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Clausal complementation of visual perception verbs in Balkan Slavic: inherited and contact-induced features

The paper discusses the complementation patterns of visual perception verbs in standard Macedonian (M) and Bulgarian (B) and offers a diachronic perspective of their development. The focus of the investigation is placed on the syntax of the central visual perception verbs: *gleda/vidi* in Macedonian and *gledam, viždam/vidja* in Bulgarian. Since perception verbs occupy an intermediate position on the cline of clause integration (Givón 2001, Cristofaro 2003) the authors presume that the clausal complementation (CC) patterns they display will combine properties typical for the patterns of the predicates at the two poles. The CC of these perception verbs in the standard languages generally manifests a syntactic regularity based on the semantic distinction between ‘immediate perception’ vs. ‘mental perception’ (Dick & Hengeveld 1991). The former chooses *kako* and marginally *da* (under negation) in Macedonian, while in Bulgarian it is *da* and the stylistically marked *kak*; the latter type of perception pairs up with *deka, oti* (M)/*če* (B) clauses. Moreover, it has been noted that in Bulgarian *da* penetrates into the functional sphere of *če*, notably with perception verb complements (e.g. Grickat 1975, cited in Gjurkova 2014: 9). To establish the current functional distribution of the CC patterns of the above verbs the authors conduct a corpus-based analysis using examples from standard Macedonian and Bulgarian, as well as comparison of translation equivalents. The analysis looks into structural and semantic factors that might influence the choice of complement patterns such as tense, aspect, word order, possibility for raising and factivity, as well as some salient regional and stylistic variation.

As is well known, Balkan Slavic languages have developed in a multilingual environment during an extensive period, as a result of which they share common features at all language levels. CC patterns have proven to be susceptible to neighboring non-Slavic language influence and one of the main aims of this research is to examine how the present situation reflects the Slavic CC patterns and how they have been affected by the Balkan language tendencies. For that purpose, the CC patterns of Macedonian and Bulgarian are compared against the corresponding patterns in Greek, Albanian, Aromanian as well as with Serbian, a South Slavic language less affected by the Balkan influence.

Additionally, the current CC patterns of the studied verbs will be compared to the situation between 17th-19th century. There is diachronic evidence that the functional specialization of declarative complements occurred during this period, when a number of competing forms were in a flux (e.g. Sonnenhauser 2015 for *kako* and *če* in prestandardized Bulgarian, Bužarovska 2002 for prestandardized Macedonian). The diachronic data show that the gradual relaxation of Church Slavic translational tradition was countered by the enhanced tendency of correlation between form and function in Balkan Slavic. This transparency principle has led to a semantically motivated regularization of complement patterning in the standard of both analyzed languages, but the tendency for overt marking of semantic distinctions seems to be more pronounced in Macedonian.

The in-depth analysis of the current complement distribution in both languages from diachronic and language contact perspective will shed light on the principles that motivate the degree of the semantic motivation of complementation patterns and may help account for the universal principles responsible for this syntactic regularity. It is also aimed to address some crucial questions that arise cross-linguistically regarding mood distinction (subjunctive vs. indicative), degrees of finiteness, factivity distinction and the degree of structural integration between the components of the complex clauses of this type.

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