

Questionnaire for a typology of double perfect constructions¹

I. The things typologized

Language Typology has made a remarkable progress in the recent decennia, and it may seem that anything that is somehow categorized can be typologically classified and elucidated. This may be true if it is not meant in a straightforward way. One presumably cannot write a typology of split infinitive, whereas a typological description of the morphology of infinitives may be reasonable at least if we do not extend our questioning beyond Indo-European. And in another theoretical frame we can typologically describe the English split infinitive while dealing with the phenomena of incorporation across the languages of the world, for instance. Two different reasons may justify our attempt at typologizing things:

a. The phenomenon in question, is widespread over the languages of the world and is to be classified on some logical grounds.

b. The phenomenon in question, being itself language-specific, can be explained by way of reference to a universal or some other interlingual generalization.

In both cases it is not the particular form with its particular meaning that is handled typologically but its categorial character seen as a case of something generally known as that category of grammar, – p.ex. not Engl. *has come*, but “Perfect”, or “Resultative”, or “VP projection” in English. Things typologized are, then, “tokens” of some “types” which again are kinds of a “category”.

I strongly suppose that there are other restrictions on typologizing which are never stated but nevertheless tacitly accepted. It “makes sense” to write a typology of α , whereas a typology of β “does not make sense” (for some linguist, some school in linguistics, under some circumstances). What does “making sense” mean in typology? Is typology not self-sufficient, not autonomous? Must there be an external ground for doing or not doing typology and for determining its possible objects?

Such questions are easily answered if the need of typology arises from some broader work. In Chomsky’s theory of language faculty the “principles-and-parameters approach” is a necessary precondition of the possibility of the theory itself, since the realization of the “innate structure” has to be explicable in its variety of which some aspect cannot be the product of mere adaptation (in the initial state of the child’s language acquisition). Thus the generativists know what things are to be typologized in the context of their work on the two other more fundamental questions: “Which are the core principles of language structure?” and “How to set parameters (for these principles)?”.

The empirical universals research in the functional typology on Greenberg’s line is a somewhat similar case. The things typologized are expected to be theoretically relevant. A hypothesis about some feature hierarchy – to

take only one typical research situation – selects among “facts” as meaningful or meaningless for this particular research. Generally it is presupposed that anything within the horizon of the structure-and-function view of language can be typologized, but most of the language phenomena known to us after centuries of efforts in describing languages must wait till some theoretical problem selects them for its special typology.

By far the most interesting case for me is the methodological orientation of the Leningrad group of the language typology, and Professor Vladimir Nedjalkov as the most consistent representative of this orientation. Here it is the typological questionnaire that plays the role of the selection mechanism deciding what does or does not undergo a typological description. Actually, nothing passes for typology if it is not provided with a questionnaire, nothing can become a typological object if it does not get a place ascribed to it by the questionnaire. This may be taken as the basis for determining the “things typologized”: α can become a subject matter of scientific typology if we can present a questionnaire (a minimal sketch of a possible questionnaire) for which this given α is a relevant datum, or a class of data.

Can we establish a questionnaire aiming at the variation of double Perfect phenomena in natural languages? It surely cannot begin with asking if the given language differentiates between expressions for some semantic cases **a** and **b**. The question “How is the meaning of Double Perfect expressed in L?” is ridiculous enough to be rejected at once. We know of no such “meaning”. The questionnaire would have to refer to the character of the “Perfect” of which it is not always clear if it is defined uniformly for different languages.

II. The Double Perfect Formations Viewed Typologically

I remember having been perplexed as a young linguist at discovering in German texts the construction I now speak of as “Double Perfect”, p.ex.:

(1) Ich *hab*’s ganz *vergessen gehabt*, lit. “I have had forgotten it completely”

(2) Ich *war eingeschlafen gewesen*, lit. “I was been fallen asleep”

I saw immediately that the Auxiliary verb of German Perfect forms in these constructions was itself put in Perfect or Pluperfect (i.e. Present or Past Perfect form) and this ran counter to my knowledge of German grammar. Later on I had more than one occasion to learn that native speakers of German were equally astonished at it even when they had just used this double form themselves.

The German Perfect is a tense form. The formation in question uses the same constructive means as the nor-

¹ This text was submitted as a contribution to a Festschrift for Vladimir Petrovič Nedjalkov in the late 90s. The editors insisted on alterations that I could not accept, and the essay remained unpublished. Now that I once more propose it for publication I still want to state that it is written **for Vladimir whom I admire**. I thank Dr. Werner Abraham and Leonid Kulikov for some useful remarks on the earlier draft of this paper.

mal Perfect forms: the usual Auxiliary verb, its tensing, the forms of “Past” Participle. Double Perfect must be viewed as a tense form but one that does not fit the tense system because the German tense paradigm includes following: a. three absolute meanings: past, present, future; b. three relative meanings: anterior, simultaneous, posterior; and c. possible combinations of “a” and “b” in Indicative, while the tense in Conjunctive is either purely absolute or purely relative. Can the Double Perfect forms possibly mark double anteriority? Some grammarians assumed this as a hypothesis but it was too evidently in contradiction with the facts of use. The double or triple anteriority is just a case of anteriority and is to be expressed by obvious means: Perfect, Pluperfect.

My situation was a hermeneutic one, I did not understand with what I had to do. Since I was too young to question my scientific prejudices, the normal linguist’s belief, I had to question language. I asked myself if I could find evidence from other idioms which either would show such forms (Double Perfect, Double Pluperfect) or maybe some peculiarities of the Tense-Aspect system hinting at possible solutions for German on the basis of analogy – of which kind I did not know. Today, I am convinced that this was the best idea for the first step to do in this research. I would even generalize my particular experience: if you do not understand a language phenomenon let your first doing be the search for typological precedents.

Very soon I found out that:

a. the Southern German dialects used Double Perfect forms to compensate for the disappeared Pluperfect; and

b. French grammars registered such forms, mostly explaining them as compensatory for the *Passé antérieur*, the aoristic Pluperfect which, however, was not completely out of use though its devaluation process began somewhere in the late Middle Ages.

Since the literary German Double Perfect formations in my collection were more often preterital than presential, it was clear to me that they could not be viewed as the effect of dialectal influence from the South, they could “only” be comparable to the French *temps surcomposés* which also allowed for preterital formations. The French and written German DPFs required a semantic-functional explanation such that the usual treatments of French grammars could be questioned in the light of German evidence. My paper [17] was my first attempt to clarify the problem.

This personal story gained some new significance for me after I came into a closer contact with Professor Nedjalkov and the Leningrad Typology Group (LTG). I had a sufficient overview of where and how the Double Perfect forms are found, cf. [33: 99-133], but now I knew that an ordered set of questions was necessary to really understand which case exactly is present where, and how, if at all, a theory of Double Perfect phenomena can be established. The questions are to be formulated and stored as pieces of evidence come to our knowledge. The resultant system of questions is the typological questionnaire. It may occur, however, that organizing the set of questions into a system becomes a problem of special kind. This is the case with the DPFs.

Let us have a look at the material to be found in special literature.

GROUP 1

Some languages develop an Evidential (imperceptive) mood on the basis of the Perfect forms. Bulgarian is probably the best known case:

(3)а. Той е осъзнал грешката си
he is realize-PART error-DEF his
“He realized his error” (in Perfect)

б. Той осъзнал (е) грешката си
he realize-PART (is) error-DEF his
“He realized/realizes his error, according to some evidence” (same construction with a displaced or eliminated Auxiliary)

в. Той уж (е) бил осъзнал грешката си и изъял да се поправи
he as-if (is) be-PART realize-PART error-DEF his and decide-PART that himself reform

“He must have realized his error and decided to improve himself (according to some outer evidence)”

The Bulgarian Evidential is an emphasized Perfect form, the Auxiliary displacement being a typical but not strictly necessary marker of it. The Double Perfect formation as in (3c) is always a combination of Evidential and Perfect. The particle *уж* is a lexical evidential marker. For a clear exposition, see [34: 258-265], and for Evidentials esp. [32]. The congeneric phenomenon in Macedonian is out of use in our time [31: 482], so it is probable that the Bulgarian Evidential also can isolate itself from the Perfect and there will be no “Double Perfect” forms any more.

The combination of Perfect and Evidential is also known from Albanian, Tajik and some Persian dialects, and to a certain degree it is also found in Latvian, where the Perfect is coming out of use now. It is apparently typical with agglutinating languages, of which Georgian and Turkish are maybe the best known examples. This is a rather large sample of languages where a lot of distinctions must be made and additional specification is required.

(a) The Turkic Perfect forms on *-miş/-miş* report on past events are relevant for the present and imply regularly an external source of information. The competing forms on *-gen/-ghan*, also looking very much like Perfect, stress the resultative character of the past action/event. The combination of Perfect and Evidential can appear in two variants: either the form on *-miş/miş* expresses both meanings, or the meanings may be isolated so that their combination requires the reduplication of the marker, as in:

(4)а. Kemal gelmiş
Kemal come-PERF
“Kemal has come”

б. Kemal gelmişmiş
Kemal come-PERF-PERF

“Kemal must have come (according to some information source)”

which is formally Double Perfect. This example is from [26: 194]. See also [11: 64-66] discussing the double forms at some length.

(b) Similar complications can be found in Iranian languages. In Tajik, the Perfect with the regular Auxiliary “to be” is practically evidential, but the temporal use is still possible. The reduplication (*хонда-аст* → *хонда-буда-аст*, lit. “[He] has read” → “[He] has had read”) means the past evidence concerning a past event. In lit-

erary Persian this combined meaning does not require a reduplication, but Double Perfect constructions are possible nevertheless. G.Lazard's grammar [15: 147-149] gives examples and treatment that make us think of German and French rather than of Turkic or Balkanic languages as a parallel.

(c) There seems to be no combination of *-ghan* and *-miş* forms of Perfect in Turkic; if I am not mistaken resultative and present-related past meanings do not build a semantic configuration which is quite normal for Germanic and Romance languages which is to be shown below. Are the *-miş* forms correctly classed as Perfect? Or is a Perfect which is loaded with evidentiality (indirect evidence) in conflict with the Resultative presupposing factuality?

(d) Having noticed the Persian case of DPF we ask now if other languages possessing evidential forms and meanings are pure cases of this "Bulgarian-Turkish type". We will discover that the Albanian case is much more complicated than the Bulgarian and even the Persian. Here the Evidential shows the tendency to become the obvious narrative form, at least in the Northern Albania [25: 107-108; 9: 564-565]. At the same time there are clear examples of use reminding of literary German and French examples, and thus of those Persian ones cited in Lazard's grammar. See [3: 79] and [30: 93-94].

(e) We must state that, until we know what this other semantic type of DPF in French and German exactly is, we cannot correctly analyze the state of things and tendencies in some languages combining their Perfect with the Evidential.

QUESTIONNAIRE FRAGMENT 1:

QF 1.1. Does the language in question possess a Perfect as a categorical form in the morphological paradigm of the verb? Which are your reasons to class the given form(s) as Perfect, if your answer is in the positive?

QF 1.2. Does the language in question possess an Evidential as a categorical form in the morphological paradigm of the verb? If not, does a form of verbal morphology imply indirect evidence as a regular meaning?

QF 1.3. If questions 1 and 2 are answered in the positive, do the Perfect and the Evidential combine? What is the formal expression of this combination? Can it be realized as a Double Perfect form?

QF 1.4. If the combination of Perfect and Evidential is realized as a DPF, which are the constraints on its building?

QF 1.5. If the combination of Perfect and Evidential is realized as a DPF, which are the conditions and restrictions governing its use? Etc.

QF 1.2. is answered easily if clear examples of contrasting sentence pairs are given. See the Bulgarian examples (3 a-c). German could also be used as metalanguage here, for it has a syntactic means to illustrate this difference: Er ist viel gereist – Er soll/will viel gereist sein "He has traveled a lot – [They say / He says] he has traveled a lot". But QF 1.1. is not really perspicuous. A lot of theoretical work is to be done before the best conceptual solution can be transformed into a precise instruction for the users of the questionnaire; cf. [23]. One of the proposals to be discussed in this connection is the following.

PRESENT

PERFECT

PRETERITE

PLUPERFECT

If you can establish the shown quadruple in a natural way for the language in question, then the upper right position is correctly defined as Perfect independently of how the form is to be translated into German, French, English or some other language accepted as metalanguage.

GROUP 2

We must come to a clear understanding of French and German and other instances of DPF, as we have just seen. French is by far the best known case, especially after the detail historical treatment of the *temps surcomposés* in [6]. The French grammatical tradition has the DPFs codified as tense forms: *Passé surcomposé* (*Il a eu chanté*), *Plus-que-parfait surcomposé* (*Il avait eu chanté*), *Future surcomposé* (*Il aura eu chanté*). The *Passé surcomposé* is much more in use than the other DPFs and the grammarians see the cause of its prevalence in the fact that it has to substitute for the archaic *Passé antérieur* (*Il eut chanté*, where *eut* is the Aorist of the Auxiliary going back to the Latin synthetic Perfect). Putting aside for a while the compensatory function let us turn to the attempts to recover the inner logic of DPF as a tense form in French. É.Benveniste [1: 185] determines the meaning of the Perfect form *Passé composé* (*Il a chanté* "He has sung") as "un fait accompli", i.e. acquired state of things, and the meaning of the Present Double Perfect form, *Passé surcomposé* (*Il a eu chanté*), as "un procès révolu", a completed process, – we may presumably think of a lasting result that came to an end earlier. A.Martinet [20: 18-19] makes a significant remark that if a Perfect can be read in the sense of (resulting) present, then this "Present" can acquire its own Perfect (or, for that reason, Pluperfect) correlate, which is then a DPF. The relevance of this structural-semantic feature is also stated in [7: 124-125] and in [27: 281-285]. In other expressions the same thing is said by G.Guillaume [10: 22-24]: we have to distinguish between the "surface time" in the relation of the finite verb to the rest of the DPF and the "deep time" in the relation of the Participle of the Auxiliary to that of the main verb.

Stéfanini stresses the principal character of this meaning in DPFs because it is logically deducible and can receive a natural treatment in a generative grammar. At the same time he characterizes its use with this meaning as archaic in literary French but very active in folk speech in Languedoc. It is not clear if the French spoken in Languedoc is meant or the Occitanic as practically another idiom. For this [24: 138-151] gives a description of DPFs stressing the importance of semantic features "past" and "resultative" which can be differently combined. A rather similar case seems to be present in Middle Dutch [12: 35-37; 28: 181] and, as far as I can judge, in Breton [16: 120-126]. Note that Breton is a Celtic language that underwent a transformation of its temporal system under the influence of French.

The literary German must belong to this class of languages. A substantial part of our examples excerpted from modern literary texts is easily characterized in terms of "past" and "resultative", as done p.ex. in [18: 127-132]. The previous conception in [17] and its fur-

ther development in [8] do not essentially contradict this interpretation. The Modern Persian DPFs as they are shown in Lazard's grammar pertain, then, to this class. But here again a lot of work is required to specify rather complicated cases.

(a) The French forms are far from being clear in their contemporary status. The logical basis of DPF as proposed by Guillaume, Benveniste and others is a good starting point to group a couple of languages as belonging to the same type, but the actual usage of the French forms deviates from their logical description. The French DPFs require a double description: as a semantic combination of result and temporal distance and as a compensation means for devaluated aoristic forms. The most typical use of DPFs, not less than 75 % of all accessible examples, exhibits exactly the contexts in which the *Passé antérieur* was and still is used.

(b) The languages pertaining to this class have mostly differing temporal systems in different moods. In the Conditional, the Pluperfect can be the form for simple past, and if the temporal distance between two past events must be stressed a DPF can be an appropriate form. See a French and a German example:

(5) Si l'électeur de Saxe *n'avait eu* en silence *veillé* sur l'oeuvre de son protégé, Luther l'eût compromise (M.Audin, Histoire de Luther) – "If the Kurfürst of Saxony had not secretly supervised the doings of his protégé Luther would have compromised him"

(6) Der Taxifahrer *hätte* in jedem anderen Beruf die Rentengrenze längst *überschritten gehabt* (I.Rodrian, Schlaf, Bübchen, schlaf) – "The taxi driver would in any other profession have had to retire long ago"

(c) The resultative meaning is not as simple as it may appear. After the category of Resultative had been postulated and described [37; 22] it became clear that the corresponding distinctions in the treatment of DPFs were quite arbitrary. Almost the total range of the temporal meanings of the Perfect can at will be proclaimed as resultative meanings. The temporal distance, where it is stressed, makes the previous action or event look sort of result-like. V.Nedjalkov's two different solutions of this problem "Perfect – Resultative" in [22] and in [18] do not exhaust the possibilities to be considered here. See [19] for a discussion based on extensive material from German.

(d) Though it is clear why and how the DPFs can be built in this group of languages it is not at all clear so far how to interpret the use of those DPFs in literary German which do not strictly fall under the resultative interpretation. V.Radčenko [36] was the first to propose a text-grammatical solution for this problem, and this seems to me now the best way to treat the German DPFs, cf. [19]. This means practically that the DPFs in German are part of the grammar of narrative and are also used in direct communication because communication can include telling stories or some other traits implying narrativity. If we accept this for German, how do we compare the literary German with the other languages of this group for which this extension of grammar is not necessary when dealing with DPF (if it really is not necessary)?

QUESTIONNAIRE FRAGMENT 2

QF 2.1. as QF 1.1.

QF 2.2. Does the language in question possess a Resultative as a special form according to definitions

in [22]? Which are the relations between Perfect and Resultative?

QF 2.3. Is the Double Perfect formation possible in the language in question? Can it be interpreted as a combination of Perfect and Resultative? Can you propose criteria for this interpretation if you answer the previous question in the positive?

QF 2.4. Are there examples left for which the given interpretation seems inadequate? On what grounds? Etc.

Note that QF 2 if correctly answered characterizes Modern English as a language without DPF although some of the German DPF expressions find a near to exact equivalent in English:

(7)a. Er *hatte* den Brief *geschrieben gehabt*

b. He *had had* the letter *written*

(8)a. Er *war gegangen gewesen*

b. He *had been gone*

The German examples are DPF, the English examples are not DPF. The answer to QF 2.2. will state for English the difference in word order between (9a) and (9b):

(9)a. He *had written the letter*

b. He *had the letter written*

which is the difference between Perfect and Resultative (if it is not Causative!). And it will also state for English the difference between (10a) and (10b):

(10)a. He *had gone*

b. He *was gone*

as, again, the difference between Perfect and (Subjective) Resultative. It is of no importance that (10b), when viewed historically, must be recognized as a residual form of the Germanic Perfect.

QUESTIONNAIRE FRAGMENT 3

QF 3.1. Do the tense rules of the language in question imply the obligatory distinction between absolute and relative tenses? If so, how do the Perfect forms participate in the expression of relative and absolute tense in the Indicative? In other moods?

QF 3.2. What does relative tense mean text-linguistically? Are the Perfect rules determined by strong syntactic context in your language? By which conditions exactly?

QF 3.3. Can the use of DPFs be determined by their role in temporal configurations of the narrative genres? Etc.

It is quite easy to see that QF 2 and QF 3 constitute two different frameworks. It is reasonable to assume a partial compatibility of answers given here and there but the whole represents a twofold theoretical movement, and the future problem of ultimate synthesis remains unknown in its content.

GROUP 3

Let us come back to the unresolved problem of the compensatory function that was mentioned repeatedly as the most natural explanation of DPFs in some languages.

The loss of Preterite in an idiom like Southern German dialects weakens the Pluperfect whose Auxiliary appears in the Preterite. While the Present Perfect comes to stand for the Preterite, the Pluperfect can be compensated for if its Auxiliary has undergone the same tensing change and now appears in Perfect. So it was in Southern German:

PRET. *machte* – *macht`* -- PRES. *macht*

PRET. *hatte* – *hatt`* -- PRES. *hat*

Now “Er machte es” is rendered by Er *hat es gemacht*, and “Er hatte es gemacht” by the DPF ersatz Er *hat es gemacht gehabt*.

The same transformation occurred in Yiddish, an outlier of Southern German separated before the devaluation of preterital forms. The verbal paradigms are varying strongly across the dialects but the Perfect compensating for the lost Preterite is the most characteristic common trend of them. My examples are from [21: 177-178]:

(11) Ech *ob gyhat gysugt*

I have have-PART say-PART

“I have said”

(12) Ech *wot gywejyn gyhat gylofn*

I was be-PART have-PART run-PART

“I had run”

Note that in (12) we have a triple Perfect form with the finite verb “be” appearing in Preterite and the AUX Participles from both “have” and “be”.

This transformational process has come to an end in Afrikaans where “have” in Present with the Participle form of the main verb is the sole past form now. Some grammarians list the double form of the type (13b):

(13)a. Hy *het gelees*, lit. “He has read”

b. Hy *het gelees gehad*, lit. “He has had read”

[4: 118-119; 35: 82-83], which must be archaic.

A similar process is observed in the Alpine dialects of French and Italian, in Sorbian (a West Slavic language in Germany); and the East Slavic transformation of the verbal system in its history as an effect of the Auxiliary suppression in the analytic Perfect, may be regarded as a comparable event. The common characteristic of all those processes is the movement to a simplified system of tenses through the loss of relative tense. The transitional period inevitably gives evidence of Double Perfect formation as a compensation for the lost forms whose meanings temporarily “demand expression”. We may think of an opposite process where the relative tense meanings get lost while the forms of Perfect and Pluperfect remain intact. Rumanian is the only instance of this case known to me.

In Rumanian, The verb *a cînta* “to sing” possesses the Present *cînt* “[I] sing”, the Imperfect *cîntam*, the old synthetic Perfect *cîntai* and the corresponding Pluperfect *cîntasem*, as well as an analytic Perfect with the Auxiliary *a avea* “to have” and PPart of the main verb: *am cîntat* “I have sung”. The system is asymmetric in two ways: there is no analytic Pluperfect **aveam cîntat*, and the non-finite Perfect forms are built, as in Slavic, with *a fi* “to be”, instead of *a avea* “to have”, the infinitive thus being *a fi cîntat*. This results in a grammatical homonymy: *a fi cîntat* can mean “have sung” or “be sung”, which is Passive, of course. Since roughly the XVI century the synthetic forms of Perfect and Pluperfect are losing their meaning of relative tense, and the analytic Perfect, being the only form capable of expressing anteriority, is reduplicated to render anteriority in the past as long as the linguistic intuition has not lost the sense of relative tense. This new analytic “Pluperfect”, which is actually a Double Perfect formation, has then the form *au fost cîntat* thus coinciding with the form of Perfect Passive. It is the semantics of the Subject that made such sentences unambiguous:

(14)a. *Cîntecul au fost cîntat*

Song-DEF has be-PART sing-PART

“The song has been sung”

b. *Omul au fost cîntat*

man-DEF has be-PART sing-PART

“The man had sung” (with Double Perfect)

Such DPFs are registered in Rumanian literature up to the end of the XIX century. My exposition here is a generalization on the base of [29].

This group of languages poses new problems.

(a) As soon as the lost preterital forms are replaced by Perfect and Double Perfect forms respectively, the justification of the terms “Perfect” and “Double Perfect” can only be historical. The terminological quadruple is realistic no more. We must say, then, that such languages (Afrikaans XIX c., Yiddish, southern German, Sorbian) do not possess DPFs if we proceed ahistorically, while a historically based research must class the forms like Yiddish (11) and (12) as Double and Triple Perfect. B. Comrie [5: 77] writes Fr. **Il avait eu eu PPart* with an asterisk and seems to assume that a triple Perfect formation cannot have any linguistic sense at all. But the French dialect of Vaud (a canton in Switzerland) knows these forms [6: 225-227], and N. Boretzky [2: 92-93] signals the triple formations in some folk tales of an Albanian village. Comrie is maybe not so wrong if we do not deal with Perfect forms of the kind known in European languages but with a Perfect as a “real category” (not jeopardized by some heterogeneous factors).

(b) There is a very serious typological problem in this. Following Saussure’s tradition we could take for granted that the choice between synchronical and diachronical approach prevents any false tendencies of thought. Typology would have to treat different stages in the history of the same language as different language systems simply because typology, as already noticed, does not deal with single forms-and-meanings but rather with their categorical images, and it is singularities that really have “history”. This is a very good principle indeed, as long as we do not encounter language phenomena that only make sense if viewed diachronically. Such is our third group of languages, but the first two should be proved in this respect as well. The initial and the final state of a changing system may not contain DPFs which, on the other hand, may appear of necessity in the intermediate stage of such a process. Can we write a typology of transitional states in language? The question is posed in dealing with DPFs in [33]. It is clear so far that the diachronical “time” of the phenomena must be represented as “structure” if we want to typologize things implying diachrony.

QUESTIONNAIRE FRAGMENT 4:

QF 4.1. Does the language in question possess the categorial Perfect? Which are your reasons to call this “Perfect”?

QF 4.2. Do all “perfect” forms always represent the category Perfect? How do you distinguish between the Perfect proper and the secondary functions of the same form(s)?

QF 4.3. Does the language in question possess doubled Perfect forms? Can you determine such forms as the (normally derived) category Double Perfect? What is the Double Perfect viewed as a category? Etc.

Note that the standard German Perfect form *haben* + PPart is not always a Perfect: Er *hat den Hut aufge-*

setzt can mean simply “He has the hat on”, *Wir haben die Reise bewilligt* (von...) usually means “We have our trip permitted (by...)”. The transitional states of the system pose more serious problems. Various aspects of identifying DPFs as such in German are extensively dealt with in [19: 32-47].

QUESTIONNAIRE FRAGMENT 5

QF 5.1. Does (did) the language in question possess Double Perfect forms? Since when are the forms registered? Which was the verbal paradigm previous to this state?

QF 5.2. If the “existence of DPFs” is stated for the past of the given language, which is the verbal paradigm after this? Can you determine the phenomenon under discussion as a natural transition from an earlier to a later state of language?

QF 5.3. How can you schematize the transition from the earlier to the later state of the system so as to include the appearance of DPF in a natural version? Etc.

Note that an additional instruction is needed if the schemes of transition in different languages are to become mutually comparable. The instruction presupposes a theory of such processes which does not yet exist but can be roughly sketched based on the known history of languages.

III. The Questionnaire in Use

Having sketched some fragments towards the desired questionnaire we have not only gained an overview of the relevant material but also an insight into how a typologist’s thought is manipulating its objects. The typological universe is polylogical. Not only languages are different. The facts we are coming to grasp are loaded with different theoretical assumptions and described in independent terminology. We are gathering them by throwing a net of questions over the data: where the answer to the question can be positive we have got one more piece to our sample of objects (represented by these facts). We must keep in mind that any such piece of evidence has its origin in a separate “grammar”. Each “grammar” is a living practice of linguistics based on a tradition. When I adopt its facts and handle them in my own conceptual framework I inevitably run into a conflict with a specialist behind that grammar, for he “is the master”, as Humpty-Dumpty says. I then try to handle facts and traditions at once and let the specialist participate in the enterprise. This kind of research field can only be structured by questions, not by theoretical statements. This is my clue to the LTG style in typology.

I must further find a way to put together a real questionnaire out of the fragments sketched above (and future ones I did not sketch here) keeping strictly to all the requirements implicit in the methodological principle I declared. It may be a special questionnaire for DPFs or a set of questionnaires for other subjects (the Perfect, the temporal configurations, the transitional states of verbal paradigms, etc.) whose fragments or parts having to do with the DPFs should be mutually compatible. What is important in present is only the exact comprehension of the constructive task the typologist is confronted with.

Suppose we have the questionnaire made and let it be answered by specialists. Suppose a Basque grammarian delivers answers informing on Perfect and Double Perfect forms in Basque. It may be roughly the following

information.

The Basque Perfect consists of the PPart (of the “main verb”, putting temporarily aside the question how it differs from the “main verb” in other languages of the corpus) and the “have-be” Auxiliary in Present; if it appears in Preterite, the construction is a Pluperfect. *Ethorri naiz* means “I am come”, *Ikusi dut* “I have seen him” in Navarro-Labourdin dialect. “Have” is identified, as opposed to “be”, by an additional predicative agreement, p.ex. *d-a* “he is”, *d-e-t* “him-have-I”, *d-u-ø* “him-has-he” etc. – Basque is an ergative language. The PPart can have a definite article attached to it, the meaning being then slightly different. Without the article this form means an “indefinite past”, with the article it approaches the “resultative”. P.Lafitte calls the former “Near Past”, the latter “Perfect” [13: 373, 384]. The pluperfect has the analogous two variants. P.ex.:

(15)aa. *Jan dut* “I have eaten”

ab. *Jana dut* “I have eaten” (= am satiated; am through with eating)

ba. *Jan nuen* “I had eaten”

bb. *Jana nuen* “I had eaten (= was satisfied; was through with eating)

The operation of Perfect formation can be performed iteratively, in two steps. The Perfect of the AUX contains the PPart forms *izan* “been” and *ukan* “had”, this gives the following DPFs:

(16)a. *Jan izan dut / Jan ukan dut*,

lit. “I have had eaten”

b. *Jan izan nuen / Jan ukan nuen*,

lit. “I had had eaten”

The article can be attached to any PPart form but not to both in one construction. (Does it mean that the semantic rule “Resultative + Resultative” is blocked?)

The best description of the meaning of these forms is given in [13: 386-387]. The main points are the following:

(i) The Double Near Past (i.e. without article) and its preterital equivalent have the meaning of relevant past experience, whose action is far and “undetermined”: *Irakurtu izan dut*, lit. “I have had read” means that I had (have had) such experience. This reminds of the logical explanation of the French Double Perfect by Stéfanini and others.

(ii) In the oblique Mood, which Lafitte calls “Eventual”, the DPFs are important for the expression of past and anteriority which are not so easily expressible by more simple forms. Regard our examples (5) and (6) for the French and German analogy.

(iii) In DPFs with the article the meaning is mostly a combination of the present effect (“result”) and the past to which it pertains as “past present”. See for analogy our information on Occitanic, Middle Dutch and contemporary literary German.

We not only know, we believe to understand the Basque usage after we have organized data of other languages and gained some overview. But Basque exhibits some peculiarities for which we cannot easily find analogies elsewhere. The series of text examples in [14: 119-121] poses some additional problems. There is *inter alia* an interesting fact of this language that the verb “to live” appears in DPF with exceptional frequency. For this fact we have no explanation. We only can ask how it is with other languages. In Occitanic it is “to see”, in French “to finish”, in German “to forget” and “to disappear”, and in

South German dialects “to say”! We are confused: what did we forget to consider in our questionnaire?

R. Lafon remarks that in the XVI century the Basque Bible of Liçarraga had many such forms whereas the secular literature of the same time had none. We think again of other languages: those possessing the Evidential use it, including its DPF realizations, in tales and legends, – if the Basque Bible was read as a myth it could be the same case, but: only if the Basque would show traits or traces of the Evidential. It actually does not.

The questionnaire never ends. We surely know examples of very well made questionnaires, but the point is not strictly technical. A questionnaire is more than a technical means in organizing collective research. A questionnaire is a principle of typological thinking and a form of existence of typological reality. It is a man-made reality, hence arbitrary, but it is being continuously substantiated by the criteria of coherence and rationality, which means, metonymically speaking, mutual comprehensibility of languages. Unlike all other scientific orientations, the typology masters polylogical realities.

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