

## DELIMITATION PROBLEMS IN THE NON-PAST DOMAIN

This article investigates the uses of present and future tense forms. Definitions of default uses of the present and future tenses (based on the relation to the time of utterance) are provided so that a large grey zone of overlap for dedicated present and future tense morphology can be identified. On this basis, the analysis pertains to a variety of present and future tense uses both in the South Slavic languages, in which the present and future tenses are distinguished morphologically for imperfective and perfective stems, and in the North Slavic languages, in which perfective stems do not distinguish between the present and future tenses. Regardless of this difference between South and North Slavic, basically the same delimitation problems arise, first of all, when present or future morphology is employed in directive speech acts or for non-time-located (habitual, omnitemporal) situations, which lack a distinct relation between a reference interval and the time of utterance and which thereby systematically trigger modal (dispositional, circumstantial) readings. For the present perfective these modal readings supply a bridge to future readings as their epistemic extensions (predictions). Furthermore, distributional facts support the argument that transpositions of the present tense (such as *praesens narrativum* and *praesens pro futuro*), particularly for perfective stems, fundamentally differ in the involved cognitive mechanisms from the aforementioned usage types. Moreover, in order to explain the tense uses in the non-past domain, a more systematic account of distinctions on the level of illocutions is required.

*Keywords:* present tense, future tense, perfectivity, Slavic, narrative discourse, habituality, reference interval.

### 1. Introduction

Common Slavic lacked a dedicated future tense; there existed only a past – non-past distinction, with the past domain being more differentiated than in most of the contemporary Slavic languages. Explicit future marking is of much more recent origin and developed variously in subareas of Slavic during or after the dialect continuum was torn apart. As a consequence, modern Slavic languages vary a lot in the marking of future tense; in this regard, even a superficial glance reveals two inter-related North-South splits. The first concerns the predominating source domains of morphemes that have become dedicated future grams: while in the Northern area auxiliaries based on inchoative verbs (< CS \**bod-*, BECOME) prevail or are even in exclusive use, the southern area is dominated by auxiliary clitics deriving from the volition verb *xotěti* (WILL). In this respect, Slovene is an exception, as it marks the future with a BECOME-auxiliary (*bô-*). Nonetheless, with respect to the second split, Slovene “behaves” like any South Slavic language (and markedly differs from North Slavic), namely: in all South Slavic languages can the explicit future gram be combined with both perfective and imperfective (pfv., ipfv.) stems. This lack of restrictions on aspect entails a clear morphological distinction between present and future not only for ipfv., but also for pfv. stems. By contrast, North Slavic languages do not allow

their future grams (BECOME or other, minor ones) to be combined with pfv. stems. Exceptions may occur for colloquial and dialectal varieties of Sorbian, and very few instances appear to be attested for historical stages of some variety or other in North Slavic. However, this does not change the general picture: for pfv. stems to mark the future, North Slavic languages use the morphological present tense, as a kind of default interpretation of the desinences on the present tense stem; there is no additional marker, and the process by which this change has come about may be captured under ‘hypanalysis’: peripheral and/or contextually conditioned functions of a construction, or a categorial opposition, become its inherent property due to a reduction in the inherited functional range (cf. Croft 2000: 126f.). As a consequence, for pfv. stems there is no morphological distinction between present and future tense, one thus wonders how present and future can be told apart. While a lacking present-future distinction of pfv. stems in North Slavic concerns the morphological form, problems in distinguishing present and future arise throughout in Slavic (and beyond), irrespective of the way tense distinctions are marked. This article will be about identifying core functions of present and future and figuring out grey zones of overlap which have been causing troubles.

Yet, apart from the aforementioned North-South splits there is another split, or cline, less obvious, but otherwise well-known, when we turn from the level of morphological marking to functions. Contemporary Slavic languages can be arranged on a gradient concerning the ways in which the morphological present tense can, or tends to, be employed apart from its assumed basic temporal meaning (see §2). While in the western part of Slavic the present tense of pfv. stems is freely used in narrative types of discourse, the eastern part bars such usage. This West-East cline has been known for a long time, and more recently it has become an important component of Dickey’s approach (sometimes dubbed ‘East-West theory of Slavic aspect’; cf. Dickey 2000 and subsequent publications). What is striking is not only the fact that this cline (on a West-East axis) runs orthogonal to the aforementioned North-South split in the rise of future grams and their interaction with aspect. Striking is the observation that restrictions concerning narrative uses of pfv. present tense are rather independent from restrictions pertaining to the employment of pfv. present for situations that lack discrete temporal reference, such as habitual events, with or without modal implications (see §3.4). As a matter of fact, little attention has been paid to the fact that the inner-Slavic areal distribution of the morphological present tense of pfv. stems does not depend on the choices these languages have to mark future tense. Narrative-like uses of pfv. present stems pattern differently than pfv. present tense employed to mark non-time-located situations (at least to a certain extent).

I will first dwell on the meaning of grammatical present and future and on their treatment in research (§2). Then I will discuss the basic facts concerning their distribution and point out desiderata to be further elaborated on across Slavic (§3). Some preliminary conclusions will finish the paper (§4). For reasons of space, and since this article only sketches the problems, references will be given to a limited extent. Glosses will be restricted to a minimum; in most cases, only upper-case indications of the grammatical categories of the relevant verb forms will be provided.

## 2. The meanings of present and future

In order to clearly delimit the range of relevant phenomena, a baseline should be defined as for which marking devices (constructions, grams) count as ‘future (tense)’. The baseline is determined by a core notion that figures prominently in the usage of such marking devices regardless of what else they may denote.<sup>1</sup> For the future, this is necessary because of its tight associations with either deontic or non-deontic modality, which have often been mentioned in the literature. Moreover, it is important to have an operative criterion to set off future from notions like ‘inactual present’, a domain in which future and present are particularly difficult to tell apart and which probably has caused most of the confusion around pfv. present. [1] formulates a proposal for such a baseline.

### [1] Operative definition of future tense

For comparative purposes, a construction (marker, gram) can be considered a sufficiently conventionalized future if among its core, or default, functions we find reference to a single (episodic) situation that is posterior to a reference interval. In the prototypical case, this reference interval is the current moment of speech (deictic time reference), but posteriority may also hold with respect to another time interval (shifted, or anaphoric, time reference).

Definition [1] builds on interval-based considerations; one of the intervals serves as reference, or anchor, for another interval which represents (part of) the situation (a.k.a. state of affairs, SoA, eventuality) talked about. The same considerations apply to various definitions of the present tense, but these definitions differ as for the role of the reference interval, or otherwise: what determines the ‘present moment’. For instance, the widely known textbook definition from Comrie (1985) allows for maximally broad intervals in relation to the moment of speech (see [2a]). Alternatively, the core function of present tense may be defined on an “epistemic” (or better: epistemological) basis, as this has been done, for instance, by adherents of Langackerian cognitive semantics; see [2b].

### [2] General definitions of present tense

[2a] Present tense “invariably locates a situation at the present moment [*sc.* of the speech event; BW], and says nothing beyond that” (Comrie 1985: 38, emphasis added).

[2b] The core function of the present tense is “locating situations in the domain of immediate reality and construing them as fully coincident with the speech event” (De Wit 2017: 38f.).

The definition in [2b] takes recourse to the cognitive notion of grounding which depends on the speaker’s monitoring of some kind or other of reality (cf. De Wit 2017: 13-17). In this sense, [2b] is based on subjectivity, and this raises the question

<sup>1</sup> This core notion may be called ‘conventionalized default use’.

how this concept of ‘presentness’ may be diagnosticized. Since I am not going to engage in this question here, we will concentrate on definitions of the type in [2a].

Definition [2a] allows for various ranges of the interval that includes the current moment of speech.<sup>2</sup> The crucial point is that “the present tense refers only to a situation holding at the present moment, even where that situation is part of a larger situation that occupies more than just the present moment” (Comrie 1985: 38). This includes statements about habits, properties and even omnitemporal truths (e.g., Russ. *Zemlja vraščaetsja*<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> *vokrug solnca*, Mac. *Zemjata kruži*<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> *okolu sonceto* ‘The Earth turns around the Sun’, or generic statements like Cz. *Kočky mňoukají*<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> ‘Cats meow’). For Comrie, there is no need to distinguish between present tense referring to SoAs that hold (or unfold) at the moment of utterance and present tense referring to situations that occur habitually but do not hold at the moment of utterance. A similar position is taken by Topolińska; see Topolinjska (2010: 11), where it is argued that present tense in omnitemporal utterances<sup>3</sup> may even be considered a particular case of the ‘actual’ present. An opposite position is taken by Grochowski (1972), who subsumes habitual, ‘potential’ and ‘universal’ meaning under the heading of ‘inactual present’ (Pol. *nieaktualny czas terażniejszy*). His position is thereby closer to Koschmieder’s, who insisted in distinguishing time-located (“zeitstellige”) tense uses from non-located (“zeitstellenlose”) uses; cf., for instance, Koschmieder (1963). In §3.1 and §3.4 we will see how these meanings are related and contribute to a larger grey zone between “present” and “future”.

Lehmann (2015) offers another position which radically differs from Comrie’s and Topolińska’s. Lehmann’s definition of omnitemporal reference disregards the time of utterance, only the relation between event time and a reference interval is important. At first sight, this looks like the definition of aspect (see below under Table 1), but the crucial point is that the reference interval is chosen arbitrarily, i.e. for any possible token of occurrence of the situation talked about. See [3], to which the symbols explained below are added to indicate equivalences:

[3] “Omnitemporal situations are defined by the relation between the actional interval (the interval of the situation denoted by the verb lexeme) [= E/TSit; BW] and the reference interval [= R/TT; BW] (cf. Lehmann 2014): An actional interval is omnitemporal, if it can be localized relative to a (closed) random reference interval in all temporal perspectives (anterior, central, posterior perspective).” (Lehmann 2015, from the abstract)

In the following, it will suffice to employ commonly accepted notions (and notations) based on interval-based semantics that were introduced by Reichenbach (1947)

<sup>2</sup> Mehlig (1995: 180) supplies a similar characterization of the categorial meaning of the *imperfective present*: „Die kategorische Bedeutung des ipf. Präsens läßt sich damit als Bezeichnung eines Zeitbereichs bestimmen, der die Äußerungszeit einschließt. Das heißt nicht, daß sich der denotierte Sachverhalt zur Äußerungszeit tatsächlich ereignen muß, entscheidend ist vielmehr seine Relevanz für den Zeitbereich, in dem sich die Origo des Sprechers befindet.“

<sup>3</sup> Here also belongs so-called ‘gnomic’ present, as represented in proverbs.

and Klein (1994).<sup>4</sup> The following table provides a synopsis of equivalences between these notions.

Table 1: *Notions employed in the analysis of tense-aspect functions*

Reichenbach (1947)	Klein (1994)	equivalent notions
S: Speech Time	TU: Time of Utterance	
E: Event Time	TSit: Time of Situation	eventuality, state of affairs (SoA), situation
R: Reference Time	TT: Topic Time „the time for which the particular utterance makes an assertion“ (1994: 37)	observer, conceptualizer; epistemic agent, attitude holder

Furthermore, perfective and imperfective aspect can be defined on the basis of Topic Time (TT) and its relation to Time of Situation (TSit), while Time of Utterance (TU) is irrelevant. Thus, pfv. aspect is defined by an inclusion of TSit in TT, which is tantamount to saying that pfv. aspect focuses on boundaries. These may be either inherent to the situation denoted by the predicate (e.g., with telic predicates; compare Ukr. *Myxajlo vidčynyv<sup>PFV.PAST</sup> dveri* ‘Myxajlo **opened** the door’) or introduced by pfv. aspect itself, e.g. by providing a temporal delimitation to an atelic predicate (e.g., Ukr. *Myxajlo podrimav<sup>PFV.PAST</sup> pid derevom (a potim vyrišyv<sup>PFV.PAST</sup> kupyty sobi morozyvo)* ‘Myxajlo **took a nap** under a tree (and then decided to buy himself ice cream)’). Therefore, pfv. aspect marks [+bounded], whereas ipfv. aspect either indicates [–bounded] or is indifferent for the boundedness distinction. This interval-based representation of aspect implies an operator-operandum approach: aspect choice operates on verb and/or clause semantics (cf. recently Tatevosov 2015: 64–67 et passim). This approach is thus compatible with other approaches, as in Breu (2000; 2021). The crucial question is how strongly the boundedness distinction interferes with tense in the non-past domain, or more precisely: how much the boundedness distinction interferes with the relation between TSit and TU, and what changes if present tense and future morphology is no longer tied to TU as a distinct time interval with deictic anchorage in the speech event.

Among all tenses, the present tense probably demonstrates the broadest array of deviations from reference to TU,

- either because this reference interval is the easiest to be cancelled:  $TT \neq TU$ ;
- or because the relation to TU is extended (‘Expanded Now’) and downplayed, as it remains only trivially implied; see the definition in [2a].

<sup>4</sup> A brief assessment of their mutual relation is given by Deo (2012: 162f.).

### 3. Diffuse intersections or different readings?

Let us now specify the context types for which a delimitation of present vs future proves troublesome, or otherwise: for which one kind or other of overlap seems to occur.

#### 3.1. Interpretations of the simple future: where is the reference interval?

For the (**simple**) **future**, Reichenbach (1947: 295f.) suggested two symbolic representations (cf. Lindstedt 1985: 31f., 75f.); they differ in the location of the reference time, which may be indicated by a time adverb(ial). Compare (1a-b), with Klein's notation added to the right:

- |                                  |                          |                  |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------|------------------|
| (1a) <i>Now I shall go.</i>      | $S = R > E$ <sup>5</sup> | $TU = TT > TSit$ |
| (1b) <i>I shall go tomorrow.</i> | $S > R = E$              | $TU > TT = TSit$ |

In both (1a) and (1b) we are dealing with a reference interval anchored to the moment of speech. However, in (1a) R/TT is indicated by *now* specifying some temporal region to which S/TU belongs, whereas in (1b) R/TT is shifted to a posterior interval called *tomorrow*.

Let us demonstrate this difference with Bulgarian examples:

#### Bulgarian

(2a) Samuil otvărna oči ot nego i se obărna kam gotvača:

– **Šte prigotviš**<sup>PFV.FUT</sup> samo edno jadene.

‘Samuil took his eyes off him and turned to the cook:

– You **will prepare** only one meal.’

(Lindstedt 1985: 255, with reference to Stankov 1981: 68)

(2b) **Šte napišeš**<sup>PFV.FUT</sup> li doklada v opredelenija srok?

‘**Will / Can you write** the talk by the deadline?’

(Lindstedt 1985: 257, with reference to Stankov 1969: 135)

In (2a), the direct speech containing the marker *šte* has the imagined moment of speech (established by the narrative) as its reference time; that is, S/TU is dislocated (or rather: invalidated) by the narrative (with the aorist forms *otvărna* and *se obărna*), but since *šte* occurs in direct speech, R/TT can be identified with this imagined moment of speech. By contrast, in (2b) R/TT is embedded in an unshifted speech event, i.e. a deictically anchored S/TU, but its relation to the latter is indicated by the adver-

<sup>5</sup> ‘>’ indicates temporal precedence, ‘=’ suggests entire coincidence of intervals. Since entire coincidence occurs rarely, the containment symbol ( $\subset$ ) might prove more adequate, as it better represents the idea of (entire) inclusion; thus  $S \subset R$  (‘R includes the moment called *now*’) and  $R \subset E$  (‘the interval called *tomorrow* includes R’), respectively. Another possibility is overlap, i.e. partial inclusion.

bial *v opredelenija srok* ‘by the deadline’. This makes the predicate refer to a moment posterior to the interval which includes the speech event.

What causes this flexibility of the reference interval in future marking? Different reference intervals may not only be indicated explicitly, or implied by the type of context (deictic vs narrative), but vagueness may arise from distinctions of speech acts (illocutions). For instance, does the direct speech in (2a) count as an anticipation of what might happen (after the narratively anchored ‘now’), i.e. as a representative speech act (in Searle’s 1977 terminology)? Or does it rather mark some directive illocution, equivalent to the imperative?<sup>6</sup> Under the latter interpretation (or: speaker’s intention), temporal reference remains located in the here and now of the (real or imagined) speech act, i.e.  $S \subset R$  (see fn. 5).

Koschmieder (1963: 9) coined the term *praesens imperativum*, which can, for Polish, be illustrated with examples like (3-4).

### Polish

- (3) Skoro jest tyle wolnych miejsc, i to od paru dni, to nie ma sprawy! *Zaraz zadzwonisz*<sup>PFV,NPAST</sup> do ordynatora i *porozmawiasz*<sup>PFV,NPAST</sup> o tym.

‘Since there are so many vacancies, and it has been for a few days, that’s fine! Right now you (will) **call** the head of the clinic and **talk** (with them) about it.’

(PNC; M. Sokołowski: Gady. 2007)

- (4) Teraz, *natychmiast weźmiesz się*<sup>PFV,NPAST</sup> do pracy i *nadrobisz*<sup>PFV,NPAST</sup> wszystko, zaczynasz zaraz jak tylko ułożymy szczegółowy plan.

‘Now, **you** (will) immediately get to work and **make up** for everything, you start as soon as we have a detailed plan.’

(PNC; A. Anonimus: Nie nadaje się, przecież to jeszcze szczeniak. 1999)

Here we have present tense of pfv. stems. Are we to classify this usage as future or present tense? This issue arises systematically for any North Slavic languages, where the morphology of pfv. stems does not supply any clue for a distinction between future and present tense. Therefore, disputes as for whether utterances like (3-4) should be dubbed ‘present’ or ‘future’ seem academic to a certain extent, and two somewhat opposite lines of argumentation can be imagined.

Either one may argue that, by using pfv. *zadzwonisz* ‘you’ll call’ etc. (in 3-4), the speaker anticipates the event (→ future, R/TT = E/TSit) which they want the addressee(s) to perform, and that this infringement of authority on the addressee(s) yields directive illocutionary force. An analogous point applies to (2a) in Bulgarian, marked with *šte*. Or, alternatively, one may argue that (3-4) and (2a) are anchored in the interlocutors’ *hic et nunc*, so that we get some Extended Now-reading (→ present, S/TU  $\subset$  R/TT). Admittedly, adverbs like *zaraz* ‘now, at once’ or *natychmiast* ‘immediately’ indicate an interval whose closure is expected to be achieved just after

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Stojnova (2017: §2.1), who, for Russian, points out that the border between an interpretation as directive or representative speech act is unsteady (*granica... dostatočno zybkaia*).

another moment.<sup>7</sup> This other moment serves as reference interval, and in (2a, 3-4) this interval is the speech event. The closed interval indicated by these adverbs can thus be conceived of as starting with, or adjacent to, the moment of speech. Such an interval is compatible with both an Extended Now-interpretation and a reading of immediate future (in the sense of [1]).

However, beyond North Slavic, other languages employ future tense morphology in directive speech acts. Bulgarian (5a) corresponds to (2a) and reflects a Balkan Slavic pattern, in which morpheme combinations identified with, or associated to, future tense are regularly used for this purpose:

#### Bulgarian

(5a) Sega **šte** (ot)ideš<sup>PFV.FUT</sup> da spiš!

‘Now you **will** go to sleep!’

(5b) Sega **šte** priberes<sup>PFV.FUT</sup> stajata si!

‘Now you **will** tidy up your room!’

(T. Avgustinova, p.c.)

Future is closely associated with the irrealis domain, i.e. with meanings capturing situations that are alternative to whatever the speaker considers “real” at the moment of utterance. This comprises utterances about hypothetical or potential situations, or situations with lowered referentiality, such as statements about habitual occurrences (see §3.4).<sup>8</sup> Another marker associated to irrealis meanings might be used for directive speech acts, namely Balkan Slavic *da* (+ indicative present); see (6).

#### Macedonian

(6) Da gi prečkate<sup>PFV.PRS!</sup>

‘Wait for them!’

The distribution of Mac./Bulg. *da* and Mac. *ke* / Bulg. *šte* in utterances with directive illocutions and their interrelation (for different subtypes and frequency patterns) still waits for a systematic investigation. On the other end of South Slavic, in Slovene, *da* (+ indicative present) is regarded as more customary than the future, marked with *bô-* (< \**bôd-*) + *l*-form, for directive purposes (Uhlik/Žele 2018: 92–95); see (7a-b), by courtesy of M. Uhlik:<sup>9</sup>

<sup>7</sup> Compare circumscriptions like ‘in the shortest possible time after what is being said or known’ (*w najkrótszym możliwym czasie po czymś, o czym mowa, lub o czym wiadomo*) for *natychmiast*, or ‘right after the moment/point in question’ (*tuż po momencie/punkcie, o którym jest mowa*) for *zaraz* in <https://wsjp.pl/>.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Plungjan (2011: 427), also Ivanova (2022) on Balkan Slavic *da*-clauses. On the typological spread of relevant grammatical distinctions cf. Plungjan (2011: 441–449) and Mauri/Sansò (2012; 2016).

<sup>9</sup> Since in the western part of South Slavic *da* has lost its irrealis restrictions, its use in directives



## Slovene

(7a) Zdaj **boš pospravil**<sup>PFV,FUT</sup> svojo sobo.

(7b) **Da mi pospraviš**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> sobo.

‘Now you (**will**) **tidy up** your room!’

Beside Bulgarian, English is another case in point, see the translations of Polish (3-4) above. In general, the employment of future tense as a replacement of the imperative is commonplace, Stojnova (2017: §2, with references) even considers it the typologically most widespread type of “secondary” uses of the future. Nonetheless, in a language like German either present or future tense sound natural for the given purpose; present and future tense do not seem to differ in illocutionary strength.

## German

(8a) Du gehst<sup>PRS</sup> jetzt (sofort) schlafen!

(8b) Du wirst<sup>FUT</sup> jetzt (sofort) schlafen gehen!

‘You go / will go to sleep now!’

There are other, “hard” facts indicating that present tense for directive illocutions does not necessarily indicate future. Let us briefly compare West and East Slavic with Slovene and Latvian. These languages make a morphological distinction between present and future (for any verb stem), but the future marking is incompatible with auxiliaries that mark directive (hortative, permissive) or optative speech acts; only present tense forms are possible. See Latv. *lai* (< \**laid*.IMP of *laist* ‘let’) in (9) and Sln. *naj* (< \**nehati* ‘let’) in (10):<sup>10</sup>

## Latvian

(9) Pagaidi, **lai** drusku **sasild-o-s**<sup>PRS-RM</sup>

‘Wait a moment, just **let** me **warm up** a bit!’

(Holvoet/Konickaja 2011: 6)

## Slovene

(10) Rekel je, **naj** mu **oprosti**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup>.

‘He said **may** s/he **forgive** him.’

(Topolińska 2003: 313; cf. also Sonnenhauser 2021)

We find cognates of Sln. *naj* with the same function in practically all West and East Slavic languages (e.g., Pol. *niech*, Ukr. *nexaj*); as for the etymological identity, only

(and optatives) can be considered a conservative feature.

<sup>10</sup> The same holds for the cognate form *neka* in the other South Slavic languages (cf. Topolińska 2008 and the references in Wiemer 2021c: 84–86).

Russ. *pust'*/*puskaj* (< 'let, release') and Cz. *at'* (of unclear origin) are exceptions, but they function in an identical manner. All these units occur with non-past forms of either ipfv. or pfv. stems, but never with the ipfv. future (*bud-/bĕd-* as copula or existential verb is an exception). See examples with a pfv. (11) and an ipfv. (12) stem.<sup>11</sup>

### Ukrainian

- (11) A druhe: **nexaj** vona **navčyt'sja**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> smažyty deruny, bo ce v mene najuljubleniša strava.  
'And the second thing: **let** her **learn** how to fry drumsticks, because this is my favorite dish.'  
(RNC, parallel corpora)
- (12) Može, j pravyl'no, ja sam u den' zdači ekzamenu ne robyv ničoho. **Nexaj** **dyvyt'sja**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> televizor, **vidpočyvaje**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup>.  
'Maybe it's right, I didn't do anything on the day of the exam. **Let** him **watch** TV and **rest**.'  
(RNC, parallel corpora)

In all these languages the directive marker scopes over non-past forms, but in none of them is future morphology allowed.

Of course, imperatives or imperative-like utterances are inherently oriented toward the future, but this only concerns their relation to a (possible, likely) state of affairs after the speech act, it **does not say anything about the location of the reference interval**. A similar point applies to verbal periphrases with non-epistemic modal meanings that sometimes give rise to future grams (auxiliaries or affixes). In fact, the shift from  $R = S$  (or  $R \supset S$ ) to  $R = E$  (or  $R \supset E$ ) is concomitant to the rise of future morphology from deontic constructions. Consider, for instance, the Romance future based on the present tense of HAVE (TO) + infinitive (Vulgar Latin *cantāre habē-o* 'I have to sing' > It. *canter-ò* 'I will sing'), or emergent future marking with the present of *iměti/imati* 'have' + infinitive in Old Church Slavonic. Compare examples with direct speech in (13a-b).

### Old Church Slavonic

- (13a) Simon-e, Simon-e, **ima-mъ**                      ti                      něčto                      **reš-ti**.  
PN-VOC                      have-PRS.1SG                      2SG.DAT                      something.ACC                      say-INF  
'Simon, Simon, I **have to tell** you something.'  
(Codex Supr.; from Bielfeldt 1961: 264)
- (13b) ꙗ ꙗ ŕedъ ustroi sę sъ ožikami svoimi, i prišъdъ močeniје priimeši vъ Komaněxъ, ꙗ ne boi sę oтъ moкъ, азъ bo jesmъ sъ tobojъ,  
i **ne ima-tъ**                      tebe                      **vrědi-ti**                      strax-ъ člověčъsk-ъ.  
and NEG                      have-PRS.3SG                      2SG.GEN                      do\_harm-INF                      (fear human)-NOM.SG.M

<sup>11</sup> The factors that influence aspect choice appear to be identical to those relevant for the "synthetic" imperative.

‘but go (at your place) and settle with your relatives, and when you arrive you will take your suffer in Komany, but don’t be afraid of the tortures, because I am with you, and human fear **shall not do** any **harm** to you.’

(Codex Supr.; from Leskien 1969: 239)

In (13a) we are dealing with an obligational meaning and the reference interval includes the moment of speech, whereas (13b) can be read either as a prediction of what won’t happen or as an expression of God’s will implying a posterior domain which is built up by the preceding imperative (*ustroi se* ‘settle’) and the pfv. present (*priimeši* ‘(will) take’, which can itself be read as a quasi-imperative). Thus, in either interpretation of (13b) the reference interval excludes the speech event. Only in an obligational reading would it be anchored in the *hic et nunc* of the speech act. In diachronic terms, the stage reflected by (13a) can be considered as starting point, while (13b), provided it will be interpreted in the aforementioned way, would illustrate a stage closer to a future gram.

A rehearsal of the material on the *iměti/imati*+infinitive periphrases in Old Church Slavonic discussed by Birnbaum (1958: 61–129) shows that many (maybe even most) examples somewhat “oscillate” between a meaning for which the reference interval can be placed posterior to the imagined speech act interval<sup>12</sup> and a modal meaning that is neither clearly deontic nor epistemic, but either close to dispositional readings (capability; see 14) or, more frequently, acquires kind of “destinative” reading (see 15-16). In many cases, such occurrences are also part of (explicit or implied) conditional contexts (Birnbaum 1958: 64, 76, 77).

- (14) *slux-ьмъ uslyš-ite. i ne ima-te razumě-ti.*  
 hearing-INS hear[PFV]-PRS.2PL and NEG have-PRS.2PL understand-INF  
*зѡр-ѣшт-е узѡр-ите. i ne ima-te vidě-ti.*  
 see-PPRS.ACT-NOM.PL.M see[PFV]-PRS.2PL and NEG have-PRS.2PL see-INF  
 ‘you[PL] will hear with your ears and **won’t understand**, those who can see will see and **won’t see** it’  
 (Codex Zografensis)

- (15) *ašte chošteši sѡvršēnъ byti. idi eliko imaši prodaždъ i daždъ ništiimъ.*  
*i imě-ti ima-ši sѡkrovišt-e °nb-se.*  
 and have-INF have-PRS.2SG treasure-ACC heaven-LOC.SG  
 ‘if you want to be perfect, go and sell what you possess, und give it to the poor, and you **will obtain** a treasure in heaven’  
 (Codex Marianus)

<sup>12</sup> Examples predominantly represent direct speech, either by God or by Jesus or some saint. There does not seem to be a correlation between different interpretations (deontic, destinative, prediction, etc.) and grammatical person; at least the rather few examples with 1st or 2nd person do not demonstrate a preference for deontic (i.e. quasi-imperative) readings.

(16) ašte ne obratite se i bȑdete ěko děti.

<b>ne</b>	<b>ima-te</b>	<b>vъni-ti</b>	vъ	°crstvi-e °nebsk-oe.
NEG	have-PRS.2PL	enter-INF	in	(kingdom of.heaven)-ACC

‘if you[PL] don’t turn into (and behave like?) like children, you **won’t enter** the heavenly kingdom’  
(Codex Marianus)

Especially in conditional contexts the relation to S/TU is of secondary (if any) importance. Anyway, most conditional contexts are closely associated to ‘inactual’ present tense.

We may sum up so far. First, there is a need for testing out the claims made above on more solid usage-based grounds. Second, and above all, cursory as these observations on the relation between present and future, or better: the changeable role of reference intervals, are, they show that, conceptually, directive utterances can be argued to refer either to some domain of present or of future, and that neither future nor present morphology provides a means for an ultimate resolution of ambiguity (or vagueness), because the argument can easily become entangled in circularity: how do we determine that morphology associated to future meaning cannot expand, or be transferred, into an adjacent area linked to the moment of speech as its reference interval? Or, on the opposite, that such morphology just marks some kind of irrealis meaning, for which, in turn, future (as defined in [1]) would be just an extension?<sup>13</sup> In fact, some scholars (e.g., Topolinjska 2008: 52f.) have treated Bulg. *šte* / Mac. *ќе* as ‘non-factual’ or ‘irrealis’ markers; cf. Kramer (1986: 56, 79; 1992: 114f.) for short surveys.

### 3.2. Default shift vs transposition

Now, what about representative speech acts? Why should (17a) be considered future, if (17b) is considered present?

#### Russian

(17a) My **vstretimsja**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> v 5 časov / ĉerez dva dnja.

(17b) My **vstreĉaemsja**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> v 5 časov / ĉerez dva dnja.

‘We **will meet/are meeting** at 5 o’clock / in two days.’

The usual answer given for Russian (and other North Slavic languages) is that present tense morphology of pfv. stems has by default been reinterpreted as (pfv.) future, whereas the future reference of ipfv. present (in 17b) results from a present>future transposition. The latter is commonly known for scheduled (and thus easily predictable or controllable) events and widespread in many languages, regardless of whether they have an aspect opposition and whether they have a firmly established grammatical distinction between present and future. So, what makes the difference between a default shift and a transposition? Presumably, three things work in conspiracy here:

<sup>13</sup> For some related discussion cf. Lindstedt (1985: 255–259), who does not end up with a comprehensible solution.

- (a) **usage:** frequency of use in different functions;
- (b) **reference:** the (in)ability to refer to ongoing processes ('actual present');
- (c) **paradigmatic structure:** a morphological contrast with an established future marker.

As concerns (b), the Slavic pfv. present cannot refer to ongoing processes because of its [+boundary] feature, that is, by definition. The only actual present tense uses of pfv. stems are performative present and teichoscopy. The latter will be touched upon in §3.4, while the performative present is "actual" only by virtue of its non-constative character, so that to capture it in terms of temporal reference would be inadequate (Koschmieder 1930). I will not deal with it further here.

As for (c), since pfv. stems in North Slavic (other than in South Slavic) do not show a morphological contrast with the future (while ipfv. stems do), they can easily "occupy" that position, so that future reference (in the sense of [1]) can easily turn out predominant in terms of frequency (see (a)).

These remarks, however, evoke two caveats. First of all, a default (e.g., pfv. + present > pfv. future) can be cancelled (or suppressed), and this happens quite often even in modern standard Russian. Non-future uses are not a *quantité négligeable*; according to preliminary figures, provided on complementary data, their token frequency varies in the range of 25-38%.<sup>14</sup> This domain, again, has been badly investigated from a usage-based perspective, so yet no strong claims can be made. However, that the point for non-future uses of PFV.PRS has to be made even for contemporary standard Russian can be inferred from further, well-known facts discussed in §3.4.

Therefore, when do we "know" that PFV.PRS really marks future and when some kind of present tense – even provided we have a reasonable definition of future tense as in [1]? This problem can be spotted already for Old Church Slavonic; see the following example:

#### Old Church Slavonic

- (18) pišetъ bo g[ospod]ju b[og]ju svoemu **pokloniši se**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>  
 'for it is written, "You **shall worship** the Lord your God'  
 (Codex Zografensis: Matthew 4:10; from Kamphuis 2020: 108)

This example conveys a directive illocution, but it differs from, e.g., (9-10) in that it does not refer to just one occurrence, but is meant as a general commandment (or expectation) with no singular reference interval. Thus, apart from illocutionary force, we have to know whether reference is specific or not (as, e.g., in generic statements). The case for general commandments is tricky – as it is with instructions (e.g., recipes) – since one can use them as general instructions or apply them to a specific occasion (see §3.4).

<sup>14</sup> Forsyth (1974: 120) counted 38% out of 502 PFV.PRS-tokens from a fragment of a Russian 20<sup>th</sup> century novel, Stojnova (2017: §7) found 26 out of 100 random tokens from the RNC (for the period since 1950). For Polish, Wiemer et al. (in prep.) found 32% out of 840 random tokens, based on 20 stems in telic and 20 stems in atelic use from the PNC (period since 1946).

Conversely, a similar point applies when morphology associated to the future is used for the denotation of generalized (habitual, omnitemporal) situations, in parallel to present tense. Compare Engl. *Boys always will be boys* and an equivalent utterance in (19a):

### Bulgarian

(19a) Čovekät **šte bāde**<sup>(PFV)-FUT</sup> vinagi ljuboznatelen.

‘Man **will always be** curious.’

(19b) Utre Marija **šte bāde**<sup>(PFV)-FUT</sup> v bibliotekata.

‘Tomorrow Marija **is going to be** at library.’

(Lindstedt 1985: 95, his translations)

In distinction to (19b), which conforms to the definition of future in [1], (19a) does not imply any specific reference interval. Admittedly, the present moment of speech may be taken as reference interval, since this moment is trivially included in the meaning of *vinagi* ‘always’. However, this trivial inclusion is part of the general definition of present tense provided by Comrie (1985) as well; see [2a]. One thus wonders what makes the difference between present and future in omnitemporal (and other non-time-located) predications.<sup>15</sup> Lehmann’s definition of omnitemporality, cited in [3], does not bring us further, either, since it applies to any grammatical tense. As for English, Ziegeler (2006: 94, referring to Bybee 1988) points out that the omnitemporal future “requires an environment in which the timeless truth refers to characteristic behaviour or a change of state”; compare

(20) Oil **will float** on water.

(21) The arctic hare **will turn white** in winter.

Whether this proves true for omnitemporal future in Bulgarian and other languages, remains to be investigated. Regardless, such usage should be considered in connection with non-deontic uses of PFV.PRS (see §3.5).

### 3.3. Transpositions of present tense

Another caveat related to the aforementioned factors (a) (frequency of use) and (c) (paradigmatic contrasts) concerns patterns of restrictions in the use of the present tense, first of all in interaction with aspect. As Lindstedt (1985: 129f.) points out, Bulgarian seems to make a distinction between *praesens pro futuro* for scheduled events (see 22) and *praesens propheticum* for events that are only imagined (or desired), but cannot be controlled or predicted (see 23-24). The *praesens pro futuro* is tightly associated to the ipfv. present, and pfv. present or future are very unlikely, whereas the *praesens propheticum* allows for both ipfv. present (23) and pfv. future (24).

<sup>15</sup> For some relevant considerations based on Lithuanian cf. Wiemer (2021a).

## Bulgarian

(22) Utre **zaminavam**<sup>IPFV,PRS</sup> za čužbina.

‘I **am leaving** for abroad tomorrow.’

(23) Znaeš li kak si predstavjam našija badešt život? (...) Ti **stavaš**<sup>IPFV,PRS</sup> mnogo bogat i znamenit.

**Kupuvame**<sup>IPFV,PRS</sup> si nie edna prekrasna vila v Banki ili v Knjaževo.  
**Obzaveždame**<sup>IPFV,PRS</sup>  
si tam xubava gradinka.

‘Do you know what I imagine our future life to be like? You **become** very rich and famous. We **buy** a beautiful villa in Banki or Knjaževo. There we **set up** a nice little garden.’

(24) Znaeš li kak si predstavjam tjaxnoto posreštane? Te **šte izljazat**<sup>PFV,FUT</sup> ot samoleta, naokolo **šte sa se strupali**<sup>IPFV,FUT,PFT</sup> mnogo xora i **šte razmaxvat**<sup>IPFV,FUT</sup> cvetja. Te **šte sljazat**<sup>PFV,FUT</sup> po stālbičkata i **šte pregärnat**<sup>PFV,FUT</sup> svoite blizki.

‘Do you know what I imagine their reception to be like? They **will come out** of the plane, lots of people will have crowded round and they [the people] will be waving flowers.

They [those coming from the plane] **will come down** the stairs and **embrace** their friends and relatives.’

(Lindstedt 1985: 130, 137f.)

Certainly, the distribution of tense and aspect, and of its relevance for such fine-grained distinctions among transpositions of the present tense,<sup>16</sup> require further investigation on a more solid basis, and it needs to be checked whether similar distinctions are empirically justified in other languages.

Regardless, *praesens pro futuro* and *praesens propheticum* jointly differ in a principled way from the narrative present. Essentially, the latter does not just describe single facts or events, but relates events in an ordered sequence. Moreover, this sequence is considered as having occurred once in a real or fictive past episode, i.e. prior to the moment of utterance (S/TU), but S/TU itself becomes entirely irrelevant; only the relation between E/TSit and R/TT counts, in which, ideally, every preceding event serves as reference interval for the subsequent event (TSit<sub>i-1</sub> > TSit<sub>i</sub>, and every TT<sub>i</sub> moves together with “its” TSit<sub>i</sub>).<sup>17</sup>

The distribution of present tense forms in narrative discourse differs entirely from the distribution in the two other just mentioned transpositions of present tense. First, narrative present “replaces” past tense, while *praesens pro futuro* and *praesens propheticum* “stand for” future tense. Second, these present tense uses show very different patterns of areal distribution within Slavic. As is widely known, languages of the eastern part of Slavic (East Slavic, Balkan Slavic) do not admit pfv. present tense to be employed as narrative present, whereas languages from the western part are very liberal in this respect (Dickey 2000, among others). See a standard example that contrasts Slovene and Russian:

<sup>16</sup> They are basically confirmed by Nicolova (2008: 273f.).

<sup>17</sup> For details cf. Wiemer (1997) and Lehmann (2008).

(25) Sln. Naslednjega dne **vstopi**<sup>PFV.PRS-V</sup> hišo, **se povzpne**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> po stopnicah, **odpre**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> vrata, **odloži**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> kovček, **prižge**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> luč, **sede**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> v naslonjač in **prižge**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> cigaro.

Russ. I vot na sledujuščij den' on **vxodit**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> v dom, **podnimaetsja**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> po lestnice, **otkryvaet**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> okno, **stavit**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> čemodan, **zažigaet**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> svet, **saditsja**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> v kreslo i **zakurivaet**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> sigaru.

‘The next day he **enters** the house, **climbs** the stairs, **opens** the door, **puts down** the suitcase, **turns on** the light, **sits** in the armchair and **lights** a cigar.’

(Derganc 2003: 72)

Most remarkably, the West-East cline of aspect restrictions on the narrative present is independent from the North-South splits in future marking, in particular of the presence/ absence of restrictions on the future marker with pfv. stems. It is thus natural to assume that the conditions which allow for the use of pfv. present forms, on the one hand, and which ban them in narrative discourse, on the other, fundamentally differ from the employment of pfv. present tense forms in usage contexts for which pfv. present tense is difficult to distinguish from future. The differences between both usage types can be subsumed as follows:

- The narrative present cancels, or suspends, the relation to S/TU (as does any narrative discourse), but the events are conceived of as having occurred once (i.e. they belong to just one episode).
- Non-past forms used in directive speech acts are related to S/TU, the crucial question is where the reference interval is to be located.
- Non-past forms which refer to non-time-located situations may either be conceived of as related to S/TU in a trivial sense of inclusion ( $R/TT \supset S/TU$ ; see [2a]), or the relation to S/TU is understood as suspended, but for another reason than with the narrative present: there is no single reference interval, or it is chosen arbitrarily in order to “pick out” a random token of the situation type denoted by the predicate.

In fact, the latter property (suspension of the relation to S/TU because of a lacking single reference interval) proves decisive to explain a big deal of pfv. present tense uses in all Slavic languages, including contemporary standard Russian. It also explains the markedly different inner-Slavic areal distribution of pfv. stems in comparison to the narrative present. However, as we will see in the subsequent subsection, it is not always easy to tell apart narrative-like from non-time-located uses.

### 3.4. Instructions, conditionality, habits and modality

Texts with an instructional purpose – like recipes, but also (under one reading) stage directions – share with narratives proper their focus on sequences of events. However, instructive texts are difficult to classify for two interrelated reasons. First, instructions can either be read as descriptions of some generic proce-



ture or they may be used to apply to a specific occasion; in the latter case the general types of action described are, as it were, actualized and time-located, while in the former understanding they are void of specific temporal reference. Second, if they go as general descriptions, instructions can be regarded as a kind of representative speech act, but if they are actualized for specific occasions they acquire directive illocutionary force.<sup>18</sup> A related point is made by Dickey (2000: 156f.): instructive texts can be read either as scripts or as running instructions on a specific occasion. However, in the latter case the illocution need not be directive; it can be just a comment on coordinated actions that are being performed simultaneously to this comment. Imagine, for instancing, online cooking programs on TV. In this case, the illocution remains representative and the discourse starts resembling teichoscopy (a.k.a. reportive present), as in online sport reports (cf. Wiemer 2021b: 67f. for more details).

Stage directions are normally rendered in the present tense, and in some languages recipes are composed of present tense forms as well. One such language is Czech (see 26), another one is Lithuanian (see 27); in either of them present tense of pfv. stems is freely used in narrative(-like) contexts.

### Czech

- (26) Vejce předem **uvaříme**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> nebo **uděláme**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> pošírované. Kedlubny **oloupeme**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> a **nakrájíme**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> na hranolky.

‘We **boil** or **poach** the eggs in advance. We **peel** the cabbage and **cut** it into chips.’

(<https://www.toprecepty.cz/recept/68766-maslove-kedlubny-s-varenym-vejcem/>)

### Lithuanian

- (27) Į keptuvę **suded-ame**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> mėsa. Ją **pagardin-ame**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> kmynais, **įtar-kuoj-ame**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> česnako skilteles ir maišydmi kepame, kol šiek tiek **apkeps** ir **nebebus** visiškai žalia. Galų gale **suded-ame**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup> nedideliais kubeliais supjaustyta cukinija, didelę saują smulkiai pjaustytų petražolių ir gerai **išmaiš-ome**<sup>PFV,PRS</sup>.

‘We **put** the meat in the pan. We **season** it with cumin, **grate** garlic cloves and stir-fry until it is slightly fried and no longer completely green. At the end, we **add** zucchini cut into small cubes, a large handful of finely chopped parsley and **mix** well.’

(<https://www.beatosvirtuve.lt/receptai/balandeliu-pyragas/>)

In accordance with the aforementioned readings, the [+bounded] feature of the pfv. stems either applies to mark off chains of consecutive events (with either representative or directive illocutionary force), or it yields a directive function for singular

<sup>18</sup> Analogous “two-level” readings can be observed with generic statements which may acquire a deontic, and thence an implied directive, reading. Compare, for instance, Russ. *U nas ne kurjat* ‘We don’t smoke here’ (⊃ ‘You ought not smoke here (as well)’ ⊃ ‘Don’t smoke here!’). Characteristically, these meanings are associated with the present tense of ipfv. stems.

actions to be performed as “actualized” instantiations of the situation types denoted by the verb stems. Regardless, in Czech, there is no need to interpret the pfv. present forms as future. In turn, Lithuanian, with its clear morphological distinction between present and future, future forms are untypical for the main line of sequencing in instructional texts. Characteristically, in (27) future forms occur in the subordinate temporal clause to mark the desired end stage of the cooked meat (*kol apkep-s<sup>FUT.3</sup> ir nebebu-s<sup>FUT.3</sup> žalia* ‘until it is slightly fried and no longer green’). The Lithuanian future may be employed with a directive purpose if there is a singular reference interval (e.g., *Tu lauk-s-i<sup>FUT-2SG</sup> manęs miške* ‘You’ll wait for me in the forest, will you’), and it occurs to picture an imagined singular episode in the future, i.e. in contexts that resemble the *praesens propheticum* in Bulgarian (see ex. 24). For more discussion concerning Lithuanian cf. Wiemer (2021a). We see that the distribution of pfv. non-past forms in Czech in instructive texts conforms to the pattern for Lithuanian present tense forms.

The indeterminacy, or possibility of a switch, between a script reading and an “actualized” use of present tense forms of pfv. stems becomes obvious also in route descriptions. See an example from Gorbunova (1997: 53):

### Russian

- (28) (...) ot stancii možno proexat’ na avtobuse (p’jat’ ostanovok). Ot ostanovki idut dve dorogi, nado idti po pravoj. Doroga **dojdet**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> do nebol’sogo ozera, **obognet**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> ego i čerez 50 metrov **upretsja**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> v zabor (...).

‘You can take a bus from the station (five stops). From the stop there are two roads, you have to take the right one. The road will **reach** / **reaches** a small lake, **will go** / **goes** around it and after 50 meters **will run** / **runs** into a fence.’

The first part provides a general description, but with the first pfv. present tense form (*doroga dojdēt*) the objectively static spots of the route acquire a dynamic flair, as if the interlocutors were moving on the route. This is known as the Observer Effect (Apresjan 1980). This effect is associated to representative speech acts, it should thus not be subsumed under the imperative-like uses discussed in §3.1.<sup>19</sup>

Crucially, again, there is no non-arbitrary way of arguing that this usage represents either present or future. In Lithuanian, for instance, either tense can be used for either script or actualized meaning, and to tell the two apart is all but trivial (Wiemer 2021a). The same holds for Bulgarian, as illustrated in (29): both pfv. present and future are possible to mark a sequence, which can be either applied to a specific occasion (+time-located) or understood as a general advice (–time-located) – depending on the interlocutors’ knowledge about the reference of this utterance. However, the same type of referential knowledge is required to “correctly” understand an utterance with PFV.PRS in Russian, as in (30).

<sup>19</sup> As far as I see, this usage type is not accounted for in Stojnova (2017).

## Bulgarian

- (29) **Napraviš**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> / **Šte napraviš**<sup>PFV.FUT</sup> tova i vsičko šte bāde gotovo.  
 ‘Do that and everything will be ready.’  
 (Kramer 1986: 5, her translation, following Aronson 1977: 25)

## Russian

- (30) Vasja tebe **pomožet**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>.  
 ‘He will **help** you.’ (on this particular occasion OR in general)

Thus, the problem of determining whether, and when, a non-past form marks a particular, and likely, event after speech time does not hinge on the question whether speakers (and hearers) have at their disposal a morphological distinction between present and future tense.

Concomitantly, the Observer Effect of route descriptions shares with imperatives and imperative-like uses of pfv. present tense an affinity to conditionality. Conditionality may be marked explicitly, as in (31-32), or it remains implicit, as in (29) or in (33) from an arithmetic task. In all these cases we are dealing with representative speech acts in declarative or interrogative clauses, and the time of utterance is of no relevance for the reference interval.

## Russian

- (31) Prjamoj, esli čto-to poobeščal<sup>PFV.PAST</sup>, objazatel’no **vypolnit**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>, no vot dobit’sja ot nego ètogo obeščanija nelegko.  
 ‘He is direct. If he promised something, he will definitely **fulfill** it, but it is not easy to get this promise from him.’  
 (RNC)

## Czech

- (32) Moc často mi nevolá, ale když **se ozve**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>, pokaždé je někde jinde než posledně  
 ‘He doesn’t me very often, but when he **gives** me a ring, he is always at a different place than the time before.’  
 (ČNC; from Dübbers 2015: 205)

## Russian

- (33) Za 2 časa rabočij izgotovil<sup>PFV.PAST</sup> 7 odinakovyx detalej. Skol’ko takix že detalej on **izgotovit**<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> za 8 časov?  
 ‘In 2 hours, the worker made 7 identical parts. How many of the same parts **will/can** he **make** in 8 hours?’  
 (from the internet)

As we see, even Russian allows for this non-future use of the morphological present tense of pfv. stems. The only condition which, in Russian, really inhibits pfv. stems is regular repetitions (cf. Širokova 1963: 99f. and the critical remarks in Dübbers 2020: 178-180); compare (34), which contrasts Russian and Slovene:

- (34) Russ. Uтром ja **vypivaju**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> čašku kofe i **s<sup>o</sup>edaju**<sup>IPFV.PRS</sup> dve buločki.  
 Sln. Zjutraj **popijem**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> skodelico kave in **pojem**<sup>PFV.PRS</sup> dve žemlji.  
 ‘In the morning, I **drink** a cup of coffee and **eat** two buns.’  
 (Derganc 2003: 68)

Note that the universal temporal quantifier (ALWAYS) and its contrary (NEVER) do not indicate regular repetition; they only imply that, given such and such conditions, the situation denoted by the predicate applies (or does not apply). This can be observed in characterizing statements about individuals (→ dispositional modality) or situations (→ circumstantial modality), i.e. in non-deontic modal contexts. Compare

#### Polish

- (35a) *On zawsze pomoże*<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>.  
 ‘He always **helps** / **will help**.’  
 (35b) ≡ *Zawsze gdy się nadarzy*<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> okazja, on pomoże<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>.  
 ‘Whenever the opportunity arises he will help / helps.’  
 ≡ *Gdy tylko nadarzy się*<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup> okazja, ...  
 ‘If only the opportunity arises, ...’  
 (36a) *Tu nie popalisz*<sup>PFV.NPAST</sup>.  
 ‘You (= anybody) **will not** be able to **smoke** here. / You **can’t smoke** here.’  
 (36b) ≡ *Nie ma tu takich warunków, w których byłbyś w stanie popalić*<sup>PFV.INF</sup>.  
 ‘There are no such conditions here, in which you (= anybody) could smoke.’

The prominence of present tense of pfv. stems with non-deontic modal meanings and their connection with habituality is not accidental. Usage types described in Slavic aspectology under labels like ‘exemplary-illustrating meaning’ (Russ. *ëgzempljarno-nagljadnoe značenie*) turn out as well-documented employments of PFV.PRS that are widespread all over Slavic, but, obviously, they have become particularly salient in modern Russian, since this usage type, together with the aforementioned modal meanings, is but a residual of PFV.PRS functions that probably existed prior to the default shift of PFV.PRS forms to mark pfv. future. Presumably, its salience in contemporary Russian is conditioned by lower expectability (in terms of token frequency) in comparison to other Slavic languages, in particular to the western part of Slavic. Lower expectability conditions a higher surprise effect, and the Observer Effect is probably but a variety of a more general phenomenon. It is another task for further research to formulate operative criteria in order to check (degrees of) expectability in an objectifiable manner.

Moreover, a certain body of cross-linguistic facts shows the tight link between habitual and non-deontic modal meanings (and of either of them to conditionality). All these meanings are unreal in the sense that they contain propositions which cannot be judged as true (or false) because they lack a concrete reference interval, as anchored either in the deictic *hic et nunc* or in narrative discourse. All these meanings may arise from generalizations over observations of episodic occurrences (Tatevosov 2004: 247) or other knowledge backgrounds (e.g., cultural knowledge about artefacts or cyclic events). These considerations and the typological facts behind them (cf. Šluinskij 2005; 2006), suggest that habituality is “linked” to future meaning via dispositional and circumstantial modality. A similar reasoning is presented in Sonnenhauser (2008): speakers “apply” their knowledge about habits or the predispositions of persons (→ dispositional modality), or of situations (→ circumstantial modality), to specific observations (i.e. occurrences) in order to predict that a situation will occur on this particular occasion. Predictions are epistemic judgments referring to situations posterior to some reference interval (which usually includes or coincides with speech time), and they can easily be made from dispositional or circumstantial knowledge backgrounds.<sup>20</sup> For instance, Russ. *Vasja tebe pomožet* (see ex. 30) can be used as a prediction that Vasja will help on the occasion relevant for the particular communicative interaction, because the speaker knows him as a helpful person.

#### 4. Tying up the threads and findings

The discussion was far from an exhaustive account of relevant usage contexts of present perfective and future marking.<sup>21</sup> However, the selective analysis of contexts in which non-past forms of verbs in Slavic languages are employed allows for some conclusions.

We should distinguish between diachronic shifts of conventionalized (i.e. established) uses, as represented by the default interpretation of PFV.PRS as pfv. future in North Slavic, and transpositions of established uses. Among the latter a distinction should be made between

- (a) transpositions conditioned by a switch from deictic to narrative register, which cancels out the relation to the interlocutors’ *hic et nunc*, i.e. to S/TU.
- (b) transpositions based on an anticipation of scheduled and/or planned events; for these the relation to *hic et nunc* is retained.

In all these uses, frequency patterns are decisive. Transpositions work, on a synchronic level, as exceptions from conventionalized temporal reference, whereas pre-

<sup>20</sup> The process behind this is known as abduction: a speaker knows a rule, makes an observation and infers that the observation represents a case to which the rule can, or is to, be applied.

<sup>21</sup> Lacking are, for instance, uses of pfv. present in advices based on negative polarity (e.g., Slk. *Prečo si neostrihaš vlasy?* ‘Why don’t you cut your hair?’; Mac. *Zošto ne sedneš?* ‘Why don’t you sit down?’) and in frustratives (e.g., Russ. *My vsë nikak ne soberemsja* ‘All the time, we won’t get together [despite attempts]’; cf. Zaliznjak 2015: 299).

sent>future shifts for pfv. stems make non-future uses of the same forms stand out the more prominently the less expectable they are (surprise effects).

The conceptual (and cognitive) connections between habituality, non-deontic modality and future (or predictions, i.e. an epistemic use) – as defined in [1] – differ in a principled way from narrative(-like) uses of present tense. Both suspend S/TU as an anchor for reference intervals, but while narrative present tense cancels this relation with respect to singular events in the (real or imagined) past, habitual and modal contexts – as typical representatives of the irrealis domain – weaken the relation to S/TU because referentiality on clause level is lowered.

Jointly with this, the meaning of utterances as marking ‘future’ vs some non-future use (provided a definition like [1] applies) depends on the interlocutors’ knowledge (or assumptions) about the intended type of temporal reference. “True” future uses are based on an unambiguous relation between the deictic *hic et nunc* of a speech act and a posterior state of affairs that represents a singular token (occurrence) of that state of affairs. Habitual and modal uses of tense-aspect forms, in the first place, denote situation types. PFV.PRS forms may “simulate” reference to situation tokens (as with the ‘exemplary-illustrative’ meaning known from Slavic aspectology), but they are deprived of the aforementioned relation to a singular reference interval set in relation to speech time.

The latter property connects habitual and modal contexts to conditionality: most conditionals are related to irrealis, and many of them lack specific reference intervals.<sup>22</sup> More importantly, when the time of occurrence of conditions is unknown (i.e. cannot be predicted), conditions are made salient by highlighting boundaries. This explains why pfv. non-past forms (no matter whether treated as ‘inactual present’ or ‘future’) are favorable means for marking non-time-located events with an explicit or implicit conditional link. This holds particularly if open repetitions are conceived of as irregular, i.e. difficult to predict.

The same applies, in principle, for (pfv.) futures (grams, constructions) that are morphologically distinguishable from PFV.PRS. That is, the same issues arise for South Slavic languages (which mark this difference for both ipfv. and pfv. stems) as they do for North Slavic languages (which do not mark this difference with pfv. stems). The proper question to be asked is: what determines (or influences) the location of reference intervals, and, first of all, is there one distinct reference interval per predicate/clause?

A factor which has largely been left out of consideration so far is illocutionary force. Directive illocutions are inherently oriented to states of affairs that can “be realized” only after the respective moment of utterance. This, however, holds both for PFV.PRS and for dedicated future grams (or constructions) as, for instance, in South Slavic. Moreover, the illocution of many utterances can only be determined (“decoded” by the addressee) if temporal reference is understood in accordance with the purpose intended by the speaker. This “mirrors” the role of referentiality in representative speech acts (as pointed out in the second and third conclusion above).

<sup>22</sup> Singular reference intervals only apply to counterfactuals (*If you had come in time, we would have dined together*) and to conditions projected into a distinct moment posterior to the speech (*If you manage to arrive by 6 o'clock, we will dine together*).

Anyway, the hitherto neglected influence of illocutionary force (or of differences in illocution) should be given more attention, all the more as differences of illocutionary force and of temporal reference can interfere in certain types of discourse, as, for instance, in instructional texts.

In §3 I have adduced some facts that support these conclusions. However, the analysis was cursory and should be amended on the basis of a larger body of data and by more scrutiny. Hopefully, this study will prove helpful in setting the stage for a comprehensive investigation of the non-past domain, in Slavic and elsewhere.

#### Abbreviations of grammatical categories

FUT – future; INF – infinitive; IPFV – imperfective; NPAST – non-past; PAST – past; PFT – perfect; PFV –perfective; PRS –present; RM – reflexie marker

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## Corpora

ČNC: Czech National Corpus – <https://korpus.cz/doku.php>

PNC: Polish National Corpus – [http://nkjp.pl/\(balanced version\)](http://nkjp.pl/(balanced%20version))

RNC: Russian National Corpus – <https://ruscorpora.ru/new/>

Бјорн Вимер

## ПРОБЛЕМ ДЕЛИМИТАЦИЈЕ ВРЕМЕНА У ДОМЕНУ САДАШЊОСТИ И БУДУЋНОСТИ

### Резиме

Рад се бави употребом облика садашњег и будућег времена код глагола. Наводе се дефиниције уобичајене употребе презента и футура засноване на односу према времену говорне ситуације, те се уочава велика сива зона преклапања између морфолошки обликованог садашњег и будућег времена. Полазећи од тога анализа је усмерена на низ случајева употребе садашњег и будућег времена како у јужнословенским језицима, у којима се презент и футур морфолошки разликују за глаголске основе несвршеног и свршеног вида, тако и у северним словенским језицима, у којима се основе свршених глагола не разликују када се ради о исказивању садашњег и будућег времена. Без обзира на ову разлику између јужних и северних словенских језика, у оба случаја се јављају исти проблеми делимитације, пре свега када се презент или футур употребљавају у директивним говорним чинovima или у ситуацијама које нису временски одређене (хабитуалност, омнитемпоралност), тј. тамо где изостаје јасна веза између референцијалног интервала и времена говорења, што систематично узрокује модално (диспозицијско, условљено околностима) тумачење. За презент свршеног вида ова модална тумачења обезбеђују спрегу са футуралним значењима у смислу њихових еписте-

мичких екстензија (процена). Даље, подаци о дистрибуцији показују да се транспозиције презента (попут *praesens narrativum* и *praesens pro futuro*), посебно за основе свршеног вида, фундаментално разликују према коришћеним когнитивним механизмима од горе поменутих типова. Неопходно је такође направити систематичнију класификацију разлика на нивоу илокуције како би се објаснила употреба времена у домену садашњости и будућности.

*Кључне речи:* презент, футур, перфективност, словенски језици, наративни дискурс, хабитуалност, референцијални интервал.