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UDC 81

The Comparative Analysis of Perfect in German, English and Old Russian¹ Seda Asaturovi² Tamar Mikeladze³ Manana Napireli¹⁻³ Telavi State University, Georgia¹ PhD (pedagogical)

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ABSTRACT. The article studies Perfect in German, English and Old Russian. Perfect is a complicated past tense, which is formed by the auxiliary verb and Perfect. The comparative analysis showed that these three languages have much in common in Perfect forming and its meaning, although Perfect doesn't exist in modern Russian.

Keywords: Perfect; German; English; Old Russian.

INTRODUCTION. The popularity of typological analysis of languages has been increased recently. The purpose of our paper is a comparative analysis of English, German and Old Russian Perfect tense. In linguistics, the perfect is a combination of aspect and tense, that calls a listener's attention to the consequences, at some time of perspective (time of reference), generated by a prior situation, rather than just to the situation itself. The time of perspective itself is given by the tense of the helping verb, and usually the tense and the aspect are combined into a single tense-aspect form: the present perfect, the past perfect (also known as the pluperfect), or the future perfect. According to Comrie (1976, p.107) in the present perfect "the present auxiliary conveys the present meaning, while the past participle conveys that of past action." This is not the first attempt to analyze Perfect in different languages. The analysis proposed by Klein, W., & Vater, H. (1998) is based on the use of term 'Perfect' in German and English. Klein, W., & Vater, H. (1998) concluded that elementary repertoire suffices to account for at least all typical uses of the Perfekt and the present perfect; it also accounts for the differences between them, "as all tense forms, the perfect may have idiosyncratic functions that are not predictable from its general temporal meaning."

The purpose of this paper is to examine the differences and similarities between existing perfect tense in German, English and historical Perfect in Old Russian. Perfect will be examined through its: a) formation, b) the auxiliary verb, its place in the sentence and its functions.

The study is specific as we will look at the three languages from the same language family and different subgroups. German, English and Russian belong to Indo-European language family but they are included in different subdivisions. One of the branches of Indo-European language family is Germanic languages. Western Germanic languages are sub branch of Germanic languages. English and German belong to this subgroup. Subsequently, there are a lot of similarities between these two languages. The basic lexis is similar. In addition grammar issues also convey similarities. Russian is the part of Balto-Slavic languages, specifically to Eastern Slavic branch. Despite a comparable extent of historical proximity, the Germanic languages show less significant Slavic influence partly because Slavic migrations were mostly headed south rather than west. Slavic tribes did push westwards into Germanic territory, but borrowing for the most part seems to have been from Germanic to Slavic rather than the other way.

Perfekt in German. Perfekt is a compound past tense. It denotes a complete action and indicates the result. Perfekt is used mostly in dialogues and questions. Perfekt is formed with present forms of auxiliary verbs, *haben* (to have) or *sein* (to be) and the past participle (Partizip II) of the main verb. The main verb expresses the meaning and doesn't change.

Most of the German verbs take the auxiliary verb *haben*.

e.g. Wir haben Tee getrunken. Meine Schwester hat ihre Prüfung bestanden. Warum hast du dich auf die Reise verzichtet?

Perfekt with *sein* verb are formed if the main verbs denote (ანდრაზაშვილი, 2008; Griesbach, 1992; Helbig & Buscha, 1993):

- a) Moving by transport or on foot: e.g. *kommen, gehen, fahren, etc*
- b) Moving from one position to another: e.g. *aufstehen, einschlafen, wachsen, etc.*
- c) Some verbs: *bleiben, begegnen, passieren, folgen, geligen, misslingen, geschen*
- d) Verbs *sein* and *warden*

As it was mentioned main verb doesn't change form but the auxiliary verbs, which are not convey a meaning conjugate in Perfekt. The auxiliary verbs show the categories of Person and Number.

In the positive sentences the auxiliary verb is found in the second place and the main verb at the end of the sentence.

e.g. Ich habe ein Buch gelesen.

In the interrogative sentences with question words the auxiliary verb is still on the second place. (გვერცაძე, 2000; Jung, 1990):

e.g. Was hast du gelesen?

In the interrogative sentences without a question word the auxiliary verb is put at the beginning of the sentence.

e.g. Hast du das Buch gelesen?

In complex sentences, specifically in dependent clauses, the auxiliary verb appears at the end of the sentence.

e.g. Ger Lehrer sagt, dass ich im Text keinen Fehler gemacht habe.

Ich weiss, dass sie nach dem Essen ins Theater gegangen sind.

In German contracted forms of the auxiliary verbs in Perfekt are used only in speaking.

The present perfect tense in English. In older English as in German, the constructions were used to refer to eventualities with some notion of pastness, and the auxiliary was usually *be* with unaccusative verbs, while it is usually *have* with transitives and unergatives (McFadden & Alexiadou, 2006).

- a. Als die drei eingeschlafen waren...
- b. when the three fallen-asleep were

There is an important point about the subsequent history of English in which it diverges from languages like German, Dutch and Italian. The Modern English perfect continues only the construction with auxiliary *have*, while the one with *be* disappeared by the end of the 19th century. The present perfect tense in English is formed with the present tense of *have* + the past participle:

e.g. I have worked

The negative is formed by adding *not* to the auxiliary. The interrogative is formed by inverting the auxiliary and subject.

Positive:

I/you/we/they/ have worked

She/he/it has worked

Negative:

I/you/we/they/ have worked

She/he/it has worked

Interrogative:

Have I/you/we/they worked?

Has she/he/it worked?

The auxiliary verb shows the category of Person only for the 3rd person singular with the form 'has'. This tense may be said to be a sort of mixture of present and past. It always implies a strong connection with the present and is chiefly used in conversations, letters, newspapers, and television and radio report. The five different usages of the present perfect are:

- a) Puts emphasis on the result, e.g. She has written five letters.
- b) Action that is still going on, e.g. School has not started yet.
- c) Action that stopped recently, e.g. She has cooked dinner.
- d) Finished action that has an influence on the present, e.g. I have lost my key.
- e) Action has taken place once, never or several times before the moment of speaking, e.g. I have never been to Australia.

In English contracted forms of the auxiliary verb are used in the present perfect tense.

e.g. I've worked; you haven't worked; hasn't he worked?

Perfect in Russian. The Modern Russian language has only three basic tenses: present, past and future. However due to such simplicity we need to introduce the concept of aspects. There are two aspects in Russian: The imperfective aspect and the perfective aspect. Aspects are only used in the past and future tense. Aspects are used to indicate if an action was completed successfully or is ongoing. To do this in English we use extra verbs like "had" and "have". Aspects are used to illustrate this difference.

Imperfective – Incomplete, ongoing, habitual, reversed or repeated actions

Perfective – Actions completed successfully.

However, in Old Russian there were four past tenses. These forms were inherited from the common Slavonic language through its Indo-European language-base. Two tenses were simple – aorist and imperfect; the other two were compound - perfect and plusquamperfekt. In Russian the word 'aorist' was borrowed from Greek and the other one from Latin.

In Old Russian, the perfect tense is a compound past tense which refers to the present action or a state which is the result of the past action. The action has happened in the past, but the result is in the present (Букатеви́ч, 1974, p. 196). In other words, for example, *есмь принеслъ* (have brought) had the meaning not only the fact of the past but also the state in the present, 'I brought it, and the thing that I brought is found here in the present' (Иванов, 1983, p. 342). Perfect was used in speech and business writing, e.g. *писа́лъ еси*; съ меня *есте* государство *сняли* (Букатеви́ч, 1974, p. 196)

Perfect was formed with the imperfect verb (Imperfective aspect) of the auxiliary verb *быти* (to be) in the present tense and perfect form (Perfective aspect) of the main verb (participle). The main verb was the second form of active voice in the past with the different endings expressing category of gender *-лъ, -ла, -ло*. The Old Russian Perfect is translated in Modern Russian with the verbs of imperfective and perfective aspects in the past.

Singular:

I person -	Есмь	хвалил	хвалила	хвалило
II person -	Еси	хвалил	хвалила	хвалило
III person -	Есть	хвалил	хвалила	хвалило

Plural:

I person -	Есмь	хвалили	хвалилы	хвалила
II person -	Есте	хвалили	хвалилы	хвалила
III person -	Суть	хвалили	хвалилы	хвалила

Dual:

I person -	Есвѣ	хвалила	хвалилѣ	хвалилѣ
II person -	Еста	хвалила	хвалилѣ	хвалилѣ
III person -	Еста	хвалила	хвалилѣ	хвалилѣ

The auxiliary verb denoted the category of person; it also showed the connection between the past action and the present, i.e. it expresses reference of action to the moment of reporting. As we have mentioned above, the main verb of the perfect expresses the meaning; like nominal forms, it has the categories of Gender and Number, except category of Person.

CONCLUSION. The central point of our analysis is the distinction between these three languages. In German and English Perfect is widely used, on the other hand Modern Russian does not have Perfect any more. Old Russian Perfect was simplified and in Modern Russian there is no compound form of the past tense. Even though we don't meet Perfect in Modern Russian, we have observed the similarities and differences between these languages. The following similarities were noticed:

- German, English and the Old Russian have the formation of perfect tense in the similar way: an auxiliary + main verb (participle).
- The perfect had the same meaning in all three languages, past action with the emphasis on result in the present.
- The Old Russian, Older English and German auxiliaries partly coincide (to be).
- The auxiliary verbs in all three languages more or less denote the category of Person.
- In the English, German and Old Russian perfect tense the main verb (participle) doesn't conjugate. However, Russian participle had the different endings for categories of Gender and Number.

- The use of perfect tense is similar in all three languages (conversation, business writing, letters)

Differences:

- The Old Russian perfect had the main verb which had the categories of Gender and Number.

• German Perfekt has two auxiliary verbs for different main verbs. Besides the category of Person the auxiliary verbs show Number.

• In German Perfekt the participle has its strictly defined position in the sentence, which is the end of the sentence. In Old Russian the position is free which means that the participle could be placed at the end or it could follow the auxiliary.

The knowledge of these similarities and differences can largely help language learners in understanding and applying grammar rules in practice. In more practical term language teachers can use the similarities to structure explanation of grammar rules. In addition understanding the similarities between languages can support translation from old documents into different modern languages. Considering all abovementioned it will be interesting to continue further analysis of Perfect in three languages specifically its use and its meaning.

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Сравнительный анализ перфекта в немецком, английском и древнерусском языках

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Аннотация. Данная работа исследует перфект в немецком, английском и древнерусском языках. Перфект это сложное прошедшее время, которое образуется путем вспомогательного глагола и причастия. Сравнительный анализ показал, что эти три языка имеют много общего в образовании перфекта и его значения, однако перфект в современном русском языке отсутствует.

Ключевые слова: перфект; немецкий язык; английский язык; древнерусский язык.