

The Aspect and Tense Verb Categories and Their Relations



Fazira Aidarkhanovna Kakzhanova

Abstract: *The paper aims at analyzing the problems of the verb categories: aspect and tense and their relations in the traditional aspect theory. The verb is one of the complicated parts of speech possessing several categories as aspect, tense, mood, voice, person, and number. The aspect category is one of the main verb categories. If verb category expresses action, the aspect category expresses its stages of internal development: process, result, fact, protracted and others. In spite of having the aspect category in their matrixes, some languages are considered to be temporal (Turkic) in spite of having a set of developed plans of expressions and plans of contents and some languages are considered to be aspectual (Slavic languages).*

All of these verb categories function in a single continuum of expression. It becomes the reason of some problems connected with aspect theory in general and the aspect category in particular. It is difficult subjectively to identify meaning, function of each discrete category of a verb because of single plane of expression. This reason affected the creation of an aspect category definition. According to traditional aspect theory, the aspect definition states, that aspect expresses 'action occurs at the time or the distribution of the action in time'. On the basis of definition, the aspect category is created by tense category, when they are two independent categories with their discrete meanings. One concept is explained by another concept. It contradicts to logic laws.

The main conclusion of the article is that the aspect category and tense category have two different discrete meanings and the role of tense category is not correctly defined in the aspect category, which leads to such division of languages as aspectual and temporal. All languages have the aspect category initially, because it is included in the matrix of a verb.

Index Terms: *aspect, concept, discrete, plane of contents, plane of expression, single continuum of expression, tense, verb seme*

I. INTRODUCTION

The aspect category is and was investigated by many linguists in different times, in different languages: Peshkovsky A.M., Shelyakin M.A., Bondarko A.V., Jespersen O., Delbruck B., Sweet H.A., Poutsma H. A., Verkuyl H., Wallace S., Hopper P.J., Comrie B., Maslov U.S., Koshmider E., Referovskaya E.A., Dahl O., Guillaume G., Vendler L. and others.

The category of the aspect is one of the complex phenomena of grammar, which until now has not found its certain solution. Perhaps that is why scientists show a constant desire to clarify the mechanisms and laws of development of this category.

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* Correspondence Author

Fazira Aidarkhanovna Kakzhanova*, Buketov Karaganda State University, Karaganda, Kazakhstan.

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The aspect category is and was investigated on the basis of different languages, but the existing traditional Aspect theory was founded and developed as a system theory by Russian linguists headed by Bondarko A.V. on the basis of the plane of aspect expression of Slavic languages, especially on the Russian language.

Definitions of language phenomena should be based on objective concepts denoted by these language phenomena, i.e. the plane of content in order to be universal for all speakers. The planes of any language phenomenon contents are permanent and unchangeable, because they consists of concepts, the plane of expression is inconstant and changeable, because there are thousand and thousand languages with their own synergy.

The definition of the traditional aspect category states, that aspect is 'action occurs at the time or the distribution of the action in time' [1, pp. 19-33]. But there was an inaccuracy in this definition where one concept (aspect) is determined by an another concept (tense).

The aim of this paper is to state that the aspect category and tense category are different concepts with their own discrete meanings and they express a verb from different angles.

II. METHODOLOGY

Since aspect and tense categories manifest themselves explicitly in syntax semantics, they are semantic – functional categories, that is why semantic – functional, distributive, transformation methods were used for processing the necessary materials.

III. RESULTS

The results of the work are that aspect and tense categories have their own discrete meanings and the role of tense category is simply to localize or to fix actions on time line, the aspect category expresses inner stages of action development. These different inner development of actions occur on the basis of energy, but not with the help of time /tense, the role of the tense category is exaggerated in the traditional aspect theory. The tense category is only fixative but not creative.

IV. DISCUSSION

Language units are bilateral, each language phenomenon has the plane of content (PC) and the plane of expression (PE). PC is a constant and permanent for all language speakers, because it consists of concepts which have their permanent properties which are equal for all people.



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For example, the concept ☀️ is the same for all people, it is round, it has an yellow color, it heats the Earth, one can not live without the sun, because it facilitates life in the Earth. But the plane of expression of the concept ☀️ is different according to languages, there are thousand and thousand types of languages in the World. For example, the concept ☀️ is named differently in different languages, for example, in the Kazakh language it is called 'kun', in the English language 'sun', and in Russian 'derevo'. The language phenomenon has the permanent planes of contents and an invariable planes of expressions [1, pp. 19-33].

Language phenomena are defined on the basis of the planes of contents, because it is impossible to create definitions on the basis of invariable language planes of expressions. Any definition as the essence of phenomenon should consist of main properties or signs of a denoted concept, because concept is a thinking process unit, the quality of thinking process products depends on how concepts coincide to their inner in order to use it correctly according to context [2].

The aspect category is one of the main categories of verb which is responsible for whole proposition of a sentence. An action has different inner developments: process, result, protracted, fact, instantaneous, inchoative, iterative and others according to human being's intention, situations, conditions being provided for action realization.

The aspect category expresses the inner stages of development of action. It is the plane of expression of the aspect category. Each type of action, i.e aspect being as the nuclear of a sentence requires different peripheral determinations or surroundings. Without knowing the aspect category it is difficult to study languages. For example, a person has translated the article. To the question: 'Have you translated the article?' He answers, 'Yes, I am translating', instead of 'Yes, I have translated', because he does not thoroughly know the plane of aspect expression and its plane of content. Having done the action, she can not convey correctly because of lack knowledge planes of aspect expression of aspects. Sometimes it leads to serious problems.

On the basis of conceptual confusion in the aspect definition theory, some languages are considered to be temporal and some languages are considered to be aspectual. Having verbs, all languages have the aspect category in their matrix, because verb semes generate all these verbal categories.

For example:

English	Kazakh
is writing	zhazyp zhatyr
had written	zhazyp boldy

On the basis of the verb 'write' the English and Kazakh languages express the aspects: continuous and perfect, in spite of the Kazakh language is considered to be only temporal and the aspect category is not finally accepted by the English language also, still instead of the Continuous Aspect it is called as the Continuous Tense. If they are called as Tense, learners will study only meanings of three tenses: present, past and future. If they are called aspects learners will study inner stages of development of each action. Two different phenomena, two different interpretations. That they function in a single continuum of expression (is

writing/zhazyp zhatyr) makes difficult to identify their discrete meanings and to accept them as a separate categories.

Language does not react to such subjective judgements, because language is an objective phenomenon, it will develop in its own way on the drawn matrix, but it has some consequents for learners. If there is no the aspect category in languages, there is no information about it. The Aspect category problems exit in languages on the basis of relations of the aspect and tense categories.

Let us analyze the traditional verb aspect category from the point of its definition, it states: 'action occurs at the *time* or the distribution of the action in *time*' [3]. It does not reveal the real essence of the aspect concept.

Firstly, the aspect is defined by the tense category, one notion is revealed by another notion, which contradicts to thinking laws.

Secondly, these notions (aspect and tense) have their own independent discrete meanings and on the basis if it they have their own functions in semantics of syntax, because all categories of parts of speech explicit categorial meanings only in contextual proposition of sentences, because they are semantical and syntactical categories.

The aspect category as one of the six main categories of a verb 'expresses different stages of inner development of action' [2] and the meaning of it is closer to the main meaning of the verb 'action'.

The Tense category as one of the six main categories of the verb expresses an action localization or fixation on time line. If the *aspect category* takes directly participation in changing inner state of actions, the *tense category* does not take participation of inner changes of an action, it only localizes and fixes externally different states of action on time line.

The idea that tense creates the aspect category was supported by many linguists. According to the opinion of E.Koshmider, the aspect category is the expression of action direction from future to past, from past to future [4].

E. Referovskaya says of aspect 'any action that is long or short contains in itself some quantity of 'operative time' of action.' [5] according to G. Guillante, it is the 'internal time of an action' [6, pp. 47-48].

Specificity of English aspects is that the aspect meaning is necessarily associated with indicating the length of time in which the action takes place and, accordingly, expressed in terms of time [7, pp. 52-54].

In the Russian language there are two grammatical categories embodying the idea of time: categories of tense and aspect...' [8]. If the aspect category identifies as the tense category, why the tense category exists, because one of them is superfluous.

The role of tense category is somewhat exaggerated in the traditional aspect theory. According to traditional aspect theory, the aspect category is considered to consist of two main aspects: perfective, imperfective, though the word 'aspectus' borrowed from Latin language, denotes 'diversity', according to the name of the word there should be more than two aspects as perfective, imperfective,



these notions appeared on the basis of ‘pair aspects’ (reshIt-perfect, reshAt –non –perfect) of the Slavic languages.

The planes of contents of these main aspects are also defined by tense category, if it is perfective, it is limited by tense, if it is imperfective it is not limited by tense. It is understandable, because the main definition of the aspect category is defined by the tense category that is why it will be continued also in these two types.

If we can accept this definition, we shall have no some confusions. On the basis of this definition, the linguistics has such an unified notion as ‘aspect tense’ category, in spite of their discrete meanings, mentioned above, if we accept this definition we deny the discrete meanings of these two notions.

On the basis of this definition there is a division between languages: aspectual languages and temporal languages. The Kazak language is considered to be a temporal language in spite of having a plenty of the planes of aspect expressions and one can not find it among verb categories in morphology of Kazakh verbs. The aspects of the English language are still named as Tense instead of Aspect, for example, the Perfect Tense instead of the Perfect Aspect.

Such subjective judgements do not influence on the existing aspect category in languages, because languages are objective phenomenon, they will develop on the basis of their types of their structure organization but it is fraught with danger from the point of teaching a language, if we say it is tense, we teach learners only to three forms of tense (is writing, was writing, will be writing), if we say it is an aspect, then we teach the inner changes of an action (aspects and sub-aspects as generic Process Sub-aspect, Intensive Process Sub-aspect, exaggerative Process Sub-aspect and others i.e to explain semantics of each aspect and sub-aspects and their area of pragmatic using).

We can not explain the semantics of various forms of actions, i.e, aspects in the Kazak language, because of ‘not having’ the aspect category in this language. To make up for the lack of an aspect, the Kazakh language has more than thirty Tenses, when we have three tense systems: past, present, and future. These numerous tenses prevent the study of this language. To understand the role of time in life in general and tense in the aspect category or in linguistics particularly, we should know what this ubiquitous time/tense is.

St. Augustine considered, that ‘when we talk about time, we certainly understand what it is, and when someone speaks about it, we also understand about it. What is time? If I’m not asked by somebody, I know what it is, if I want to explain about it to another person I don’t know what it is.’ [9].

According to Aristotle: ‘Since time is a measure of motion, and it will be a measure of peace, because peace is in time. Do not think that those who are in time need to move, as well as all that is in motion: time is not a movement, but a number of movement.’ [10].

Further, he wrote: “We do not only measure movement by time, but time is measured by movement because they identify each other and time defines motion being its number and motion is time.”

By definition of Kant: ‘Time is not something objective and real: it is neither a substance and accidents nor an attitude, it is an objective condition of the human mind by nature, which

is necessary to coordinate all the sensible perceived things with each other by a certain law or pure contemplation. ...Time and space a priori forms of knowledge they are the basics of our sensory perception and therefore, it is inaccessible to cognition as a phenomenon.’ [11].

There are different conclusions about time: *time is motion; time is a number of motion; it is inaccessible to cognition* and so on.

What is the main specific features of concept of time? Let us analyze the concept ‘time’.

1. Meaning: a day and night (periods between sunset and sunrise of the Sun);

2. Form: morning, day, evening, night; a day consists of 12 hours and night consists 12 hours; a day consists of 24 hours; on the basis of a day there are such notions as a week, month, year, century and so on.

3. Function: social and private organization of life of people: Concept ‘time’ is the biggest useful invention of human being created on the basis of periods between sunset and sunrise phases of the Sun, structured to 24 hours which help people to organize life and bring them into orderly movement, creating certain system against chaos. Different types of time were invented: global, social, personal [2].

Global world time consists of Gregorian time, calendar of Mai, Pulkovo and others.

Social time consists of all types of schedules: working day from 9 am till 6 a clock, transport schedules, education schedules in schools, universities, age periods: school ages: from 7 to 17 ages, university ages from 18 till 22, pension ages from 58, 63,65.

Personal time fixes life of each person from the birth till the death. Each person puts in himself to an established time schedule. Everything that happens with a person is fixed voluntarily by a person or involuntarily on time line: school, college, university, work, retirement and death, information which is necessary for the public record, because it is impossible to live in society and not be free from existing rules of society. Time fixes human life on time line.

How is movement measured by time? Movement is action and action needs energy.

Meaning of movement: movement appears on the basis of actions which need energy. Time doesn’t generate energy. Human actions are done on the basis of energy created by physiological, biological, chemical reactions of human (all living beings) organisms, which are the sources of energy. There exist other actions (movements) being created on the basis of generating energy by using laws of nature or laws of physics, chemistry (technological, technical) invented by human beings.

Form of movement: direct, reverse, reflexive, procedural, productive, prolonged, inchoative, recurring and others.

Function: changing of the state of subjects (adolescences, maturity...), objects (pass away), and life in general on the basis of actions or movements [2].

What kind of connections have these notions: ‘*movement or number of movement*’ and ‘*time*’? Movement is created on the basis of generated energy by people or on the basis of physical,

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chemical laws of objective life mentioned before. If it is a human being's movement (action) it is based on physiological, biological reactions of a person, which generate the necessary energy for living. If it is an objective life, for example, trees, grass and their development in a 'rest' also depend on inner chemical, physical, biological reactions with the help of the Sun, but not with the help of 'time' invented by human being, which can only localize or fix actions on time line, which can't generate energy which is necessary for making movement or action.

If one plans to complete the building of a house by September, but it doesn't mean that this month will be the real indicator of completion of building of the house, it is only the intention of a person, who is building the house to finish before winter cold. Time (September) doesn't facilitate to finish the house namely in September, if an owner of building house doesn't provide it by people and materials. Time can't change situations. The proverb: 'everything flows, everything changes' is not about time it is about generating energy, energy runs out of and everything comes to the end.

Movement is an action, which makes changes. Action and its modification appears on the basis of their inner energy but not with the help of time/ tense. If it is so, how does the tense category creates aspect category? This is a rhetorical question.

An aspect as a language element is generated by verb sememe as the other categories of a verb. An aspect expresses inner development of an action produced on the basis of human being energy or energy created by objective world or physical and chemical laws, not by tense category.

V. CONCLUSION

The aspect and tense categories of the verb are independent categories. Each of them has its own discrete meaning and reveals verb from different sides.

- Aspect expresses stages of inner action development and it is the plane of aspect expression.
- Tense only localizes or fixes actions or aspects on time line.
- Aspect and actions are not created by tense, action transformation occurs on the basis of energy being created by human being or on the basis of physical, chemical, and physiological laws, aspect is created on the basis of verb seme generative properties.
- Tense does not generate energy which is necessary for modification of actions.
- Aspect may be process, result, protracted, instantaneous and others.
- Tense may be present, past, and future.
- The role of tense in the traditional aspect theory is exaggerated.

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