

The Problem of Transposition of Tense Forms in German Language

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ABSTRACT

In this article is explored the transpositional use of German tense forms according to grammatical conceptions of Prof. E. I. Shendels. The theoretical ideas put forward by the scientist in these studies cannot escape the attention of any researcher who conducts scientific research on the grammar of the German language. In this article, we also discuss the transposition and ambiguity of tenses and we will try to explain based on the grammatical concept of E.I. Shendels.

Professor E.I.Shendels has a unique position among scientists who researched German linguistics of the 20th century. The grammatical concepts and theoretical views used by the scientist have not lost their relevance even today. It is known that Professor E.I.Shendels in her doctoral thesis and monograph deeply researched the paradigmatic and syntagmatic features of tenses in the categories of German language inclination and ratio, based on component and contextual analysis, both theoretically and practically.

The theoretical ideas put forward by the scientist in these studies cannot escape the attention of any researcher who conducts scientific research on the grammar of the German language. In this article, we also discuss the transposition and ambiguity of tenses. We will try to explain based on the grammatical concept of E.I. Shendels.

In her monograph entitled "Многозначность и синонимия в грамматике", the scientist comments on such concepts as opposition, neutralization, component and contextual analysis before elucidating the issue of transpositional use of German tenses.

Although opposition is closely related to the concepts of grammatical category and paradigm, it is not equivalent to either of them. The main difference between grammatical category and opposition is as follows:

The set of forms belonging to one grammatical category is invariable, that is, the researcher cannot change them based on her own point of view. For example, in German, the category of agreement consists of only 4 members, and the category of tense has only 6 forms. Opposition can occur within any grammatical category with more than two members.

The researcher can divide the forms included in the same grammatical category into different groups according to their similar or distinguishing features. Agreement forms in German can be included in binary opposition (indirect-indirect). In this case, the nominative is contrasted with

all other cases or they can be divided into a three-member opposition. Nominative (independent agreement) - genitive (combined with a noun) - dative and accusative (combined with a verb). In order to further clarify the issue, we divide the tense category forms into oppositions. As mentioned above, there are 6 tenses in the indicative mood. We can divide them into absolute (present, preterit, future 1) and relative (plus perfect, perfect, future 2) forms. In this case, the tense category is a 6-member opposition. Two cases are observed when members of the opposition are used as syntagma components in speech:

1. The member of the opposition retains the distinguishing marks
2. The member of the opposition loses its distinctive features

Some distinguishing features in the paradigmatic meaning of grammatical forms are withdrawn (neutralized) in an unfavorable context. As a result, grammatical forms approach each other to the level of synonymy. Convergence of opposites is a common phenomenon in morphology and syntax. There is no opposition if its members do not come closer to each other under the influence of certain circumstances. S. Kartsevsky pointed out that the prevalence of this linguistic phenomenon in our speech is based on a certain regularity. [3, 128]. And E. I. Shendels called this law neutralization in grammar [2, 15]. Neutralization usually occurs by transpositionally applying a member of one opposition to another member. In this case, the distinguishing features of the members are not taken into account, and only their common features, which are the basis for their convergence, are taken into account [2, 16].

E. I. Schendels, in researching the issue of transposition of German tenses, places special emphasis on component analysis. Most grammatical forms consist of two or more meaning units (elements). These units of meaning are called *sema* by E. I. Shendels [2, 23]. The sum of the *semas*, in turn, constitutes a *gramme*. *Sema* is the smallest (minimum) element of the categorical meaning of the form. When the grammatical form is analyzed into sections, it becomes possible to get more complete (detailed) information about it. If the meaning of the *Präteritum* (past simple) was limited only to the term "past time", it would not have any difference from the perfect. Therefore, in order to clearly define the difference in meaning between grammatical forms, it is necessary to analyze the terms perfectly. For example, if the *Präteritum* is added to the theme of "past tense", the theme of "irrelation with the time of speech" is added, while the perfect is characterized by the theme of "dependence on the time of speech" in addition to the theme of "past tense". The difference between the opposite forms is also determined by the expressivity/non-expressiveness of the meaning sign. For example, *Perfekt*, *Pluskvamperfekt*, *Futurum 2* usually have the meaning of "completion of an action", while preterit and *Futurum 1* have no clear indication of this sign (that is, they can express both the completion and incompleteness of an action).

E.I. Shendels gives a wide place to the concept of transposition and emphasizes that as a result of it, partial, additional or syntagmatic meanings are formed in the lexicon and grammar.

The characteristic of transposition is that it occurs within the framework of a certain system of opposition in which a grammatical form has entered, says the scientist. Therefore, in grammar, transposition should be studied primarily based on opposition. But only when the lexical-syntactic properties of two members that are part of an opposition match, it becomes possible for them to enter the transposition. For example, the present can mean the past tense (*Präsens Historikum*) typical of the *Präteritum* (past simple) or the future tense (*Futurum Präsens*), which is the paradigmatic meaning of the *futurum*, but it cannot express the meaning typical of *Pluskvamperfekt* (past perfect) and *Futurum 2*. The transposition of each tense form in the polynomial opposition system takes place differently. For example, the perfect is used instead of the past perfect, and the preterit *Futurum 2* (future perfect) is used instead.

In the following contexts, *Perfekt* (present perfect) and *Pluskvamperfekt* (past perfect) is used instead of:

Der verzweifelte Republikaner, der sich wie ein Brutus das Messer ins Herz stieß, hat vielleicht zuvor daran nicht gerochen, ob auch kein Hering damit geschnitten worden ist (H. Heine. Ideen).

Diederich musste ihm viel von Göppele berichten. Ob er die Fabrik gesehen habe? Und war er bei den anderen Geschäftsfreunden gewesen? (H. Mann. Der Untertan).

Although the *Präteritum* and perfect tenses have the same meaning as the past tense, they are fundamentally different in use. Which one to use in a particular context depends on several reasons. Let's take a look at some of them

Some verbs tend to appear in one of these tenses according to their lexical features. For example, *sein*, *haben* and modal verbs are mainly used in the *Präteritum*.

There are verbs from which the perfect cannot be formed. An example of this is the verb *stammen*.

The author's dialect also has a certain importance in the use of tenses. For example, the preterite is rarely used in the Swabian dialect (Schwäbischer Dialect) and southern German dialects. In North German dialects, however, both tenses are often used, and so on.

Even so, the synonymous use of these forms is often found in the German language. In particular, it is used instead of the perfect *Präteritum* in the following contexts.

Es war ein Freund deines Großvaters und ein reputierlicher Mensch. Aber er war Offizier und Edelmann; und dein Großvater war immer sehr gegen das Militär. – Auf deines Großvaters Hochzeit tanzten sie miteinander und ich entsinne mich wohl, sie machten ein schönes Paar zusammen... Es ist aber das letzte Mal gewesen; er nahm bald darauf seinen Abschied und kaufte sich weit von hier ein Landhaus (Th. Storm. Im Sonnenschein).

In some texts, the perfect future is used instead of 2. Although both forms express the completion of an action, the paradigmatic meaning of the perfect is the past tense, while the paradigmatic meaning of the *Futurum 2* is related to the future tense. Only under the influence of the context, the "past tense" theme of the perfect recedes, the "future tense" theme appears, and the transpositional use of these tense forms occurs:

Ich werde nicht rasten und ruhen, bis ich den Anstifter ans Tageslicht gezogen habe (H. Sudermann, Der Katzensteg).

There are several reasons why the perfect is used synonymously with *Futurum 2*. One of these is when:

"Ich hoffe zuversichtlich, dass Sie bis zum Nachmittag Ihre Müdigkeit soweit überwunden haben, dass es Ihnen möglich sein wird, mir fünf Minuten zu schenken..." (B. Kellermann, Totentanz)

Assimilation of tenses. In this case, it is semantically close to the action expressed by the future 1 and its synonyms in the perfect sentence:

"...Jedenfalls werden Tausende den Protest sofort verstehen, und damit habe ich meine Absicht erreicht!" (B. Kellermann, Totentanz).

"...Nachher fahre ich runter nach München, und Sie haben Ihre Anweisung von der Post zurückgeholt!" (H. Fallada. Jeder stirbt für sich allein).

When the perfect is used instead of *Futurum 2*, the tenses also play an important role. For example:

„Einen Leutnant kannte ich, der zitierte seinem Mädchen Rilke-Gedichte durchs Telefon. Ich bin bald gestorben, obwohl es mal was anderes war". (H. Böll, Und sagte kein einziges Wort).

The present tense is used instead of the plural *Präteritum*: This phenomenon depends on certain stylistic situations in the context. These are the styles of fiction, oral speech, journalism and periodicals. In works of the narrative genre, the choice of tense is made freely. But it is difficult to imagine the author describing the action in the past tense using the present tense. Most importantly, the timing of the described event depends on the relational effect of the reader's reception of it. This effect occurs only as a result of giving a *Präteritum* background to the present.

Usually, cases of transition from *Präteritum* to present are observed at exciting points of the work (story). If the action took place in the past tense, and the event is more clearly embodied in the eyes of the hero of the work, a state of transition from the *Präteritum* to the present is observed. For example:

Kontorek hielt uns in den Turnstunden so lange Vorträge, bis unsere Klasse unter seiner Führung geschlossen zum Bezirkskommando zog und sich meldete. Ich sehe ihn noch vor mir, wie er uns durch seine Brillengläser anfunkelte. (Remarque E.M., Im Westen nichts Neues).

As a conclusion, it should be noted that under the influence of the conditions and context in the speech process, the differentiating symbols in the paradigmatic meaning of the tenses can be activated, weakened, retreated, and used in a new function. Based on this, cases of ambiguity and synonymy are observed in the system of tense forms.

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