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On the bifurcation between preterit and evidential

Auxiliary drop within Serbian perfect forms
1. Object of investigation

Auxiliary drop within Serbian perfect forms (l-forms) in 1st and 3rd person:

(1) a. dala je perfect
give.PP.F.SG be.AUX.3SG

b. dala ø ‘truncated’ perfect
give.PP.F.SG AUX.3SG

- perfect: generalized past, perfect; replacing aorist and imperfect
- ‘truncated’ perfect: stylistic variant
1. Object of investigation

Functions ascribed to the truncated l-forms:

- emotional reaction
  
  (2) Hej! **Došao** Petar!
  ‘Hey! Petar’s here!’ (Alexander 2006: 161)

- lively storytelling
  
  (3) **Bio** jednom jedan kralj…
  Once upon a time there was a king… (Alexander 2006: 161)

- ‘hot news’
  
  (4) Antropolozi **našli** mumiju!
  Anthropologists find mummy! (Alexander 2006: 161)
1. Object of investigation

Problem: lack of a thorough analysis of actual usage patterns in colloquial speech
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

North Slavic (West and East Slavic)

- L-forms: generalized past, replaced other past tenses
- auxiliary lost in 3rd person in West Slavic, in all persons in East Slavic
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

North Slavic

(5) Cze
   a. zpívala jsem
      sing.PP.F.SG be.AUX.1SG
      ‘I sang’
   b. zpívala
      sing.PP.F.SG
      ‘she sang’

(6) Rus
   a. ja pela
      I sing.PP.F.SG
      ‘I sang’
   b. ona pela
      she sing.PP.F.SG
      ‘she sang’
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

Balkan Slavic: Bulgarian and Macedonian

- aorist and imperfect: witnessed/definite past
- l-forms
  - distanced/generalized/indefinite/neutral past
  - perfect
  - non-confirmative evidential: hearsay, inference, surprise
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

Macedonian

- auxiliary lost in 3rd person (c.f. West Slavic)
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

Bulgarian

- auxiliary variation in 3rd person
  - +aux: perfect, generalized past
  - –aux: evidential (‘renarrative’)

On the bifurcation between preterit and evidential: auxiliary drop within the Serbian perfect forms
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

Bulgarian

(7) Blg

a. pisal e perfect
   write.PP.M.SG be.AUX.3.SG

b. pisal Ø evidential
   write.PP.M.SG AUX.3.SG
2. L-forms in other Slavic languages

Bulgarian

- distinction between perfect/past (+aux) and evidential (–aux) undermined by the actual use of these forms (Friedman 1986; 2001; Roth 1979)
3. Point of departure

Claims

- same grammaticalization path of the I-forms in all Slavic languages: resultative – perfect – preterit
- auxiliary drop as a consequence of grammaticalization process
- evidential meaning as a result of pragmaticalization
3. Point of departure

Procedure

- trace the development of the I-forms in Slavic (c.f. Dickey 2013; Fielder 2003; Lindstedt 2000) focusing on the form-meaning-interrelationship
- derive the semantic invariant of –aux-forms
- demonstrate the functioning of –aux-forms on the discourse-pragmatic level in Serbian colloquial speech
4. Development of the I-forms

Stage I: the resultative presence of a state resulting from a past event at the time of utterance

- I-participle: resultant state
- auxiliary: connection with the time of utterance

(8) Old Church Slavonic

prišelъ esi_ aux p[og]oubitъ nasъ (Codex Marianus, Mk 1.24; Parallel Corpus Old Church Slavonic Gospel Texts)
‘you have come to ruin us’
4. Development of the I-forms

Stage II: ‘current relevance’-perfect

anchoring of a past situation with the speaker as reference point, i.e. ‘current relevance’:

“a condition on the discourse, in that the speaker portrays the consequences of an event as somehow essential to the point of what he is saying” (Dahl and Hedin 2000: 392)

- I-participle: resultant state and/or past situation
- auxiliary: link to the reference point (usually the speaker)
4. Development of the I-forms

Stage II: ‘current relevance’-perfect

(9) Old Church Slavonic

\[ \text{ni li sixъ este}_{\text{aux}} \ k'ni'gъ \ c'li } \] (Codex Marianus, Mk 12.10; Parallel Corpus
Old Church Slavonic Gospel Texts)

‘have you not read the books?’
4. Development of the I-forms

Stage III: between perfect and preterit
broadening of use and fading of the ‘current relevance’ component

- I-participle: situations anterior to the present
- auxiliary variation
  - +aux = anchoring with reference point, i.e. perfect
  - –aux = no anchoring, i.e. preterit
4. Development of the l-forms

(10) Middle Czech (14th-17th centuries)

a. a tak jest$_{aux}$ již k tomu přišlo
   ‘and so it has already come to the point’ (Dickey 2013: 108)

b. v pátek se rozstonala a v pondělí ji pochovali na Rožmberce
   ‘on Friday she started ailing and they buried her in Rožmberk on Monday’ (Dickey 2013: 108)
4. Development of the I-forms

(11) Pre-modern Bulgarian (15th century)

a. Sôšto taka ozdravêcha⁰₉₉ and nêkoj ženi, koito po nevolja so₉₉ aux napustnali mayžeťê si, i se zavârnachâ⁰₉₉ pri têchâ. (Fielder 1998: 352)

‘And also the women, who have unintentionally left their husbands, recovered and came back to them.’

b. I taka, narodâtă nalëga⁰₉₉ po zelena treva, kakto nêkoga bilo pri chudesata na mojata Christosâ. (Fielder 1998: 352)

‘And so, the people lay down on the green gras, as it happened at the time of my Christ’s miracles.’
4. Development of the I-forms

Stage IV: discourse-pragmatic reinterpretation of auxiliary drop

- semantic invariant of –aux: ‘lack of anchoring with the speaker’
  - distancing of the speaker from what she is saying
    - hearsay, uncertainty, surprise etc.
  - (generalized/neutral/indefinite) past

→ situation in Serbian (Meermann 2015; Meermann and Sonnenhauser forthcoming) and Bulgarian (Sonnenhauser 2012; 2015)
4. Development of the I-forms

Serbian

(12) hearsay

Ali kaže do bolnice tako čujem da žene razgovoraju nije stigla do bolnice. Oni brzo davali veštačko disanje, davali sve moguće od sebe kaže. (Hinrichs and Hinrichs 1995: 87)

‘But, apparently, she did not make it to the hospital, I hear the women talking. They did rescue breathing on her, they apparently tried everything they could.’
4. Development of the l-forms

Serbian

(13) assumption

Mislim znaš šta to znači? Kad on jadnik uhvatio [zvučnik] pa krpio i super iskrpio – kad ono radi kaže fala Bogu! (Hinrichs and Hinrichs 1995: 100-101)

‘Do you know what I think what this is about? When he took the loudspeaker and repaired it and he did it well – when it worked he said “Thank God”.’
4. Development of the I-forms

Serbian

(14) surprise

Jao! On izmislio? (Savić and Polovina 1989: 134)

‘Oh! He made [that] up?’
4. Development of the I-forms

Serbian

(15) irony

U pet dolazi ovaj… Kako se zove? Duvančić!
– Ja baš tela da kažem Krompirančić. (Savić and Polovina 1989: 164)
‘At five o’clock arrives… What’s his name? Duvančić!
– I was just going to say Krompirančić [mocking name; krompir
‘potato’]’
4. Development of the I-forms

Serbian

(16) preterit, e.g. at the beginning of narrative sequences

Ja išla da kupim taj keks, pa vidim Krašovu čokoladu u Beogradskoj robnoj kući, i ja samo što nisam pala u nesvest. (Hinrichs and Hinrichs 1995: 42)

‘I went to buy that cake, then I see the Krašova chocolate at the Belgrade big store and I nearly fainted.’
5. Conclusions

- auxiliary drop as a consequence of grammaticalization from perfect to preterit
- semantic invariant of –aux: no anchoring with the speaker
- discourse-pragmatic reinterpretation: distancing
  - evidential: hear-say, assumption, surprise
  - irony
  - neutral (e.g. text structuring)
- integration of Balkan Slavic into an all-Slavic context
  - pragmationalization instead of a fully grammaticalized evidential paradigm
Thank you for your attention!
References:


