

VARIOUS CRITERIA OF INTRALINGUAL ASPECTUAL CATEGORIZATION

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Grammatical, lexical-grammatical, lexical, contextual and prosodic means in Modern English are part of the aspectual conceptual category, consisting of marked and unmarked members of the opposition. In the present article we would like to analyze some minor aspectual means existing in English, with occasional examples concerning Romanian and some other European languages. Diachronically the dominant categorial forms can become subservient to more competitive means. In Early English lexical and contextual means ceded the priority to the perfective-imperfective opposition, which in its turn is now subservient to the taxonomy of continuous – non-continuous aspect. In the Romance languages the durative forms have mainly a stylistic aspectual function. The same tendency in the use of continuous aspect in the English language.

Keywords: *grammatical category, lexical-grammatical category, lexical aspectual forms; marked forms, unmarked forms, conceptual category.*

DIFERITE CRITERII DE CATEGORISIRE ASPECTUALĂ INTRALINGUALĂ

Categoria conceptuală aspectuală în limba engleză contemporană este exprimată de mijloace gramaticale, lexical-gramaticale, lexicale, contextuale și prozodice, existente și în alte limbi cu prevalarea unor sau altor forme. În prezenta lucrare sunt analizate unele mijloace aspectuale minore folosite în limba engleză contemporană cu exemple ocazionale din română și din alte limbi. În plan diacronic, formele categoriale dominante pot ceda prioritatea altor mijloace aspectuale. În engleza veche, mijloacele lexicale și contextuale au cedat întâietatea taxonomiei perfect/imperfect, care, la rândul ei, e întrecută de formele categoriale aspectuale durative. Sunt analizate exemple de forme aspectuale în limbile engleză, română, spaniolă, portugheză și italiană. În limbile romanice formele durative aspectuale sunt folosite preponderent în plan metasemiotic. Formele continue în limba engleză au aceeași tendința de a fi folosite în scopuri stilistice.

Cuvinte-cheie: *categorie lexicală, categorie lexical-gramaticală, forme durative, categorie conceptuală, forme marcate, forme nemarcate, taxonomie.*

The category of aspect in various languages has been scientifically analyzed by linguists. Still there are plenty of controversial points of view as to the categorization criteria. Controversy on the emic level leads to various interpretations and confusion in teaching/learning a foreign language. Prof. M.Blokh considers that the aspective meaning of the verb, as different from its temporal meaning, reflects the inherent mode of the realization of the process irrespective of its timing. The aspective meaning can be in-built in the semantic structure of the verb, forming an invariable, derivative category. The various lexical aspective meanings have been generalized by the verb in its subclass division into limitive and unlimitive sets, on the whole, this division is loose, and the demarcation line between the sets is easily trespassed both ways [1, p.155]. In Modern English the Continuous/ non-Continuous aspectual opposition is dominating. But opinions have been voiced that in English there are plenty of lexical and lexical grammatical aspectual means, dominant in some other languages. In various publications, including the online ones in Glottopedia, Wikipedia et al, plenty of terms representing mainly the Aktionsart metalanguage have been put forward: *perfect, perfective, momentaneous, ingressive, evolutive, delimitative, completed, telic, atelic, accomplishment, achievement, saturative, exhaustive, finite, terminative*, etc. [5,6]. In internet sources we find a list of terms representing the lexical, lexical-grammatical and grammatical taxonomies: perfective: *I struck the bell* (non-temporal event). Momentaneous or momentaneous actions: *The mouse squeaked once*. Perfect: *I have arrived*. Recent perfect or after perfect: *I just ate* or. Prospective: *I am about to eat, I am going to eat*. Imperfective – both lexical and grammatical: *I am walking to work* and *I walk to work every day*. Continuous or Progressive – grammatical and lexical: *I am eating, I know*. Stative: *I know French*. Habitual: *I used to walk home from work, I would walk home from work every day, I walk home from work every day*. Gnomic/generic: *Fish swim and birds fly* expressing general truths. Episodic: *The bird flew*. Inceptive or ingressive: *I started to run*. Inchoative: *The flowers started to bloom*. Terminative or cessative: *I finished my meal*. Defective: *I almost fell*. Pausative: *I stopped working for a while*. Resumptive: *I resumed sleeping*. Punctual: *I slept*. Durative: *I slept for a while*. Delimitative: *I slept for an hour*. Protractive: *The argument went on and on*. Iterative: *I read the same books again and again*.

Frequentative: *It sparkled*. Experiential: *I have gone to school many times*. Intentional: *I listened carefully*. Accidental: *I accidentally knocked over the chair*. Intensive: *It glared*. Moderative: *It shone*. Attenuative: *It glimmered* [7]. Various aspectual meanings and synonymous metalinguistic units used in the field. Aspectual meanings are expressed not only by verbs but also by other parts of speech and linguistic means like: adverbs, nouns (including the deverbal ones) adjectives, etc. Stylistic, phonological syntactic, suprasyntactic and contextual means can also contribute to aspectual categorial intensification. Thus, in "The role of Aktionsart in deverbal nouns: State nominalizations across languages" by Antonio Fa' Bregas, Rafael Marin" plenty of examples are aduced of various lexical aspectual meanings expressed by nouns in English and Italian [8]. As to lexical durative aspect we have to mention that in some grammar books we find the rule that *putandi* and *sentiendi* verbs should not be used in the continuous aspect. A closer inspection of this phenomenon shows that they can be used in the continuous aspect metasemiotically. Verbs like "believe, see", etc. express the durative aspect lexically and they are used in the grammatical continuous form when there is a necessity to intensify the durative meaning, to make it more emphatic, more expressive: *But I am seeing you, you are there behind the tree! Am I really hearing what you are saying?* Here are some verbs, which possess lexical durative aspectuality and in non-expressive style they are not used in the grammatical continuous form: *see, feel, taste, observe, agree, disagree, believe, disbelieve, differ, doubt, find, foresee, forget, imagine, hear, know, mean, notice, recall, recognize, recollect, remember, suppose, think, trust, distrust, understand, smell, detest, forgive, hate, like, dislike, love, mind, please, displeas, prefer, want, wish, desire, hear, sound, look, appear, consider, expect, hope, loathe, refuse, regret, be, belong to, contain, consist of, cost, depend on, deserve, have, hold, matter, own, resemble, etc.* In their continuous the degree of expressivity amplified: *God was witness to all their calamities. He was seeing them robbed. He was seeing them famish hour by hour. He was seeing them die.* (The stylistic impact here is further enhanced by the repetition of *was seeing* in the 3 sentences.) *I am seeing a brown colour. You are seeing this place for the last time. I am hearing it better now. Am I really hearing a voice at last! The dog was smelling the lamp post. She was smelling the fish to find out whether it was fit to eat. She was tasting the sauce to find out whether it was salt or sugar she had put into it. She was feeling the sun extremely. She was nothing like me, so she must be a stranger whom I was observing, though in a most bewildering way, etc.* The same could be said of the verbs used with durative adverbs: *always, often, constantly, permanently, occasionally, usually, etc.* The English people regularly use the grammatical continuous aspect with durative adverbs in their emphatic speech, to make it more expressive: *He is always doing things like that. They were always worrying. He was permanently promising to come.* The choice of the continuous aspect depends only on the action being viewed in progress. This is the only criterion that matters when an aspectual form is chosen. When there is a necessity to intensify the categorial aspectual meaning, English people in emotionally coloured situations use the durative forms: *You don't see me. Oh, I see you. No, you don't! But I am seeing you! You are behind the bush!* Thus, the continuous forms are also used for stylistic purposes. The emphatic use of *seeing* and *always* is accompanied by emotionally coloured prosodic means: wide range, high fall, slowed down tempo, increased loudness, etc. The categorial meaning discloses the nature of development of the verbal action, on which ground the suggested name for the category as a whole will be "development" or "duration". Simultaneous use of grammatical, lexical-grammatical, grammatical, lexical, metasemiotic and suprasyntactic aspectual means should be taken into consideration in the process of categorization. The means of expression of the conceptual category of aspect in the confronted languages should be analyzed in order to single out coincidences and non-coincidences and use them in the teaching/learning process. Besides the continuous/non-continuous opposition we find in some works the taxonomies of **perfect/non-perfect aspect** and **perfect/continuous aspect**. There is a metalinguistic confusion in case of the terms *perfect* and *perfective*. The original meaning of the Latin term **perfect** was a **finished action** and formed an aspectual opposition with **imperfect forms** (*unfinished actions*). This aspectual category still exists in many languages. Gradually the term **perfect** acquired the meaning of *anteriority*. That is why now it would be more convenient to use the term **perfective** in the meaning of *finished action* and the term **perfect** to express the meaning of *anteriority*. A perfect form in English, depending on the context, may express either a finished or an unfinished action [3, p.234-236]. Taxis as a historical linguistic category developed various means of expressing anteriority in the Indo-European languages. In English, beginning with the Old Period, the grammatical categorial forms started to develop (influenced by Latin) to support the already existing lexical and contextual means. At present the English category of taxis is one of the basic

grammatical morphological categories which comprise the whole system of the finite and non-finite verb forms. The opposition of anteriority - simultaneity can be expressed in English purely grammatically, lexico-grammatically and lexically using contextual and lexical markers, like adverbial modifiers, etc. We should carefully keep apart the conceptual category of anteriority and the grammatical one as constituted by the oppositions of the relevant categorial forms. The function of anteriority is universal in the sense that in all the languages we are supposed to be able to express the anteriority of an action to another action or moment of speech on the axis of time. The fact that the category of taxis is interconnected with other grammatical categories (aspect, voice, mood, etc.) and expressed by certain grammatical forms results in different interpretations and various metalinguistic units. At present in all the European languages there is a tendency of perfect forms to gradually get out of usage. The simplification of the system of perfect forms is compensated by lexical and contextual means getting a more important function in expressing anteriority within the universal category of taxis. Different meanings can be expressed by one and the same form in different contexts or by changing the lexical character of the verb. Linguistic categories are in a state of permanent change [2, p.122-143]. Taxis is grammatically expressed by finite and non-finite perfect forms, which are interpreted as expressing anteriority, a complete action, result, tense. But more linguists (E.Benveniste, A.Smirnitsky, R.Allen, H.Palmer, O.Akhmanova) consider anteriority to be the main categorial meaning of finite and non-finite perfect forms [2, p.122-143]. At the same time they express finished/unfinished/durative actions. In Romanian the process of perfect forms getting out of use is more advanced than in English. In the majority of cases taxis is expressed by lexical and grammatical means. Lexical means are now in the process of gaining more ground than the grammatical ones. As to the use in different functional styles it has been observed that the non-finite perfect forms are practically not used in journalese, either in British or American newspapers. As far as finite perfect forms are concerned, preference is given to present perfect, the form that is best suited to establish a correlation between past and present, on the one hand, and the connection between the performer and the undergoer of the speech event, on the other. The inclusive perfect forms usually express an imperfective (unfinished) anterior action, which includes the present moment: *I have lived here for many years and I am not intending to move to any other place*. This example would be in aspectual opposition of perfective/imperfective to *I have lived here for many years and now I move to a new place* (finished anterior action). At the same time both examples could be part of the marked member of the opposition of Continuous/non-continuous aspect. We should take here into consideration the lexical durative aspectual lexical meaning of the verb 'to live', which will contribute to the intensification of the general durative meaning combined with the continuous form, where its expressivity is considerably enhanced: *I have been living here for many years*. In the examples like "*He had been reading his book for two hours before I came back*" we observe that the prevailing aspectual meaning is that of a continuous action (unfinished action) in development during a certain period of time before another action in the past (past anteriority) [3, p.236]. One of the most important elements of all the perfect forms of the verbs in English is **past participle or participle II**, expressing anteriority in the purest way and contextually finished or unfinished actions. It can be used separately and synthetically express anteriority and voice, serve to form a number of perfect and passive voice analytical forms. Participle I and participle II form an opposition: *reading – read, citind – citit; writing – written, scriind – scris; seeing – seen, văzând - văzut; creating – created, creând – creat*. We observe three distinct categorial oppositions, that of simultaneity vs. anteriority (category of taxis), active vs. passive (category of voice) and continuous vs. non-continuous (category of aspect). Some intransitive verbs gradually acquire transitive submeanings: *Running a factory is not easy. The factory is run well. He was laughed at – El a fost luat în râs* [3, p.236]. The perfect non-finite forms express a more distinct than the finite forms. The past participle expresses anteriority in the purest way. Examples of **participle II** used in the function of an attribute: *The house built a hundred years ago is still in a very good state. Casa construită o sută de ani în urmă s-a păstrat în condiții foarte bune*. In both languages a complete coincidence is attested of **past participles** in attributive functions. A.Smirnitsky thinks that "is gone" may be identical to the combination "have gone" in a transferred meaning "he died" like in the sentence "*Poor Mr. Brown is (has) gone. He has left us. He has joined the great majority*". "*Where is Mr. Brown? He is gone (=has gone). He will be back in an hour*" In case of transitive verbs the past participle has a passive meaning closely connected with "perfectivity" (finished action) (*The letter written yesterday was sent in time.*) [4, p.278-288]. The past participle is regularly confronted the Romanian with participiul trecut: *The methodology tested in the Indo-European field set the pattern. Metoda experimentată*

în domeniul indo-european a devenit exemplară. The English participle II can correspond to the Romanian mai mult ca perfectul: *On the staircase Charny met only some officers, friends of his, informed beforehand. Pe scări, Charny întâlnește numai câțiva ofițeri, prieteni de ai săi, care fusese anunțați (=anunțați) din timp.* Past participle can be used in the functions of **a)** attributive - *The data obtained are being carefully analyzed and studied. Datele obținute sunt analizate și studiate atent;* In both languages the participles have the function of attributes. **b)** adverbial modifier of time - *Asked (being asked) to comment about the U.N. resolution tabled by the Afro-Asian countries, the Prime Minister replied... Întrebat (fînd întrebat, când a fost întrebat) să comenteze rezoluția ONU propusă de țările Afro-Asiatice, Primul Ministru a răspuns...;* The English participle „asked” has the function of adverbial modifier of time and could be substituted by the passive voice form of the present participle „being asked”. The form „tabled” has the function of an attribute; **c)** adverbial modifier of condition - *If given the opportunity, this industry will rapidly develop. Această industrie se va dezvolta rapid, dacă vor fi create posibilități favorabile (=Posibilități fiind date, această industrie se va dezvolta rapid);* **d)** adverbial modifier of concession- *But the Right-wing Labour leaders, though forced to give way on some questions, will stick to their policies. Liderii laburiști de dreapta, deși forțați să cedeze în unele probleme, vor susține politica lor;* **e)** complex object with past participle - *We hope to see this issue raised in all trades councils, in every union. Noi sperăm să vedem această problemă ridicată în fiecare sindicat.* The construction of complex object with past participle in English corresponds to a structure of complex object with subjunctive in the meaning of future and in the second complex object with past participle [2, p.152-164]. Thus, we can state that past participle express anteriority and finished actions in cases when the action is preceding the moment of speech. Thus we can conclude that the conceptual category aspect is expressed by a variety of grammatical, lexical-grammatical and lexical means. The continuous and perfect aspectual forms are more or less well described in the linguistics. The lexical aspectual elements are still to become the object of serious linguistic and linguo-stylistic research. Here we should scrutinize all the lexical grammatical classes of lexemes, the syntactic and suprasyntactic phonological means in the field as to the description of a complex aspectual system existing in English and Romanian as conceptual categories.

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