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TEMPORAL EXPRESSION IN RUSSIAN, ENGLISH, AND UZBEK: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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Abstract: This article examines the theoretical foundations and practical aspects of the linguistic representation of the time category. It analyzes grammatical, syntactic, and lexical means of expressing temporal relations in their interaction at various levels of the language system. Special attention is paid to the functional-semantic approach to the study of temporality and to the comparison of means of expressing time in Russian, English, and Uzbek. The article examines the differences between grammatical tense and semantic aspect, and considers the cognitive bases of perception and linguistic formation of temporal relations. Through examples, it is demonstrated that the time category represents a multi-level system in which grammatical, syntactic, and lexical means interact to achieve precise expression of temporal meanings in various contextual conditions.

Keywords: time category, temporality, grammatical tense, aspect, temporal relations, functional-semantic field, comparative linguistics, language typology.

INTRODUCTION

The category of time occupies a central place in the system of linguistic universals and is traditionally considered one of the fundamental categories of language (Bondarko, 1987). As V. V. Vinogradov (1972) notes in his classic research, temporal relations allow the speaker to understand and convey information about the sequence, simultaneity, and duration of events. Unlike other language categories, which may be optional in certain languages, the time category is present in virtually all known languages of the world, although the ways of its expression and the degree of grammaticalization may differ significantly (Comrie, 1985). Modern linguistics provides a comprehensive approach to the study of temporal relations that goes beyond the traditional understanding of time as a grammatical category of the verb. Within functional grammar, the time category is interpreted as a multi-level and polyfunctional system that includes the interaction of grammatical forms, syntactic constructions, and lexical elements (Bondarko, 1987). This approach makes it possible to more fully describe the mechanisms of expressing temporal meanings and to understand the peculiarities of their realization in different languages. The relevance of the research is determined by the need for a deeper understanding of how language systems reflect universal and language-specific aspects of human perception of time. A typological analysis of the means of expressing time in genetically unrelated languages makes it possible to identify both universal patterns and unique characteristics of each particular language.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The theoretical basis for studying the time category in linguistics relies on several key concepts developed over the last century. One of the key problems in linguistic theory is the distinction between grammatical tense and grammatical aspect. Although these categories often interact and may be encoded by a single morphological form, their functional purpose differs

significantly. According to Bernard Comrie's definition (1985), grammatical tense is a category that expresses the relation of the time of an event to the moment of speech. In other words, tense localizes an event in relation to the act of communication. Bernard Comrie identifies three main temporal forms found in languages of the world: past tense, present tense, and future tense, although the degree of their grammaticalization varies in different languages. Aspect, according to Yu. S. Maslov's definition (1997), characterizes the internal temporal structure of an event. Aspect indicates whether an action is completed or uncompleted, its iterativity, duration, and other semantic parameters. Unlike tense, which is always deictic (directed toward the moment of speech), aspect only sometimes contains a deictic component. This distinction is particularly important in the analysis of Slavic languages, in which aspect is a fully functional grammatical category. In Russian, for example, the opposition of perfective and imperfective aspects penetrates the entire verbal system and interacts with temporal forms at all levels (Maslov, 1997; Vinogradov, 1972).

A significant influence on the development of the theory of grammatical tense was exerted by the system proposed by Hans Reichenbach (1947). Reichenbach proposed analyzing temporal relations with the help of three temporal points: the point of event (E) — the temporal moment at which the described event occurs; the point of speech (S) — the moment at which the utterance occurs; and the point of reference (R) — an auxiliary point relative to which the location of the event is determined and often indicates indirect time. The Reichenbachian system makes it possible to describe not only simple tenses (present, past, future) but also complex temporal structures, such as perfect and pluperfect. For example, in English, the form "has written" can be described as a situation in which the point of event (E) precedes the point of speech (S) but has relevance at the present moment through the introduction of a point of reference. Despite some critical remarks regarding the universality of Reichenbach's model, its principles remain useful for contrastive analysis of the temporal systems of different languages.

One of the most fruitful approaches to studying the time category is the concept of functional-semantic fields (FSF) developed by A. V. Bondarko (1987, 1990). According to this theory, the linguistic means of expressing a particular meaning or function form a functional-semantic field—a system of units at different language levels that are united by the commonality of function and are in relations of interaction. The functional-semantic field of time includes means of expressing temporal meanings at all levels of the language system: at the morphological level through verbal forms of tense and aspect; at the syntactic level through syntactic constructions expressing temporal relations; at the lexical level through adverbs of time, temporal prepositions, and conjunctions; at the suprasegmental level through intonational means. The center of the functional-semantic field of time is constituted by verbal forms (especially in languages with developed morphology), while peripheral elements of the field are formed by syntactic constructions and lexical units. The presence of such a multi-level field allows the language to provide variability in the expression of one and the same temporal meaning depending on contextual and communicative factors (Bondarko, 1990).

Modern research in cognitive linguistics (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Evans, 2004) shows that the expression of temporal relations in language is connected with fundamental cognitive structures and metaphorical schemes that humans use to understand the abstract concept of time. One of the most universal cognitive metaphors structuring the expression of time in language is the metaphor "Time as Space." According to this metaphor, time is understood and expressed through spatial categories. Vertical and horizontal orientation of time, as well as understanding time as a flowing stream, reflect deep cognitive structures that are universal for humanity but receive specific expression in different languages. Deixis—the process by which the meaning of an expression

depends on the context of utterance (Levinson, 1983)—also plays a critical role in the expression of time. Temporal deixis is accomplished through reference to the moment of speech as the reference point, which allows the speaker and listener to mutually orient themselves in time.

METHODOLOGY

This research is conducted within the framework of a comparative-typological approach to the study of languages. The research material consists of examples from three genetically unrelated languages: Russian (Slavic family), English (Germanic family), and Uzbek (Turkic family). The choice of these three languages is motivated by their typological differences in ways of expressing temporal relations: Russian is characterized by a high degree of grammaticalization of aspect-tense forms; English demonstrates a developed system of analytic constructions; Uzbek represents an agglutinative type using suffixal expression of temporal meanings. The research includes analysis of means of expressing time at three main levels of the language system: morphological (grammatical forms), syntactic (syntactic constructions and sentence formation methods), and lexical (lexical units with temporal meaning). Special attention is paid to the interaction of these levels in the expression of complex temporal relations. The methodological approach is based on the principles of functional grammar developed by A. V. Bondarko, which allows viewing the time category as a multi-level system of interacting means united by commonality of function. The analysis uses the contrastive method, which makes it possible to identify both universal patterns in the expression of time and language-specific features of each of the studied languages. Examples are selected from various types of discourse and contexts to ensure material representativeness. In analyzing phraseological units, a structural-semantic approach is used, allowing identification of ways of encoding temporal meanings in fixed expressions. Cognitive analysis is aimed at revealing metaphorical and metonymical models underlying the expression of time in languages.

DISCUSSION

In Russian, the system of grammatical tense is traditionally described as tripartite: past, present, and future tense. However, this system functions in close connection with the category of aspect, which makes the Russian verbal system one of the most complex in European languages. Past tense is formed by adding the suffix *-l-* to the infinitival stem of the verb and does not distinguish persons and numbers but agrees in gender and number with the subject: *chitál* (read), *chitála*, *chitálo*, *chitáli*. The meaning of past tense can be supplemented by the aspectual paradigm: imperfective aspect indicates incompleteness of the action in the past (*chitál*—the process of reading), whereas perfective aspect denotes a completed action (*prochitál*—an action whose result is evident). For example, in the context "Profesor chitál léktsiu v techénii dvúkh chasóv" (The professor was reading a lecture for two hours) the imperfective aspect is used, indicating process, whereas "Profesor prochitál léktsiu za soróck minút" (The professor read the lecture in forty minutes) with the perfective aspect emphasizes result and completeness.

Present tense in Russian is formed synthetically using the personal endings of verbs of the first and second conjugations: *chitáyu* (I read), *chitáesh*, *chitáet*, *chitáem*, *chitáete*, *chitáyut*. An important characteristic is that present tense in Russian is theoretically possible only for imperfective verbs. Perfective verbs in the present tense form denote future action: "Ya pishu pis'mó" (I am writing a letter—present, imperfective aspect) versus "Ya napishú pis'mó" (I will write a letter—future, perfective aspect). Future tense in Russian can be expressed in two ways. The synthetic form is created from perfective verbs by adding personal endings to the stem: *napishú*, *napishésh*, *napishét*, *napishém*, *napishéte*, *napishút*. The analytic form is created using the

auxiliary verb *byt'* (to be) in the present tense plus the infinitive of an imperfective verb: *búdu chitat'*, *búdesh chitat'*, *búdet chitat'*, etc. The analytic form emphasizes the processual character of the future action. When comparing "Ya napishú stat'yú zavtra" (I will write an article tomorrow—perfective aspect, synthetic future—emphasis on result) and "Ya búdu pisat' stat'yú zavtra" (I will be writing an article tomorrow—imperfective aspect, analytic future—emphasis on process), significant differences in the way of expressing temporal relations become apparent.

The English language has a different structure of the temporal system compared to Russian. In English, four main temporal planes are distinguished: present, past, future, and relative temporal relations, which can be expressed in each of these planes. For each temporal plane, two aspectual forms are characteristic: Simple and Perfect. In addition, English has the Progressive form, which can be combined with other forms. Thus, English provides diverse means of expressing temporal meanings. In present tense, the form "reads" is used for habitual actions, "is reading" for an action occurring at the moment of speech, "has read" for an action completed by the present moment, and "has been reading" for an action beginning in the past and continuing to the present with indication of duration. Examples in context demonstrate these distinctions: "The manager reviews the report every Monday" (simple present, habitual action), "The manager is reviewing the report right now" (present progressive, action occurring at the moment of speech), "The manager has reviewed the report" (present perfect, action completed by the present moment but having relevance in the present), "The manager has been reviewing the report since morning" (present perfect progressive, action beginning in the past and continuing to the present with indication of duration). Similarly in past tense: "The manager reviewed the report last week" (simple past, completed action), "The manager was reviewing the report when I called him" (past progressive, action in process upon the occurrence of another event), "The manager had reviewed the report before the meeting" (pluperfect, action preceding another action in the past).

Uzbek, belonging to the Turkic family, has a significantly different structure for expressing temporal relations compared to Slavic and Germanic languages. In Uzbek, the time category is expressed in an agglutinative manner through the affixation of suffixes to the verbal stem. The present-future tense is formed using the suffixes *-adi/-adi/-adi/-adi* (third person) and personal endings: *rahbar hisobotni tekshiradi* (The manager checks/will check the report). The definite past tense is formed using the suffix *-di/-di/-di/-di*: *rahbar hisobotni tekshirdi* (The manager checked the report). The indefinite past tense is formed using the suffix *-gan/-gan/-qan/-qan* and expresses an action that occurred in the past but whose temporal point is not specified: *rahbar hisobotni tekshirgan* (The manager was checking the report [at some point]). Future tense is formed using the suffixes *-ajotgan/-ojotgan/-ajotgan/-ojotgan* or an analytic construction with an auxiliary verb. An important characteristic of Uzbek is the presence of the grammatical category of the permansive (state), expressed by the suffix *-ib* and conveying resultative meaning: *men kitobni o'qib qo'ydim* (I read and left the book in a read state).

In addition to morphological means, temporal relations in the sentence and text are expressed through syntactic constructions. Temporal subordinate clauses are introduced by conjunctions that establish different types of temporal relations between events in the main and subordinate clauses. In Russian, such constructions can be represented by expressions like "Kak tol'ko zakónchilsya doklad, nachalás' diskússiya" (As soon as the report ended, the discussion began—the conjunction *kak tol'ko* expresses immediate succession of one event after another), "Kogdá zakónchilsya doklad, nachalás' diskússiya" (When the report ended, the discussion began—the conjunction *kogdá* expresses simultaneity of events in terms of their completion), "Prézhde chem nachat' diskússiyu, dokladchik otvetíl na voprósy" (Before beginning the discussion, the speaker answered questions—

the conjunction *prézhde chem* expresses precedence of an event), "Posléy togo kak zakónchilsya doklad, nachalás' diskússiya" (After the report ended, the discussion began—the conjunction *posléy togo kak* explicitly marks succession). Similarly in English: "As soon as the presentation ended, the discussion began" (*as soon as*—immediate succession), "When the presentation ended, the discussion began" (*when*—simultaneity in terms of completion), "Before the discussion started, the speaker answered questions" (*before*—precedence), "After the presentation ended, the discussion began" (*after*—explicit marking of succession). In Uzbek: "*Ma'ruza tugashi bilan muhokama boshlandi*" (With the ending of the presentation, the discussion began—immediate succession), "*Ma'ruza tugagach, muhokama boshlandi*" (After the presentation ended, the discussion began), "*Muhokama boshlashdan avval, ma'ruzachi savolga javob berdi*" (Before the discussion began, the speaker answered the question).

Temporal relations between events can also be expressed through coordinating constructions in which events are presented in a particular sequence. The order of succession of clauses in this case becomes a way of expressing temporal sequence. An example from Russian "Ya otkryl dver', voshyol v komnátu, vklyúchil svet i sel za stol" (I opened the door, entered the room, turned on the light, and sat down at the desk) demonstrates that the sequence of actions reflects their chronological order. The grammatical forms (all verbs in the same aspect—perfective) support this linear structure. Similarly in English: "I opened the door, entered the room, turned on the light, and sat down at the desk." And in Uzbek: "*Men eshikni ochdum, xonaga kirdim, chiroqni yoqdim va stol oldida o'tirdim*" (I opened the door, entered the room, turned on the light, and sat down at the desk).

Lexical units possessing temporal semantics form the periphery of the functional-semantic field of time. These include adverbs of time, prepositions, conjunctions, and certain other parts of speech with temporal meaning. Temporal adverbs express various parameters of temporal relations: localization in absolute or relative time, distance from the moment of speech, duration, repetition, etc. Adverbs expressing division into past, present, and future include in Russian *vchera* (yesterday), *ran'she* (earlier); in English—*yesterday*, *earlier*; in Uzbek—*kecha* (yesterday), *avval* (earlier). For present time: *seychas* (now), *teper'* (now) in Russian; *now*, *today* in English; *hozir* (now), *bugun* (today) in Uzbek. For future time: *zavtra* (tomorrow), *pozhe* (later) in Russian; *tomorrow*, *later* in English; *erta* (tomorrow), *keyinroq* (later) in Uzbek. Adverbs expressing repetition and periodicity include *chasto* (often), *inogda* (sometimes), *redko* (rarely) in Russian; *often*, *sometimes*, *rarely* in English; *tez-tez* (often), *ba'zan* (sometimes), *kam* (rarely) in Uzbek. *Vsegda* (always) and *nikogda* (never) correspond to *always* and *never*; *har doim* (always) and *hech qachon* (never) in Uzbek. An example of using temporal adverbs—"My chasto vstretcháemsya s kollegámi pozhe rabóty" (We often meet with colleagues after work)—demonstrates that temporal adverbs clarify frequency and temporal localization. In English, "We often meet with colleagues after work tomorrow," the adverb *often* indicates repetition and *tomorrow* indicates future time. In Uzbek, "*Biz hamkasalarimiz bilan ish tugagach tez-tez va'ta o'tishamiz*" (We often meet with colleagues after work).

Prepositions in Russian and English, as well as postpositions in Uzbek, are capable of expressing various types of temporal relations. Russian prepositions of time include *v*, *na*, *pri*, *vo vremya*, *v techéniye*, *v prodolzhéniye*, *posléy*, *péred*, *do*, *s*, *cherez*. Examples of their use: *v pyatnitsu* (on Friday—on a specific day), *v techéniye nedéli* (within a week—within a specific period), *posléy sobrániya* (after the meeting—succession of event), *za den' do vstrechi* (a day before the meeting—precedence). English prepositions of time include *at*, *on*, *in*, *during*, *for*, *after*, *before*, *since*, *until*, *within* with examples: *at 3 o'clock* (at a specific moment of time), *on Monday* (on a specific day), *during the meeting* (during an event), *for two weeks* (during a period). Uzbek postpositions include *oldin* (before), *keyin* (after), *vaqtida* (during), *davomida* (during). Examples:

boshliqning kelishidan oldin (before the manager's arrival), *uchrashuv vaqtida* (during the meeting), *qor kuni davomida* (during the snowy day).

Of particular interest is the expression of temporal relations through phraseological units—fixed expressions that are semantically and structurally irreducible to the sum of their constituent components (Vinogradov, 1972). Phraseological units with temporal meaning form a special corpus of expressions that reflect culturally-specific ways of perceiving and understanding time. In Russian, such expressions include "*bezhat' vremya*" (time runs—metaphorical designation of the fast passage of time), "*vpustu potratit' vremya*" (waste time—expression of inefficient use of temporal resource), "*kak tol'ko mozhno*" (as soon as possible—urgency, minimal delay), "*na dnyakh*" (in a few days—in the near future). Examples in context: "*Vremya bezhit nezametno, kogda chelovek zanyat interesnoy rabotoy*" (Time flies unnoticed when a person is engaged in interesting work—metaphor of time's movement), "*My potratili vpustu tselyю nedelyu na etu zadachu*" (We wasted an entire week on this task—temporal expression where time figures as a valuable resource). In English, phraseological units with temporal content include "*in the long run*" (ultimately, in the end), "*day in and day out*" (day after day, constantly), "*against time*" (in a hurry, against time), "*around the clock*" (twenty-four hours), "*in the blink of an eye*" (in an instant, very quickly). Examples: "*We worked against time to finish the project*" (expression of urgency and haste), "*In the long run, this investment will be profitable*" (expression of temporal perspective). In Uzbek, phraseological units include "*vaqti-paytiga*" (in good time, at the right moment), "*kun sayin*" (day by day, daily), "*tumani davomida*" (during a whole period), "*bir dum*" (suddenly, unexpectedly), "*tez orada*" (soon, in the near future).

The comparison of systems of expressing time in Russian, English, and Uzbek reveals significant differences in the degree of grammaticalization and types of lexicalization of temporal meanings. Russian is characterized by a high degree of grammaticalization of tense and aspect at the morphological level. Aspect of the verb is a mandatory grammatical category inextricably linked with temporal forms. This allows the speaker to express subtle distinctions between duration, resultativity, and iterativity of action. English has less developed verb morphology (especially compared to Russian) but compensates for this through a developed system of analytic forms (perfect, progressive aspect) and extensive use of auxiliary verbs. English pays significant attention to expressing aspectual meanings through the progressive form. Uzbek, as an agglutinative language, uses suffixal expression of time; however, the degree of grammaticalization of aspectual distinctions is less evident than in Russian. Instead, Uzbek often relies on context, adverbs, and lexical means to express aspectual meanings.

Perfect is one of the most interesting categories for typological comparison, as in different languages it is expressed in various ways and has different functions. In Russian, the perfect meaning (an action completed by the present moment and having result) is expressed by the perfective aspect form: "*Ya prochitál etu knigu*" (I read this book—I read it, the book is in my head, I know its content). In English, perfect is formed by an analytic form with the auxiliary verb *have*: "*I have read this book*" (an action begun in the past and having result in the present; the speaker can return to this book). In Uzbek, perfect meaning can be expressed in various ways: by the suffix of indefinite past tense "*Men bu kitobni o'qigan*" (I read this book—result in present time) or by a periphrastic construction "*Men kitobni o'qib qo'ydim*" (I read and left the book—permansive meaning).

The expression of time is not limited to proper linguistic means; it is closely connected with pragmatic and discourse aspects of communication. Deixis—the process by which the meaning of an expression depends on the context of utterance (Levinson, 1983)—is accomplished through

reference to the moment of speech as the reference point. Temporal deictic expressions include absolute deictic expressions such as *vchera*, *segódnya*, *zavtra* (yesterday, today, tomorrow in Russian), *yesterday*, *today*, *tomorrow* in English, *kecha*, *bugun*, *erta* in Uzbek, and relative deictic expressions such as *ran'she*, *pozhe*, *v to vremya* (earlier, later, at that time in Russian), *earlier*, *later*, *at that time* in English. An example of deixis use in discourse: Speaker 1 asks "*Kogdá sostóitsya vstrecha?*" (When will the meeting take place?—When = at what moment in time?), Speaker 2 answers "*Zavtra v poldn*" (Tomorrow at noon—tomorrow = the day after the day of speech; noon = a specific moment in time on that day). In narrative texts, the phenomenon of tense shift is observed, when a speaker transitions from one temporal form to another to achieve particular discourse effects. The historical present—the use of present tense to convey past events with the aim of bringing them closer to the reader and creating a sense of vivid narrative. Russian example: "*On vkhódit v komnátu. Smótrit po storonám. Vídit pis'mó na stolé. Otkryvàet konvért drózhasheĭ rukóĭ.*" (He enters the room. He looks around. He sees a letter on the table. He opens the envelope with a trembling hand.—Instead of: he entered, he looked, he saw, etc.) English example: "*He walks into the room. He looks around. He sees a letter on the desk. He opens the envelope with trembling hands.*" Uzbek example: "*U xonaga kiradi. Atrofi tekshiradi. Stol ustida xatni ko'radi. Konvertni titrab oching koradi.*"

The expression of time in language is also based on fundamental cognitive structures and metaphorical schemes (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980; Evans, 2004). One of the most universal cognitive metaphors structuring the expression of time in language is the metaphor "Time as Space." Vertical orientation of time and horizontal linear orientation of time can be directed from left to right (in languages with left-to-right writing orientation). In Russian, this is expressed as "*idti v budúshcheye*" (go into the future), "*obrashchát'sya v proshlóye*" (turn back to the past); in English "*move forward in time*," "*look back at the past*"; in Uzbek "*kelajakka borish*" (go into the future), "*o'tmisga qaytarish*" (return to the past). Time can also be understood as the movement of a stream of time in which the observer is either stationary (static point) or moving participant. In the model where time moves past a stationary observer: in Russian "*leto proshló*" (summer passed), "*zima podkhódit*" (winter is approaching); in English "*the summer has passed*," "*winter is approaching*." In the model where the observer moves through the field of time: in Russian "*my vstúpili v nóvyy god*" (we entered a new year), "*my priblizháemsya k kontsu mesyátsa*" (we are approaching the end of the month); in English "*we're entering a new era*," "*we're approaching the deadline*."

CONCLUSION

The analysis of the linguistic representation of the time category shows that this phenomenon represents a multi-level and multi-faceted system in which the means of different language levels interact. Time is not a monolithic grammatical category but rather a functional-semantic field in which grammatical, syntactic, lexical, and discourse means work in concert to achieve precise expression of temporal relations. The comparative analysis of three genetically unrelated languages (Russian, English, and Uzbek) reveals both universal principles of time expression and unique typological characteristics of each language. Russian is characterized by high grammaticalization of aspectual distinctions; English relies on analytic constructions and progressive aspect; Uzbek uses agglutinative suffixes and contextual means. The cognitive approach to the study of temporality allows us to understand that the expression of time in language is based on fundamental metaphorical schemes, such as "Time as Space" and "Time as Motion," which reflect universal aspects of human perception and understanding of time.

The research revealed that temporal relations can be transmitted by various means depending on the structural characteristics of a language. Despite typological differences among the studied languages, the principles of expressing temporal relations in many cases prove to be similar, indicating the presence of universal patterns in the organization of temporality. Phraseological units demonstrate culture-specific ways of conceptualizing time that reflect unique characteristics of each language community. The pragmatic and discourse aspects of expressing time, including the deictic character of temporal forms and phenomena of tense shift in narrative, show that the expression of time is deeply embedded in the communicative context and the discourse goals of the speaker.

Further research in the field of temporality should give greater attention to the interaction between grammatical tense, aspect, and modality; the role of lexical and phraseological means in expressing complex temporal relations; the discourse functions of temporal forms in various text types; cross-cultural differences in the perception and expression of time in language. Research into phraseological units with temporal meaning in a diachronic perspective could shed light on the evolution of ways of conceptualizing time in the consciousness of language speakers. Such a comprehensive approach to the study of the time category will not only allow better understanding of the internal structure of language systems but also expand our understanding of the relationship between language, thought, and reality. Of particular importance is the study of temporality in the context of digital communication and new forms of discourse, where traditional means of expressing time may undergo significant changes. Moreover, the teaching of Russian, English, and Uzbek as foreign languages should pay close attention to differences in the expression of tense and aspect, as these categories often cause difficulties for non-native learners.

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