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Influence vs. Convergence in Areal Phenomena\*

Victor A. Friedman  
University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill

It has long been recognized that the Balkan peninsula is an area in which linguistic contact has resulted in the spread of semantic, syntactic, and perhaps other linguistics phenomena among unrelated or distantly related languages. Thus, for example, in the colloquial speech of various Balkan languages one "drinks" tobacco and "eats" a beating, the Turkish dialects of Macedonia employ Slavic or Albanian modeled analytic constructions to express possibility and necessity rather than using the original synthetic forms, and even on the phonological level one can observe such striking phenomena as the fact that the Albanian, Slavic, and Turkish dialects in a single broad area have all lost the original /h/ of the earlier stages of their respective languages.

The subject of this paper will be a feature which is generally considered to be another example of this kind of areal phenomenon, viz. the use of the old perfect participle without its auxiliary to render reported speech in both Bulgarian and Turkish, i.e. the notion that these two languages have a morphological marker for second-hand information. As early as the beginning of this century, it was suggested that the Bulgarian forms came to be used in this fashion due to Turkish influence (Conev 1911:15-16). In this paper, I will attempt to make two main points: 1) The phenomenon is actually the opposite of what it appears to be, i.e. there is a special marking for personal affirmation in the nonperfect preterite forms rather than marking for reportedness in the perfect ones, and 2) The apparent similarities between Turkish and Bulgarian are superficial and thus due to convergence rather than existing at a deeper level and being due to influence, i.e. there is no true isomorphism.

In order to make the arguments as comprehensible as possible, the examples will be limited to the singular, and various aspectual and taxic distinctions will be omitted.<sup>1</sup> In the context of this discussion, whatever is said of the singular is also true of the plural, and the categories of the type aorist, imperfect, progressive, and pluperfect are irrelevant to the arguments being advanced. The first task of this paper must be a brief exposition of the morphology of the relevant Bulgarian and Turkish forms to which the discussion will be limited.

In Turkish, we shall be concerned with two past tenses: one is formed by adding the suffix *-di* to the verb-stem (the so-called *di*-past), and the other is formed by adding the suffix *-miş* to the stem (the so-called *miş*-past). This latter form also serves as the perfect participle. Another Turkish morpheme essential to this discussion which requires special mention is the emphatic-copulative enclitic *-dir*, which can frequently be translated by English "is." In reading the examples, it should be remembered that Turkish suffixes are subject to progressive assimilation for the feature

voice and also to the laws of vowel harmony. (Thus the d of -di and -dir may become t, and the i of all three suffixes will become ı if the preceding vowel is ı or a, u after u or o, and ü after ü or ö.) In Bulgarian, the two corresponding past tense forms are traditionally known as the past definite and the past indefinite.<sup>2</sup> The past definite is a synthetic form, while the past indefinite is an analytic one composed of the old perfect participle in -l and the present tense of süm "be" used as an auxiliary. Let us now consider Table I, which gives the Turkish and Bulgarian forms of a verb meaning "love" (Turkish sev-, Bulgarian običa).

|           |   | PAST DEFINITE/DI-PAST | PAST INDEFINITE/MIŞ-PAST |             |
|-----------|---|-----------------------|--------------------------|-------------|
|           |   |                       | reported                 | nonreported |
| TURKISH   | 1 | sevdim                |                          | sevmişim    |
|           | 2 | sevdim                |                          | sevmişsin   |
|           | 3 | sevdi                 | sevmiş                   | sevmiştir   |
| BULGARIAN | 1 | običax                | običal süm               |             |
|           | 2 | običa                 | običal si                |             |
|           | 3 | običa                 | običal                   | običal e    |

TABLE I

The parallels which are traditionally said to exist can be described in the following fashion: the di-past and the past definite are synthetic forms which specify that the speaker witnessed the action described. The miş-past and the past indefinite consist of a participle, formed with -miş in Turkish and -l in Bulgarian, and the enclitic auxiliary meaning "be," Turkish -im, -sin, -dir and Bulgarian süm, si, e. The omission of this auxiliary in the third person is said to mark reported speech while its presence in the third person signals an ordinary unmarked past, and the Bulgarian situation is said to exist due to the influence of the Turkish model (e.g. Andrejčin 1952:39-40). This phenomenon has caused Bulgarian linguists to posit two completely different sets of paradigms, a reported and a nonreported, which happen to be totally homophonous except in the third person (e.g. Andrejčin 1938:10, 57). A different view is that the opposition, assuming that it exists, is neutralized except in the third person (Aronson 1967:93). Thus, for example, using a verb meaning "pass, go on" (Bulgarian zamina, Turkish geç-), we can adduce the following examples of the supposed distinctions:

|                     |                         |                |
|---------------------|-------------------------|----------------|
| 1 a. Zamina.        | b. Zaminal.             | c. Zaminal e.  |
| Gecti.              | Gecmiş.                 | Gecmiştir.     |
| "I saw him pass on" | "They say he passed on" | "He passed on" |

This simple distinction of witnessed (1a), reported (1b), unmarked (1c), which is traditionally used for both Bulgarian and Turkish, cannot, however, account for many of the sentences in which these various forms occur. Consider the following:

2. Evliya Çelebi 1664 Nisanında ... orada kaldı (Gülübov 1949:382).  
Evliya Çelebi in April 1664 ... remained there.
3. Edna zvezda padna,--kaza Marin.--Umrija njakoj.  
A star fell,--said Marin.--Someone died (Aronson 1967:87).

Each of these examples is readily translatable into the other language, and both contradict the notion of witnessedness. Since (2) is taken from a current text, the author could not have witnessed the action. In (3), Marin did witness the fall of the star, but the statement that someone died is based in his conviction from indirect evidence rather than on his having witnessed the act. These counterexamples do not actually contradict the concept for which witnessed is merely an inadequate term. It would still be possible to justify the use of these forms in these contexts on the basis of a concept such as personal vouching or speaker's affirmation (V. Friedman 1977:40).

The nature of the so-called reported/nonreported opposition in the miş-past and the past indefinite is another matter, however. There are two questions which must be treated here: 1) the existence of a reported/nonreported opposition and 2) the relationship of the omission of the auxiliaries -dir in Turkish and e in Bulgarian. Consider the following examples:

4. ... gledam ... na taja firma moja Mečo napravil stojka ... (Maslov 1955:314).  
... I look ... at that firm my Mečo made a stop (i.e. came to a stop) ...
5. Kaza će Ivan e zaminal.  
He said that Ivan went on (i.e. left).
6. Bu sabah hesabettim ... tam 73 gece olmuş (Johanson 1971:284).  
This morning I counted ... it has been exactly 73 nights.

Examples (4) and (6) are taken from literature and show uses of the past indefinite and the miş-past without the auxiliary in contexts which are clearly nonreported. Example (5) comes from my own fieldwork in Bulgaria and shows a past indefinite with the auxiliary in a context which is clearly reported. It is clear in view of these facts (the examples could, of course, be multiplied) that the traditional reported/nonreported distinction is an inadequate explanation. How then can the alternation between the presence and absence of the auxiliary be accounted for?

For Bulgarian, a look at the situation in the dialects and in the neighboring Macedonian and Serbian languages gives an indication of the answer. In Macedonian, which Bulgarian linguists consider as a series of Bulgarian dialects (BAN 1978), the auxiliary has been completely lost in the third person of the past indefinite in all contexts except in the northwestern dialects, i.e. near the Serbian and Bulgarian borders, where it is generally retained, although it may be omitted in describing both reported and nonreported events (Vidoeski 1962:217-220, 231-234). In Serbian the auxiliary is normally always retained in the corresponding past tense, but in certain contexts it can be omitted from any person. This omission occurs especially frequently in sentences with two time references, e.g. those with verbs of reporting:

7. Peva staru pesmu: kako kad'n Stana u bastu isetala ... (Grickat 1954:51).  
He sang an old song: how Lady Stana walked out into the garden ...

In addition to this, the auxiliary is never omitted from the third person in the West Bulgarian dialects, so that school-children from those regions have difficulty in learning when they are supposed to omit it (Kabasanov 1966: 52-53).

This all leads to a single suspicion: the third person auxiliary in the past indefinite in East Bulgarian (which is the primary basis of the literary language in this respect) is and has been for some time in a state of flux. It is following the tendency toward being lost which is already well known elsewhere in South Slavic. During the period of the fixing of literary norms, which lasted well into this century, this alternation was noticed, and it may have been observed that it was especially frequent in contexts which involved reporting. Nevertheless, the situation was sufficiently unclear so that grammarians writing during the first third of this century could actually get the meanings reversed. Consider the following examples:

- 8 a. Rekata pridosla.      b. Rekata e pridosla (Conev 1911:13).  
The river has risen.      The river has risen.
- 9 a. Toj umrja.      b. Toj e umrjal (Romanski 1926:145).  
He died.      He died.

According to Conev, (8a) means that the speaker actually saw the river rise while (8b) means he merely heard the noise of a rising river but did not actually witness the event. Romanski states that (9a) means the death was witnessed by the speaker, while (9b) means the event was reported to the speaker. Thus Conev assigns to (8a) precisely the opposite meaning from that prescribed in Bulgarian grammars, while Romanski ignores the presence of the auxiliary in his explanation of (9b). This suspicion was supported by my own fieldwork in Bulgaria this summer, where every speaker questioned--both East Bulgarian and West Bulgarian, educated and uneducated--accepted (5) and often preferred it to the same sentence with the omitted auxiliary, despite the fact that the latter is the officially promulgated literary norm (BAN 1978:20).

If reported/nonreported is a specious distinction, then what is the nature of the opposition between the past definite and past indefinite in Bulgarian? The answer is to be found in the fact that while the past indefinite can be subordinated to any type of verb, including those directly contradicting the notion of reportedness, e.g. vidjax ce ... "I saw that...", and can also occur in definite contexts, the past definite cannot be subordinated to verbs which directly contradict the notion of affirmation:

10. \*Ne vjarvam ce toj naprav tova.  
I don't believe that he did it.

Sentence (10) is ungrammatical in its literal meaning with the past definite; a past indefinite form must be used. On the basis of this it can be said that the distinction past definite/past indefinite is based on the opposition affirmative/nonaffirmative for which the past definite is marked, and that

the presence or absence of the auxiliary in the third person of the past indefinite, while it may tend to occur in the context of reported speech, does not constitute the marker of a special grammatical category of reported speech. Rather, the Bulgarian past indefinite can be said to imply reportedness by its opposition to the marked affirmative form, but as the unmarked member of the opposition, its most likely implication (i.e. chief contextual variant) is not always realized.

Let us now consider the relationship of the Bulgarian omission of the auxiliary to the Turkish use of the particle -dir. As was mentioned earlier, the Bulgarian third person auxiliary e is the third person singular of the verb meaning "be." In addition to functioning as an auxiliary, it has the usual copulative functions of such verb forms meaning "is" found in most European languages. Thus for example the Bulgarian e is used only in the third person and cannot ordinarily be omitted in its copulative function. The Turkish -dir, on the other hand, is ordinarily omitted in its copulative function and can be suffixed to any person in a number of tense forms:

11. Belki ... o anda anlamışmdır (Ivanov 1976:82).  
Perhaps ... at that moment I understood.
12. Belki bu ismi duymuşsundur (Ivanov 1976:82).  
Perhaps you have heard this name.
- 13 a. Yorgunsun.      b. Yorgunsundur.  
You are tired.      You must be tired (Underhill 1976:208).
- 14 a. Şiir yazıyorum.      b. Şiir yazıyorumdur.  
I am writing poetry.      Surely I am writing poetry (Lewis 1967: 139).

The basic meaning of -dir is really to "emphasize the termination of the predicate--to say, in effect, 'period'" (Swift and Ağralı 1966:220). This emphatic function can often be rendered by English adverbs such as surely. The use of this emphatic particle in a context which is already marked, e.g. a marked person (the first or second), causes the thereby doubly emphasized, i.e. in a sense overemphasized, statement to become less definite as in examples (13b), (14b) and to a certain extent also (11) and (12).

The opposition of the di- and miş-past in Turkish appears to be like that of the past definite and past indefinite in Bulgarian, i.e. on the basis of the unacceptability of sentences such as the following:<sup>3</sup>

15. \*İnanmıyorum ki o adam bunu yaptı.  
I don't believe that that man did this.

Where only the miş-past can be subordinated to a verb directly contradicting the notion of affirmation, it can be said that like the Bulgarian past definite, the Turkish di-past is marked for affirmation while the miş-past, like the past indefinite, by the fact that it is the unmarked member of the opposition affirmative/nonaffirmative implies reportedness as the most typical type of nonaffirmation, but it does not always carry this meaning (cf. e.g. [6]). The use of the marked emphatic -dir with the marked first and second

persons can produce a kind of overmarking which renders the predicate less certain. This same emphatic quality of *-dir* when coupled with the unmarked person of the unmarked past, i.e. the third person of the *mis*-past, serves to cancel out the unmarked past's chief contextual variant meaning which, as in Bulgarian, is some form of nonaffirmativity such as "reported," and leaves only the meaning "unmarked past."

From the foregoing material, it is possible to conclude that the apparent similarities in those parts of the Bulgarian and Turkish verbal systems examined here are the result of convergence rather than influence. In both languages the definite pasts developed into marked affirmative forms while the indefinite pasts--originally perfects in both instances--became the unmarked forms whose chief contextual variant meaning developed into "reported" in contrast to the marked affirmative. Since the marking for affirmativity is a natural enough outgrowth of definiteness, its occurrence in Bulgarian need not be ascribed to Turkish influence. The development of perfects into unmarked pasts is well-attested in other languages, e.g. French and German, while some sort of nonaffirmative meaning such as "reported" has been claimed for this form in such disparate languages as Avar, Estonian, Georgian, Lithuanian, Sanskrit, and Tajik. Hence the similarities of Bulgarian and Turkish in these respects could be convergent rather than due to areal influence. The apparent isomorphism with regard to the presence and absence of the third person auxiliary in the two languages is clearly only a superficial resemblance. The Bulgarian phenomenon involves the process of auxiliary loss found elsewhere in Balkan Slavic, and it happens to occur in East Bulgarian with greater frequency in nonaffirmative clauses. The Turkish phenomenon involves the addition of a relatively new particle, *-dir* (from the third person singular aorist *durur* "stands"), whose occurrence with the unmarked person of the unmarked past eliminates that past's nonaffirmative chief contextual variant meaning. Thus in differentiating areal phenomena from convergence and in considering questions of influence and historical development, it is the semantic markings of grammatical categories and the total functioning of morphological units rather than isolated surface phenomena which must be examined.

## Notes

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<sup>1</sup> Throughout this paper I have made extensive use of ellipsis for the purpose of making the examples as readily comprehensible as possible by eliminating all nonessential material. It should be understood that the omitted words and phrases in no way change the basic meanings of the sentences and do not, therefore, affect the arguments being advanced. Exact references to the complete passages are, of course, always provided. It should also be noted that I have changed the original second person plurals to second person singulars in examples (12) and (13). As in the case of ellipsis, these changes were made solely for the sake of rendering the examples more easily interpretable to the non-Balkanist, and they do not affect the arguments.

<sup>2</sup> Although it can be shown that these terms are not literally correct, i.e. they represent contextual variant meanings of these forms rather than basic meanings (Aronson 1967), their long tradition of usage and the need for the simplification of nonessential details for the sake of clarity justify their use in this paper.

<sup>3</sup> This sentence, like (10), is in fact acceptable if the speaker actually does believe that the person did it but wishes to emphasize amazement by means of an expressive, i.e. nonliteral, expression of disbelief. In such cases, *napravi* and *yaptı* still express affirmation, while *ne vjarvam* and *inanmıyorum* express surprise at having to affirm the event rather than a refusal to affirm it. Cf. English I can't/don't believe he did it! when the speaker does in fact believe the event. Such uses, because they involve nonliteral meaning, do not affect our arguments (V. Friedman 1977:43).

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