. The construction thus presents problems for syntactic and lexical classification.

2. The increased productivity of the imperfectivizing suffix {-uva} in Macedonian alongside the widespread retention of older imperfectivizing {-a} is leading to a new sub-aspectual distinction (concrete accomplishment by Humphries 1997), whose interpretation is sometimes influenced by the existence of marked status categories that developed out of the opposition between the old perfect and the synthetic past tenses. The existence of this sub-aspectual distinction presents problems for classifications such as Chung and Timberlake's (1985) four-way distinction based on the intersecting oppositions open/closed and dynamic/nondynamic: E.g., Imperfectives *gleda* 'watch' (state=open+nondynamic) and *bara* 'seek' (atelic process=open+dynamic) versus perfectives *zagleda* 'notice'

(change of state=closed+nondynamic), *najde* 'find' (telic process=closed+dynamic). Macedonian {-uva} appears to combine telicity and openness, i.e. a telicized imperfective, which is not accounted for in this schema. As a result, Russian perfectives will sometimes correspond to Macedonian telicized imperfectives, as in the following example (from Humphries 1997, #65): [Macedonian] *Vo mrakot go izvadi nozhot od nozhnicata, i prefrlujajkij ja seta tezhina od ribata na levoto ramo, se navedna nazad i na rabot od chunot go preseche jazheto* = [Russian] *V temnote on vyprostal iz futljara svoj nozh i, perenesja vsju tjazhest' ryby na levoe plecho, otkinulsja nazad i pererezal lesu na planshire* (English original 'In the darkness he loosened his sheath knife and taking all the strain of the fish on his left shoulder he leaned back and cut the line against the wood of the gunwale'. Consider also the following example from Humphries (1997, #115), in which {-uva} has the meaning of an on-going present (i.e., the opposite of an iterative), with a resulting sense of 'witnessed' for native speakers: *Pak se izgubiv. ... A gledaj na Aleksandra! Nea nishto ne e smeta. Taa sekogash odlichno se snaogja vo nepoznati gradovi. Taka i tuka se snajduva besprekorno.* 'I got lost again. ... But look at Aleksandra! Nothing bothers her. She always gets around well in unfamiliar cities. So she's finding her way around perfectly even here. Similarly in Humphries (1997, #239): *Vchera deteto ja rasfrlashe/rasfrlujashe sobata* 'Yesterday the child was messing up the room' the result of the 'actuality' of the form in {-uva} is that it gives the sense that the action was witnessed, whereas the form in {-a} implies vouched-for but not witnessed. In Humphries (1997 #321): *Chuv deka Predsedatelot se opravuvaj/opravaj od povredite!* 'I heard that the President has been recovering from the injuries!' The form in {-uva} has the effect of an admirative, while that in {-a} has a dubitative effect.

3. Both Bulgarian and Macedonian make use of the opposition between the old perfect and the aorist to render effects that in Russian are rendered by means of the opposition perfective/imperfective. Thus, for example, the connection between negation and aspect (imperfectivity) in Russian is replaced to some extent in Balkan Slavic by manipulations of status as in the following example from Aleko Konstantinov's *Baj Ganjo*, in which Bulgarian and Macedonian keep perfective aspect but render the denial that anything occurred by switching from the aorist to the perfect, while Russian renders the effect with a negated imperfective (cf. Sell 1994 #248): [Bulgarian] *I v tova vreme edin negoduvashit pisu'k oglushi cjaloto zavedenie... --Kakvo stana baj Gan'o, ti li e napravil neshto?— izvikax az trevozhno i su'rdito. —Ne su'm be, brate, kakvo su'm i napravil!— otgovori spleteno baj Gan'o s rastreperan glas.* = [Macedonian] *a vo toj moment eden protesten pisok ja zaglushi celata slatkarnica... -- Shto stana, baj Ganjo, da ne e napravil ti neshto - viknav jas trevozhno i luto. -- Ne be brate, shto sum e storil - odgovori spletkano baj Ganjo, so rastreperen glas.* = [Russian] *Kak vdrug na vsju komnatu razdaetsja krik negodovanija. —Chto takoe, baj Ganju? Eto ty ej chto-nibud' sdelal?— trevozhno i serdito voskliknul ja. —Nichego ja ne delal, bratec, ej-bogu, nichego,— drozhashchim golosom shivchivo otvetil baj Ganju.* 'And just then an indignant cry deafened the entire establishment. "What's going on, Baj Ganjo? Did you do something to her?" I exclaimed troubled and angrily. "I did nothing, brother, nothing!" Baj Ganjo answered contradictorily in a trembling voice.'

In Friedman (1996), I argued that the rise of resultativity and status in Macedonian have encouraged superordinate aspect to take on greater significance than both subordinate aspect and taxis. As a result some types of encoding of temporal differences that are morphologically marked in Bulgarian are discourse

bound in Macedonian. Moreover, I noted that Bulgarian makes far more use of the old pluperfect than Macedonian, which generally substitutes a non-taxic past according to aspect -- aorist for the perfective, imperfect for the imperfective. Together, these phenomena point to a new encoding of temporality *sensu largo* in Macedonian. Related to these developments is the complete paradigmaticization of *ima*-perfect in Macedonian as opposed to the situation in Bulgarian, where it is restricted to transitive verbs with animate or human subjects and has obligatory agreement if there is an expressed object. The present discussion contributes to the picture of Macedonian as increasingly differentiated from the rest of Slavic in its grammatical development in part as a result of contact (active 'be' perfects with the old past passive participle), but also in part owing to the generalization of native material (the increasing generalization of {-uva}, which itself, however, could have been encouraged by the tendency to generalize salient morphemes in contact situations). Both of these phenomena have impact on the representation of aspect in the lexicon and the question of which features must be lexically specified. At the same time accounts of aspect based on Russian are shown to need some significant modification in order to be applicable to Balkan Slavic due to the presence of both status and resultativity.

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