

Grammatical Meanings of Plusquamperfect Tense and its Contextual Analysis

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ABSTRACT

The article examines the polysemy of plusquamperfekt in German. Plusquamperfekt is used to express the long past tense, and also has the property of relative usage. The interaction of two or more tenses in the same context is called the relative tenses of verbs. In this case, the connection between two or more actions is not focused on the moment of speech, but enters into a mutual connection. Linguists' theories about polysemy plusquamperfekt are substantiated and contextually analyzed using examples from German works of art.

Introduction. It is known that the current German tense category uses three forms to express the past tense, which are preterit (Präterit), perfect (Perfekt) and plusquamperfekt (Plusquamperfekt). The paradigmatic meaning of these tense forms is characteristic of expressing the past tense. The preterite is a form of the simple tense, which is mainly used in the narration of works of art and actions and events. The perfect tense is one of the actively used forms in both written and spoken speech. It is formed from the present of the auxiliary verbs haben/sein and the Participle II form of the main verb. Plusquamperfekt is formed from the preterite of the auxiliary verbs haben/sein and the adjective form II of the main verb. The main meaning of Plusquamperfekt is to express the past tense (German: Vorvergangenheit/ Eng. past in the past). It is used in an absolute and relative sense according to the speech situation. Studies have shown that the use of the plusquamperfekt as a relative tense is high.

Main part. In the modern German language, according to the use of verb tenses, it is divided into two - absolute and relative. The absolute use of tense forms means that they express the meanings of the past, present and future tenses in relation to the moment of speech. In other words, the use of one tense form within a sentence (or small context) to express a concrete meaning is called absolute use. In this case, the tenses are not used in relation to each other:

Wir saßen in einem dieser neu ingerichteten Cafés auf Barhockern um einen zu hohen Rundtisch (G. Grass, Im Krebsgang).

Es wird ein Fest, ein riesiges, gewaltiges Fest werden (K. Brinkbäumer, Der Traum vom Leben).

It can be seen that only one tense is used in both sentences. In the first sentence, the preterite tense form is used in absolute form, which expresses that the action was performed before the

moment of speech, that is, in the past tense. In the second sentence, the performance of the action after the moment of speech is expressed using future tense 1.

The interaction of two or more tenses in one context is called the relative use of verb tenses [3, 48]. In this case, the relationship between two or more actions is not focused on the moment of speech, but enters into a mutual relationship. According to it, actions can be performed simultaneously or sequentially. In other words, the occurrence and use of two or more tense forms in relation to each other within one sentence (or context) constitutes relative use.

Um die Zeit, als David Frankfurter von Bern nach Davos unterwegs war, befand sich Wilhelm Gustloff auf Organisationsreise (G. Grass, *Im Krebsgang*).

Niemand wusste, woher sie gekommen waren (Deutschland erzählt)

It can be seen from the given examples that two tense forms are used in both sentences (preterit/preterit in the first sentence, preterit/plusquamperfekt in the second sentence), one of them is used in relation to the other.

Thus, in German, the present, preterit and futurum 1 tenses are absolute and perfect, plusquamperfekt and futurum 2 tenses are relative. It should be said that the relative tense forms can be used in the absolute sense in some cases under the influence of a favorable context:

Ich habe an einem Morgen vierzehnmal sein Bett gebaut (E.M.Remarque, *Im Westen nichts Neues*).

Der Fremdenführer wird schon mit allen möglichen Fremden durch Wien gefahren sein (I. Bachmann, *Besichtigung einer Stadt*.)

As we said, the plusquamperfekt is a form of the relative tense, which is formed from the preterite of the auxiliary verbs *haben* or *sein* and the adjective form of the main verb. Its main meaning is to express the past time (German: *Vorvergangenheit*). Plusquamperfekt is mainly relative. Therefore, it is often used in larger texts, rarely in a separate sentence (with minimal context):

Anfang siebenundsechzig, bald nachdem ich mich in der Karlsbader Straße abgeseilt hatte, nach Kreuzberg gezogen war, darauf mein Studium schmiß und bei Springers „Morgenpost“ als Volontär einstieg, hörte der Geldsegen auf (G. Grass, *Im Krebsgang*).

Keiner konnte ihn gut leiden, er war schon ein paar Mal schuld daran gewesen, dass wir im Graben das Essen zu spät und kalt bekommen hatten (E.M.Remarque, *Im Westen nichts Neues*).

Pluskvampekrfect can sometimes be used in an absolute sense. In this case it is used with the preterite:

Jemand hatte eine alte Matratze an den Waldrand gelegt. Da lag sie waldfremd mit rotem Bezug. (E. Strittmatter, *Schulzenhofer Kramkalender*)

Gemütlich gingen wir auf die Knie, dann auf die Arme und so fort; inzwischen hatte er schon wütend ein anderes Kommando gegeben. (E.M.Remarque, *Im Westen nichts Neues*).

Determining the semantic functions of the plusquamperfekt is not too difficult: there are linguists who express the opinion that "any long past tense meaning can be expressed only in the plusquamperfekt" (Latzel, Hauser-Suida/Hoppe-Beugel, Gelhaus). In our opinion, this idea does not justify itself. When saying why, the preterite and perfect, which are past tense forms, can also fulfill the functions of plusquamperfekt within a convenient context:

Goethe ist 1832 gestorben.

Goethe starb 1832.

The time relationship between the action and the moment of speech is not always explicitly expressed in the sentence (for example: adverb, tense, tense, etc.). If it is not expressed using any lexical or grammatical means, then it is reflected in "linguistic or non-linguistic context" [4, 67]. Germanist scientist Hans Werner Eroms takes into account all shades of meaning of plusquamperfekt and defines it as follows: "It is inappropriate to consider plusquamperfekt as the primary past tense, because it is always used with other tenses" [1; 345]. Another Germanist, Dieter Wunderlich, continued his opinion, saying, "In German literature, the plusquamperfekt is never used out of context in a simple sentence. His character is revealed only in the context" - says [5; 151].

Analysis shows that the plusquamperfekt in modern German has the following meanings:

1. Plusquamperfekt is used in a relative sense and serves to express the long past time, that is, an action, an event (German: Vorvergangenheit) before an action in the past tense. This is its main meaning. In this case, it can appear as a prepositional phrase, a subordinate clause, or an independent clause. It is often used in conjunctions with the conjunctions **nachdem, als**:

Nach einem halben Jahr in Neuandalusien hatte Humboldt alles untersucht, was nicht Füße und Angst genug hatte (D. Kehlmann, Die Vermessung der Welt).

Als er fünfhundert gezählt hatte, stand er auf (S. Hermlin, Die Zeit der Einsamkeit).

The plusquamperfekt, when used in a definite article, expresses a retrospective meaning:

Er sah die Frau, die er nie gesehen hatte (L. Frank, Karl und Anna).

It can be used as a complement clause:

Es war jetzt klar, dass sie sich ganz und gar verirrt hatten (B. Brecht, Dreigroschenroman).

Kropp war sogar soweit gegangen, dass er sich vorgenommen hatte, im Frieden das Postfach einzuschlagen (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues).

As we mentioned above, the plusquamperfekt serves to express an action, an event that happened earlier than in the past tense. If two actions are expressed in their natural sequence in the past tense, then the plusquamperfekt is not necessarily used.

Er sah mit suchendem Ausdruck um sich, dann sank er zur Seite und wurde von Humboldt aufgefangen. Mit dem nächsten Schiff kehrte er zurück nach Spanien (D. Kehlmann, Die Vermessung der Welt).

Es war schon Mittag, als die ersten von uns aus den Baracken krochen (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues).

If two actions in the past tense differ greatly in time interval from the point of view of completion, the action that preceded it is expressed by the plusquamperfekt, and the action that follows it is expressed by the preterite:

Im Krieg hatte ich den Mann aus den Augen verloren. Aber dann sah ich ihn eines Mittags in den Wartesaal treten. (G. Weisenborn, Der Verfolger)

Vor vierzehn Tagen war es ziemlich ruhig in unserm Abschnitt, und der Furier hatte deshalb für den Tag unserer Rückkehr das normale Quantum Lebensmittel erhalten. Nun aber gab es gerade am letzten Tage bei uns überraschend viel Langrohr und dicke Barocken (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues).

The plusquamperfekt usually expresses a completed action in the past tense. Sometimes it also expresses a repeated and continuous action in the past tense with the help of lexical units, and performs a function specific to the preterite:

Wir waren irgendwie immer zärtlich an sie verloren und hingegeben, und das Kleinste mündete uns einmal immer in den Weg der Unendlichkeit (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues).

The past tense, like the preterite, can express the meaning of a story in fiction. In the artistic image, the past tense forms plusquamperfekt, preterite and perfect are used, and the historical present is partially addressed. The author skillfully uses these forms of time in different contexts in the artistic description of the events in the work, so that these events become real in the eyes of both the author and the reader. Past tense forms do not always have a past tense meaning in an artistic representation, they usually represent an imaginary present epic tense. In other words, the work of art serves to express the time in which the characters live and act. Although the main meaning of the plusquamperfekt is to express the past tense, this meaning is neutralized by the context and is used along with the preterite:

John wollte nicht sterben. Nicht hier. Noch nicht. Er dachte an seine Familie. Er hatte ihre Gesichter verloren, erinnerte sich an Schemen, aber die Gesichter und die Körper seiner Frau und seiner Kinder waren unscharf geworden. Er sah sich ihre Fotos an. Er spürte, wie verschwamm, was sein Leben gewesen war (K. Brinkbäumer, Der Traum vom Leben).

The beginning of the literary text directs the reader's attention to the past events that happened before the moment of speech. The first sentences in the text lay the groundwork for the tense character of the next action and serve as a point of time determination:

Im September 1828 verließ der größte Mathematiker des Landes zum erstenmal seit Jahren seine Heimatstadt, um am Deutschen Naturforscherkongreß in Berlin teilzunehmen. Selbstverständlich wollte er nicht dorthin. Monatelang hatte er sich geweigert, aber Alexander von Humboldt war hartnäckig geblieben, bis er in einem schwachen Moment zugesagt hatte (D. Kehlmann, Die Vermessung der Welt).

Dieser Sommer 1918 ist der blutigste und der schwerste. Die Tage stehen wie Engel in Gold und Blau unfassbar über dem Ring der Vernichtung. Jeder hier weiß, dass wir den Krieg verlieren (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues).

When we compare the set of distinguishing semantic features of plusquamperfekt and preterite, we see that they are similar in terms of signs of action initiation, completion, and completion before the moment of speech. In contrast to the preterite, the plusquamperfekt has a distinguishing semantic marker of the perfective. The differentiating semantic sign of perfect includes two subsemas - the presence of the action before the moment of speech and the actuality of the result. The approximation of the meaning of the plusquamperfekt to the preterite is explained by the retreat of the perfect sign:

Gauß atmete tief ein. Er war erleichtert, dass er hinaus war. Er musste schnell weg, bevor dieser Verrückte seine Zusage bereute. Der hatte also die Disquisitiones gelesen! Er hatte sich noch immer nicht ans Berühmtsein gewöhnt (D. Kehlmann, Die Vermessung der Welt).

In paradigmatic analysis, subsemas are usually not distinguished, but for syntagmatic analysis this distinction is essential. For example:

“Na, hoffentlich habe ich nichts vergessen,” - sagte sie und war im Begriff, die abgetragene Ledermappe, die sie an die magere Brust gepresst hatte, auf den Tisch zu legen (B.Uhse, Die Patrioten).

In the above sentence, the plusquamperfect is performing the function of the preterite as a result of the withdrawal of the subsema of actuality of the result specific to the plusquamperfect.

2. The second meaning of Plusquamperfekt is to express the recent past, and this meaning is called futuristic plusquamperfekt (das futurische Plusquamperfekt) [2, 231]. Futuristic

plusquamperfekt differs from the meaning of future perfect (futurisches Perfekt). While the perfect expresses that the action actually takes place after the moment of speech (Morgen habe ich die Treppe geputzt), the plusquamperfekt expresses that the action takes place before the moment of speech. In fact, the meaning of the long past tense (German: Vorvergangenheit) characteristic of the plusquamperfekt is withdrawn under the influence of the context, and the meaning of the past tense (German: Nachvergangenheit) is formed in relation to the moment of its speech:

Sie atmete tief aus und war Sekunden später eingeschlafen. (L. Frank, Mathilde)

Er rannte den ganzen Weg, bis er das Haus erreicht hatte.

Futuristic plusquamperfekt is usually used with the conjunctions **solange ... bis, bis, bevor, ehe**. The semantics of these connectors express the completion of any repeated or continuous action, event in the main clause.

Er schoß so lange, bis er getroffen hatte.

Der Pfarrer predigte solange, bis die Gemeinde eingeschlafen war.

3. Plusquamperfekt is used not only to express actions in the past, but also to express the future. In German, this meaning of the plusquamperfekt is actually specific to the perfect, and it is rarely found in abstract sentences in fiction. In this case, the plusquamperfekt is used instead of futurum 2, expressing a completed action in the future tense:

Ich würde – zum Schluss erst, wenn ich mit meinem Hut schon rundgegangen war, Kalick öffentlich ohrfeigen (Böll H. Ansichten eines Clowns. München).

Später, wenn sie alles überstanden hatte, wenn sie sicher sein konnte, dass Walter keinen inneren Vorbehalt mehr gegen ihre Ehe hegte, wollte sie ihm alles gestehen, und dies würde ein herrlicher Augenblick werden. (G. Harkentahl, Liebe ist mehr)

In these sentences, the tenses and the conditional indicate that the plusquamperfekt and preterite are located after the moment of speech.

4. Another additional meaning of plusquamperfekt is that it expresses aspectual character in the sentence. "Aspectuality" is a functional-semantic category of the language, which expresses the nature of action in a sentence through various morphological, syntactic, word-forming and lexical means. It is found in many languages of the world as a means of grammatical expression and belongs to the additional type of grammatical expression of time relations along with tense forms. The aspectual meaning of the plusquamperfekt is to express the state of completion, not the course of action:

Und wie du mich aus dem Schlamassel holtest, als ich noch ein kleiner Rekrut und zum erstenmal verwundet war? (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues)

Wir waren einem der Regimenter mit der hohen Hausnummer zugeteilt, vorher aber zur Einkleidung in die Garnison zurückbefördert worden (E.M.Remarque, Im Westen nichts Neues).

As can be seen from the given examples, the plusquamperfekt does not express the completion of an action, but the state of completion.

5. In its absolute use, the plusquamperfekt can express not only the long past time, but also any action, event in the past time. This case is mainly found in oral speech and German mass media, and constitutes a unique stylistic style:

(The opinion of the speaker in the TV show)

Wir waren drei Monate in Amerika gewesen.

Hatten Sie das bereits erledigt?

When the plusquamperfekt absolute is used, three main interrelated shades of meaning are displayed: a) It indicates the attitude of negation, resistance and displeasure of the subject;

Jens will die Unterlage nicht unterschreiben. Er hatte es fest zugesagt.

Sabine kommt nicht. Und ich hatte sich so gefreut!

b) Expresses the "personal-subjective" attitude of the speaker to the level of the past distance in relation to the moment of speech of the reported event;

(Football player in an interview after the match)

Es war ein schweres Spiel gewesen.

(Entering a restaurant with a reservation)

Wir hatten einen Tisch bestellt.

c) Expresses the meaning of respect. In this case, the plusquamperfekt expresses the speaker's respect for the person he addressed before;

(Professor asking the researcher about the results of the research)

Nach den Büchern hatten Sie gefragt?

Hatten Sie mir diesen Brief geschrieben?

(The seller addresses the buyer who came to replace the purchased product)

Hatten Sie Ihre Quittung mitgebracht?

Taking into account the distance of the action from the moment of speech in the given examples, the perfect or preterite should have been used. Such cases of the absolute use of the plusquamperfekt are directly related to its stylistic features. This use of the plusquamperfekt has already become commonplace in the media of German daily life.

Such cases indicate that the plusquamperfekt performs not only grammatical but also stylistic functions. Usually, in such sentences, not the meaning of the time of the plusquamperfekt, but the subjective-stylistic attitude of the speaker to the time of the performance of the action, event comes to the fore.

Conclusion. From the points given above, it is clear that plusquamperfekt is a multi-meaning tense form. When we compare it with the past tense forms in the current Uzbek literary language, we can see its relatively similar forms. In the Uzbek language, many verb tenses have more than one meaning. In the modern Uzbek literary language, there are mainly four forms of the past tense verb, - di, - gan, - (i)b with an affix and forms formed using the imperfect verb edi [6,133]. Among them, in the forms formed with the help of -gan and -gan+edi, the time of execution of the action-state is relatively longer than the moment of speech, and in terms of meaning and functions, it corresponds to the German plusquamperfekt:

The water that was repeatedly poured in order to soften the ground and destroy the forest in the spring was no longer absorbed into the ground and froze (A. Qahhor).

She forgot Khushroybibi, her village, whom she had just remembered, her humble, hard-working late husband, and her lion-like village nephew, who had disappeared at an unexpected time, and her thoughts were occupied only by her own affairs (Oybek).

The degree of remoteness of the time of performance of the action can be different, including the form made with the affix -gan can be used in relation to the event that happened several centuries ago [6, 139]:

Once upon a time, your father tried hard to make me go. As for me, I stubbornly did what I knew (Sh. Rashidov).

Uzbek -gan and -gan+edi forms have the meaning of action completion, similar to the German plusquamperfekt.

In conclusion, it should be said that the plusquamperfekt is a multi-meaning tense form, which expresses not only the meaning of the long past tense in relation to the moment of speech, but also the meaning of the recent past tense and the future tense. With these features, the plusquamperfekt can also replace the preterite and the perfect under the influence of the context.

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