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Expressing Time in the Autobiographical Discourse
of Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) from Kosovo and Metohija

Abstract: The oral corpus of recorded conversations with displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija was formed in 2003. The transcript of a three-hour conversation with a female interlocutor originally from the environs of Suva Reka (Metohija) has been subjected to discourse analysis, an oft-used technique within linguistic anthropology. The focus of the contribution is on the interlocutor's ways of expressing time. Her autobiographical discourse, as well as that of displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija in general, shows that the war/bombing/displacement functions as a temporal divide, as a time marker in relation to which the past, present and future are expressed. The results of this pilot study into time expressions may be used as the starting point in studying the entire oral corpus.

Keywords: anthropological linguistics, reconstruction, expressing time, autobiographical discourse, timer marker, time localizer, Vantage Theory, male and female time, Kosovo and Metohija, displaced Serbs

Introduction

As political scientists have already observed in reference to the political status of internally displaced persons, the state tends to treat its citizens differently by social distinctions such as ethnicity, class, caste, religion and region. The forced movement of people within a nation state also challenges the traditional understanding of citizenship rights as equally distributed to all citizens.[1]

During the civil war in the former Yugoslavia in the 1990s, researchers of the Zagreb-based Institute of Ethnology and Folklore Research analyzed interviews with Croatian refugees. According to Maja Povrzanović, "from the professional point of view, writing about the war became a learning process — a process of rethinking some fundamental issues in anthropology of which the relationship between insider and outsider scholars was but one. War ethnography is used here as a general term for articles on war-related issues".[2]

Political and military events in Serbia in 1999 led to the displacement of Serbs from Kosovo to other parts of Serbia: many ended up in refu-

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[1] Braun 2003, 377.

[2] Povrzanović 2000, 151.

gee camps; others were accommodated by relatives and friends; and some were able to arrange for private accommodation. Academics responded in ways they felt would best contribute to preserving some of the tradition and culture now threatened with extinction. In 2002, two institutes of the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts (SASA), the Institute for the Serbian Language and the Institute for Balkan Studies, started a UNESCO-supported project: *A Study of Slavic Speeches in Kosovo and Metohija*. The project resulted in an archive of audio recordings made both with displaced persons and with those still living in enclaves in Kosovo.[3] The collected material was partly published in three edited multidisciplinary volumes: *Refugee Kosovo* (2004), *Life in the Enclave* (2005) and *Kosovo and Metohija: Living in the Enclave* (2007), as well as in many individual articles in various publications. This paper also makes use of the recorded material.

The analysis presented here forms part of a more comprehensive research aimed at identifying and examining a certain stereotype of time in the discourse of displaced persons from Kosovo recognized in the placement of chronological facts in a subjective coordinate system, as well as at identifying specific ways of expressing subjective time in relation to objective time and to "cult" time, i.e. time as perceived in traditional folk culture. This discourse analysis of time expression is only a pilot study within more extensive research involving the displaced persons from Kosovo.[4]

1. Research method

The main goal of the research project *Study of Slavic Speeches in Kosovo and Metohija* was to record, and thus to preserve, the endangered dialects and speeches in the wake of the events of the 1998/99; hence the project's predominantly dialectological focus. The methodology of traditional dialectological studies requires recording interviews with elder persons as bearers of autochthonous speeches. These usually lack formal education, were born in, and usually have never left, the place whose speech is studied. These eligibility criteria are met mainly by women, who are therefore considered preferred collocutors. With the Institute for Balkan Studies joining the project, the approach to language became interdisciplinary in nature. The interviews were designed in such a manner that the material collected should not be representative only in dialectological terms, but also useful for linguistic pragmatics, linguistic anthropology, ethnolinguistics, anthropological and folklore studies. For the same interdisciplinary reasons, there was no insis-

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[3] The archive is now stored at the two SASA institutes.

[4] The paper presents preliminary results of my doctoral research "Stereotype of time in the discourse of internally displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija".

tence on the criteria insisted upon by traditional dialectology; instead, the main requirement for collocutors was that they be typical bearers of local culture. The questionnaire most frequently used in the course of this research was the questionnaire for the ethnolinguistic study of the Balkan Slavic area developed by Ana Plotnikova (1996). The interviews with displaced persons accommodated in collective centres and those still living in the Kosovo-Metohija enclaves did not, however, end with Plotnikova's questionnaire, but expanded to include their autobiographies, stories of their displacement and related tragic events. All the characteristics of the conversations conducted affirm the interdisciplinary nature of the project.

The research team of the Institute for Balkan Studies employ the method described above in their anthropolinguistic fieldwork, modifying it in response to their individual scholarly concerns and the distinctive cultural features of the area under study.[5]

2. A woman participant from Suva Reka

The participant was born in the village of Movljane in 1935, and she married in the village of Sopina (Municipality of Suva Reka, Metohija). Interviews providing four hours of recorded material were made at the *Ugrinovačka* refugee camp in Zemun (Belgrade, Serbia) in the spring of 2003, four years after she had fled Kosovo. She attended only primary school and she married very young, in accordance with local traditional custom at the time. The interview touched upon a number of topics: everyday life, the traditional local calendar system, her own life and her reflections on moral principles and values.

The conversation was guided by the researcher's questions. I insisted on topics related to traditional culture, but the transcribed material clearly shows the participant's autobiographic interpolations into the formal discourse. The "ideal model of a ritual" was reconstructed, but it was mixed with the model practised over a certain period in the past. By the "ideal model of a ritual" I mean the whole set of traditional elements supposed to be contained in one ritual in a given community. The obligatory set of rituals undergoes gradual change in response to changing times, place, and a number of other factors.

Bearing in mind that in ethnolinguistics a huge part of the material is based on the reconstruction as related by participants, it is difficult to

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[5] Work on the project *Ethnic and Social Stratification of the Balkans* carried out by the Institute for Balkan Studies, SASA, includes interdisciplinary fieldwork conducted by Annemarie Sorescu-Marinković, Tanja Petrović, Marija Ilić, Marija Vučković and myself, under the direction of Biljana Sikimić.

the question may be assumed to result from her inability to abstract facts from the supposed ideal model of a ritual, in this case the wedding. The latter is the case when the participant answers the researcher's "neutral" question by speaking in the first person and citing an example from her own experience:

> (Well, yes, and could a girl say that she did not want to marry?) Well, she could, but she had respect. (So, she had to?) She had respect. **I mean, I had a chance to go wherever I liked, but where my father gave me away, that's where I am. And, whether I had to or not, I didn't want to shame him, I mean, that is how it was back then.** He gives you away, so how can you go off somewhere else. And it turned out all right, it wasn't bad.

As already stated, the researcher's emphasis is on reconstructing the ritual under study. Many rituals have lost some of their components over time and the participants are aware of that. So these changes frequently crop up. The process of remembering is always heavily dependent on the moment at which the act of remembering takes place. Speaking about their own past, about the time of their youth, the women were aware of changes that had meanwhile occurred in family structure and values.[9] Autobiographical discourse typically consists of statements describing events, followed by personal comments which as a rule refer to differences between "their own" time and the present.[10] With people in a refugee camp, dislocated from their place of origin (Kosovo) where most of their habitual activities used to take place, interviews focusing on questions such as: "What was life like then?" or "How did you use to celebrate Christmas?" become a reconstruction of a reconstruction.

The whole conversation with the participant from Suva Reka has been transcribed, but this analysis will be limited to the ways of expressing time in autobiographical discourse, a topic I am particularly interested in because I believe that in the autobiographical discourse of the displaced persons from Kosovo and Metohija the war/bombing/displacement play the role of a boundary event, the point in time in relation to which the past, present and future are expressed. On the other hand, I shall cite other examples (also from autobiographical discourses) which may be seen as completely individual ways of expressing time, and which I believe to be important because they show which categories of time are involved in my collocutors' worldviews housed in language. Although in the latter case one

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with their position as imposed by rural patriarchal society and see it as a very bad and humiliating state".

[9] Petrović 2007, 48–49.

[10] Ibid., 50.

may speak about idiolectal ways of expressing time, this analysis might suggest which categories of time in the discourse of the displaced persons are amenable to study, and open the way to comparative and contrastive studies of time categories in the discourse of both the displaced persons and those still living in the enclaves in Kosovo and Metohija.

In order to facilitate translation into English, I first had to "translate" the dialect into standard Serbian. It is a fact that translation from a dialect into a standard language, and especially from one language into another, necessarily entails the loss of the dialect's distinctive features. Therefore, my analysis of time categories in these examples cannot be fully presented (e.g. the use of tenses, the meaning and use of prepositional phrase patterns etc).

3. Expressing time in autobiographical discourse

From the oral data obtained from my collocutor from Suva Reka, different aspects of expressing time emerge. It is possible to study the binary oppositions such as "now and then" or the usage of temporal adverbials such as "today", "tomorrow", "the day after tomorrow", but the analysis of utterances denoting temporal markers used as boundaries to determine the past, present and future can be of exceptional importance (e.g. *jedan dan pre rata*, "one day before the war"; *jedan dan pre bombardovanja*, "one day before the bombing", and so on). Bearing in mind that the linguistic sciences classify temporal adverbials as a morphosyntactic category, this type of analysis should be based on local vernacular syntax.

By way of introduction, I shall quote some recently suggested ideas, namely, that many studies have distinguished different time dimensions, such as historical, social or process time. An important time dimension is social time, a time perspective in which the actual behaviour of people is guided by rules and norms for relations with other people. The time frame that people have may influence their daily life in a direct manner. We hypothesize that a local time-path calendar allows people to think in their own time frame.[11]

Because of the forced spatial dislocation of displaced persons, I believe it very important to research the manner in which the past, present and future are expressed in their discourse, as well as whether a "shift" has occurred in the meaning of adverbs of time, such as now, tomorrow, yesterday etc. in relation to, according to my hypothesis, a new point of reference. I therefore believe that in analyzing these time relations the linguistic con-

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[11] Haandrikman et al. 2004, 340.

text is as important as extralinguistic ones. As the linguist Carlotta Smith argues:

> We have known that the interpretation of the tense requires information from context at least since demonstration of its anaphoric nature. The type of text passage in which a sentence appears determines the interpretation of tense in the sentence. Within a sentence tense interacts with other temporal expressions to establish a time for temporal interpretation. Almost every combination of temporal expressions is well-formed grammatically. But the meanings depend on tense, other temporal expressions in the syntactic context, and the mode of discourse of the passage.[12]

Context can provide information essential to locating a situation in time.[13] In some of her previous papers, Smith shows that text passages realize one of five discourse modes: Narrative, Report, Description, Information and Argument, and that there are three temporal modes: Narrative, Report and Description (2001; 2003).[14] Each has a different principle of advancement according to the predominant entities and how they are organized.[15] Citing patterns of tense interpretation and describing each of the temporal modes, Carlotta Smith only takes written text into consideration. The Discourse Modes are formulated for written texts. The main ideas hold for spoken discourse as well, but not all cases are covered: it does not account for conversation.[16]

The examples analyzed in this paper differ from Smith's Discourse Modes (narrative continuity of events is repeatedly interrupted by digressions), but they also show similarities, so we can only partly apply their characteristics to our material.

In this paper, I shall use two terms related to expressing time: the time marker and the time localizer. Although they are effectively synonymous, they will be used to denote two different concepts. The marker denotes the abstract concept, part of the participant's time map, the idea of expressing time and creating time categories. The localizer is grammatical, expressed in time adverbials and expressions or in the patterns of prepositional phrases used to define time adverbially.

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[12] Smith 2007, 420.

[13] Ibid., 424.

[14] Quoted after Smith 2007, 424.

[15] Ibid., 425.

[16] Ibid., 424.

3.1. Use of the traditional calendar

I shall focus only on some examples from the recorded conversation that illustrate a specific way of expressing time that is closer to the methods of linguistic anthropology. According to Jacques,[17] time can be divided into chronological time, measurable by clocks, called "Chronos", and the human and living time of intentions and goals, called "Kairos".[18]

In the discourse focused on the participant's personal drama — the killing of her son just one day before the bombing of Kosovo began in 1999 — and yet incorporated into the complex of social events, I note her use of the feast-days of the traditional Orthodox Christian calendar as her own time markers. The event she recounts is temporally defined in relation to a certain feast-day, a special date from which the counting of a new personal time begins. In the following example she mentions the traditional feast of *Mladenci* along with some typical rituals, but the exact date of the feast, which is the 22nd of March, is not mentioned at all:

> *That day I was making the* pogača [round bread] *and cooking fish, it was* **Mladenci**, *my daughter-in-law was preparing the* pogača, *I made this* tavče [baked beans] *and we were waiting for him to come.*

The exact day of the week — Monday — specifying the time of the tragic event, is also related to the same traditional feast:

> *They killed my son* **on a Monday, on Mladenci Day**.

The same traditional feast is the time marker for the past, but it continues to function in the present. In the following sentence the interval between these two points in time is expressed:

> **This Mladenci Day**, it's four years. (***Sad ove Mladence što je, četiri godine.***)

As translation of the statement does not indicate the precise meaning of the verbal tense, my analysis will not go into the meaning of the tense used. However, the relation between the tense used and the adverbial of time, and their relation to the time of speaking would certainly show that the speaker's centrality implies an organizing consciousness, a temporal perspective from which the speaker invites the audience to consider the event.[19]

The traditional feast of *Mladenci* becomes the stimulus triggering the participant's memory of a tragic event. That the tragic event, death of her

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[17] Jacques 1990 [1982].

[18] After Haandrikman et al. 2004, 345.

[19] Taylor 1977, 203, quoted after Smith 2007, 421.

son, constitutes a very important part of her autobiographical story is indicated by her repeated digressions to the tragedy elicited by various segments of the interview.[20]

On the other hand, other events from the participant's autobiography are also located in time through the use of the traditional calendar — her own wedding took place on St George's Day.

> *Time passed, some two years later, it was autumn, **St George of wintertime**, there was the wedding. It was a big wedding, with horses, there were thirty odd horses, wedding guests, you know.*

I believe it important to note that this statement does not specify the year of the wedding; instead it uses a traditional feast as the time localizer. In the Orthodox Christian calendar two days of the year are dedicated to St George: *Djurdjevdan* (23 April/6 May) and *Djurdjic* (3/16 November). Given that Djurdjic is celebrated in the second half of the year (November), and that with the way time is now counted winter does not officially start until the 22nd of December, this division of the year into summer and winter is obviously dependent on rural elements, such as agricultural work in the fields.[21]

In the statement *it was autumn, St George of wintertime*, I encounter two different time categorizations of the event. On the one hand, there is the categorization of time according to the contemporary, mathematical, counting of time, since St George — Djurdjic (3/16 November) falls on an autumn date. On the other hand, the participant places the traditional feast in a category which she has adopted along along with the cultural code of the environment into which she was born and in which she lived until the displacement.

In this way, time localizers are added to the already defined time categories (winter vs. summer), defined according to the usual jobs con-

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[20] Ćirković 2004, 91.

[21] Although this paper looks at time categories as linguistic ones, the issue of the origin and existence of conceptual and thus linguistic categories is associated with human cognitive activity and the projection in language of knowledge about extralinguistic reality (Popović 2008, 153). This extralinguistic reality and temporal categorization have been looked at from the anthropological perspective by Otilia Hedeşan. In her study on the Bayash of Trešnjevica (central Serbia), Hedeşan 2005, 66, states that the observance of rituals and holidays implies the group's sedentary season, while the failure to observe them indirectly points to the group's nomadic season. Our case is different, i.e. on this occasion we are not speaking of the frequency or omission of holidays, but rather of the division of the calendar year into two periods depending on natural factors, which again, impose the organization of time.

nected to the seasons of the year. This idea of categorization is based on the Vantage Theory. Its founder Robert MacLaury explains:

> Vantage theory concerns the method by which people construct, maintain, and change categories. They do so by coordinating inherently fixed images (or ideas) with inherently mobile (or changeable) recognitions of similarity and difference of perceived experience to the images. Vantage theory poses that categorization consists not only of the viewer recognizing similarity and difference but of the viewer coordinating these recognitions with a fixed gist that he has extracted from some gamut of experience that he has selected. In Vantage theory, this coordination of fixed and mobile reference points derives by a deep-seated analogy with the process through which a person makes sense of his own position in space-time by reference to fixed landmarks and degrees of slow and fast motion.[22]
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> People construct any category around a quintessential example or typical member; other members pertain to the degree that they share attributes with that prototype. Membership is based on shared essential properties; an entity either belongs or does not belong, and all members pertain at equal value. Categories are applied via logic to the natural order of an observer-independent world, either correctly or incorrectly.[23]

To be able to draw further inferences about the division of the year into winter and summer, however, I need material that is both more extensive and thematically more diverse. Therefore, I shall confine myself to the hypothesis inspired by the example cited above: *Time passed, some two years later, it was autumn, **St George of wintertime**, there was the wedding*. The examples also indicate the time location of certain community rituals: *They go to fetch earth, is it Thursday*[?]*, the Thursday after the Holy Trinity* [Pentecost]. *I used to know what this day was called, a Thursday, but is it called Ljudovdan, Vidovdan* [St. Vitus' Day]*, it was a Thursday, but Vidovdan. And we go to get earth.*

For Sacks,[24] calendars can also be customized or personalized by marking dates which are privately apposite and peculiarly relevant to the individual calendar user. According to him,[25] this personalized use ensures that time becomes organized in relation to an individual's "relationships or biography".[26]

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[22] MacLaury 2002, 285–286.

[23] MacLaury 1991, 55.

[24] Sacks 1987.

[25] Sacks 1992, 36–37.

[26] Quoted after Hogben 2006, 329.

3.2. Daily chores as time markers

A research into local expression of time recently developed in Taiwan seems interesting for our purpose. The researcher noticed the expression of every-day time in accordance with events considered as being of primary importance for the local community. In Taiwan, housewives observed that the time their children came home from school every day was also the time they started to prepare supper. Therefore, housewives invented a new word to name this time (about 5 pm): *pinokayan no mitiliday* (the time students come home from school). As soon as they saw homebound students, they knew it was time to cook, a habit still kept by the housewives.[27] Through the different aspects of social life in the present-day village, it seems that the villagers are attempting to combine their own cultural traditions with certain cultural elements of "superior" others, and striving for a better future.[28]

In the case of our Kosovo refugee, the time of day the tragic event occurred is marked by everyday female chores. The supposed duration of these chores marks the exact time when the son was expected to return from work. The following part of the discourse shows the temporal sequence of events, that is the organization of daily activities in relation to the usual time of the son's return from work, the location of events in relation to the everyday timetable and, finally, an unexpected tragedy instead of the expected arrival:

> *That day I was preparing the* pogača [round bread] *and I was cooking fish, it was* Mladenci*, my daughter-in-law was preparing the* pogača*, I made this* tavče *[traditional dish] and we were waiting for him to come. I am waiting for him to have lunch, we fast on* Mladenci *Day, you know, I made a full baking pan of fish, with rice, and I told her: "Daughter-in-law, I say, can you make a small cake, I will make a pan, my son Bogi will come now, he will have his lunch, I say, it is* Mladenci *today."*

It is open to discussion whether the event described, an integral part of the narrated autobiography, is connected with the *Mladenci* Day ritual, or with one of its parts. Even if it is expressed in terms of everyday routine, ritual time cannot be equated with everyday time because its function within ritual is a specific one.[29] Moreover, in this example verbs are used whose meaning is that of everyday actions. They can be understood as representing

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[27] Huang 2004, 326.

[28] Ibid., 335.

[29] Within Slavic studies, for ethnological and anthropological views of time categories in folklore material, see Risteski 2005, and the edited volumes V*remya v prostranstve Balkan* (Moscow 1994) and *Zemljevidi časa* (Ljubljana 2001). These views may encourage linguists to conduct an analysis which might show the ways in which these time categories are reflected in language.

everyday routine, but it should be borne in mind that this is a reconstruction of a ritual, even if it is a ritual in which the collocutor herself took part.

My collocutor uses daily chores not only to describe recent events, but also as a time marker to describe other, in this case reconstructed, rituals. The researcher's intention, as previously stated, is to obtain the "ideal model of a ritual" (wedding) from the participant, but the participant describes her own wedding instead. However, in doing so she uses the third person singular in the present tense: *brings water, sits down, waits for the guests to arrive*, or the present tense of the third person plural *and they play music, they prepare lunch, they dance*. It may be assumed that the participant's reply has been elicited by the researcher's "neutral" question: *And what happens then?*

The description of actions the traditional wedding procedure involves is framed by daily chores, with one of them — the bringing of water — being part of the wedding ritual.

Music and dance form an integral part of the wedding, but in the discourse of my collocutor, a daily chore is "inserted" into this set of ritual tasks as well — the preparation of lunch, which in the time organization of the wedding day, and based on the discourse of successive actions, takes up the central place:

> (And what does she do then?) *Nothing. She* **brings water**, *sits down, waits for the guests to arrive, you know, the* izviđajci [the bride's relatives who arrive after the bride's departure to the bridegroom's house]*, as* prvičari [same meaning]*, who arrive for the first time, she waits for them, all dressed up. And they play music,* **prepare lunch**, *dance*.

The genuine daily chores functioning as time markers in language are found in the following statement:

> And **I get up** *at one o'clock,* **light the fire, dry the** opanci [traditional rural footwear made of pig leather]*, the* **socks, I dry them for everyone**, *for them when they get up in the morning.*

Also, individual daily chores also represent the time frame of other, collective, daily activities. Used in the discourse, these duities indicate the organization of the time of the participant herself.

The successive verbs *get, light, dry* by which the situation is expressed give the sequence of events round which the discourse is formed, and thus help organize the rhythm of the text. Their meaning can also indicate the beginning and end of the situation described, and in this way segmentize the statement. Used in this manner in discourse, the verbs might perhaps be seen as a kind of discourse marker. Since the joint function of discourse markers is to segmentize the text, and the text as an event phenomenon has its procedural and thus also temporal dimension, the discourse markers in one way or another and to varying degrees, help form the rhythm of the

text and its temporal configuration. In signalling boundaries, the discourse marker as internal temporal localizer (i.e. the temporal definition of the boundary parts of the text as opposed to its whole) plays the part of temporal localizer with two markers which are basic on the time axis: the anterior and the posterior marker (e.g. clichéd beginnings and endings of epistolary discourses).[30] By segmenting the discourse, the markers shape it, above all by stressing the starting and ending boundaries, or by stressing continuity, or by stressing its duration.[31]

In the examples quoted I encounter Carlota Smith's temporal characteristics of narratives:

> Narrative primarily introduces particular event and state entities into the universe of discourse. Narrative consists of a sequence of consequentially related events and states. The order in which they occur is crucial for understanding. In narrative, events and states are related to each other temporally. The first sentence established a time, actual or fictional; after that, events and states are given in sequence or they are simultaneous with previous times in the text. This is the basic narrative pattern: there are other cases as well, e.g., events are not always recounted in the order in which they appear; there are changes of level; etc.[32]

3.3. Occurrences in the outside world as time markers

In the description of her daily tasks, my collocutor uses occurrences from the outside world (the crowing of roosters) as time markers. Compared to nowadays, these markers can certainly be called traditional. As the recorded material shows, they are connected to the modern measuring of time in hours, and they are probably used in conversation so as to familiarize the researcher with this time dimension.

> (So, the bride[33] is the last to go to bed, and the first to rise?) *Yes, oh poor me, there were no watches then like now, you've been wearing one for thirty years already, there was no clock.* **When the roosters crow, when the roosters start to crow, I know it's one o'clock. And I get up at one o'clock**, *I light the fire, dry the* opanci, *the socks, I dry them for everyone, for them when they get up in the morning.*

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[30] Popović 2000; Piper 2001, 198–199.

[31] Piper 2001, 210.

[32] Smith 2007, 425.

[33] In Serbian traditional culture the term *mlada* (literally "young") is not used only to denote the woman on her wedding day, the bride, but also the woman during her first year of marriage or the youngest daughter-in-law in the household.

However, if the statement is analyzed, it can be assumed that the connection between the traditional way of telling time (the crowing of roosters) and the modern counting of time (one o'clock) is very recent in her time map. It might rather be assumed that the traditional marker in the period when it was the only valid one was connected to the chores to be done, and that the time interval that begins with the crowing of the roosters and ends with the rising of the family members in the morning was both necessary and sufficient for the completion of all chores, which is all that matters in a traditional way of life.

In this statement, the present tense is used to express the past, thus producing a narrative dynamism and bringing the situation to life. In the same statement *When the roosters crow, when the roosters start to crow, I know it's one o'clock*, the verb is used both in its imperfective aspect [Serbian: *pevaju*] and in its perfective aspect [Serbian: *zapevaju*]. I can assume that the imperfective verb is used to mark some general, unspecified time — "back then people used to get up with the first roosters", while the perfective verb marks personal time, i.e. the personal commencement of the described situation. However, for me to reach valid conclusions on this hypothesis, I believe this use of imperfective and perfective verbs has to be confirmed by further examples; otherwise, this example may be considered an unintentional self-correction in stating a situation.

3.4. Historical events as time markers

In addition to using traditional holidays, occurrences from the outside world and daily chores to define the time dimension of our collocutors, events in their autobiographical discourse are also localized in time in relation to "global" historical events. By this I mean events and changes outside the personal life of my collocutors, events which they could not have influenced themselves. There are two such events: the rule of Josip Broz Tito and the beginning of the bombing in 1999.

It is observable that Tito's rule does not have a time frame in the discourse, although it is important because it marks a period of our participant's personal history and localizes it in time:

> *Well, sure, they put up the flag. That was, **Tito ruled at that time, when I got married**. It was Tito. It was Tito's flag.*

Even though the event is related to a personal history defined in time by Tito's rule, a person uninformed of historical events cannot know which pe-

riod this was. We build relationships by sharing experiences from our pasts with others and by listening to memories that others share with us.[34]

This example [*Well, sure, they put up the flag. That was, **Tito ruled at that time**, when I got married. It was Tito. It was Tito's flag.*] also confirms, like several previously quoted (such as not specifying the year of the wedding but only a holiday from the traditional calendar; the roosters crowing as a time marker for getting up), that the mathematical or modern measuring of time in the perception of time and time periods does not have the same meaning for members of another generation and from another cultural area (i.e. the researcher).

The modern, mathematical, measuring of time finds linguistic expression in the participant's statement where recent political events are used as time markers for events from her private history. So for the first time in the discourse we can find the year in which a certain event is located:

> Well, it's only **this ninety-nine** that evil has befallen me, **up to that time** we were doing really well.

Here the year *this ninety-nine* is a time localizer, and as the sentence continues, the anterior situation is expressed by the anaphora *up to that time*.[35]

It has been noted in the part of the discourse relating to recent events from personal history that the time marker for these events is "war". The idea is verbalized not only by the lexeme *war*, but also by the lexeme *bombing*. The idea of "war" is connected to the refugee period, so that the idea of political events in Kosovo in 1999 is generally expressed by constructions in which displacement is a time marker.

In my collocutor's time map, the temporal propinquity of the war and bombing is expressed by the demonstrative pronoun *ovaj* "this":[36] *Well, up to now we were doing well, then this war came*, and precise time is expressed by the construction *one day before the war, one day before the bombing, I lost*

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[34] Bauer et al. 2003, 27.

[35] As I have already noted, this is a dialect discourse adjusted to standard Serbian in order to facilitate translation into English, and I am not going here into formal-language discourse analysis or an analysis of the patterns of prepositional phrases by which time is expressed.

[36] As stated by D. Klikovac in her paper on the use of demonstratives in standard Serbian, psychological proximity to the subject of conversation is expressed by the pronoun *ovaj* 'this' (Klikovac 2006, 136). In her analyses of demonstrative pronouns in Croatian, S. Kordić arrives at the same conclusions as Klikovac. Kordić analyzes the use of the demonstrative pronoun *ovaj* 'this' in expressing spatial relations, and states that objective space can be replaced by subjective proximity and distance, which entirely depend on the speaker's emotions (Kordić 2002, 73).

my son. I also find an inclusion of emotional elements and a subjective posi-
tion in the use of the time adverbs "now" and "tomorrow". Even though the
conversation took place in 2003 or four years after the bombing and the dis-
placement of the Kosovo Serbs, the participant used the time adverb "now"
with the past tense, so as to bring the events connected to her personal his-
tory and recent events closer together in time:

> *Well, thank God, all was well, it's only **now** that evil befell me, because of
> this son that they now killed in the war; well, **up to now** we were doing
> well, then this war came; ... it was good, but now evil befell me when we
> fled. **Up to now**, up to this time, I baked bread in the* crepulja [pottery
> vessel]. *Before we fled, before the bombing.*

As Carlota Smith suggests, confirming the hypothesis of the nec-
essary presence of emotional elements in the subjective position within a
discourse, the present "now" indicates subjectivity, a mind present at the past
time; it does not change the temporal interpretation.[37] The adverb of time
"now" obviously does not convey a meaning connected to speech time, but
is used in the context of reference time.[38]

The time adverb "tomorrow" in my collocutor's discourse adds dyna-
mism to the situation, bringing the event closer to the researcher and show-
ing the perspective from which she observes the situation of which she is
speaking. The shift in perspective is reflected in the shift in the meaning of
"tomorrow", which in relation to the use of the past tense which points to
reference time, refers to situation time.

> *They killed my young son, one day before the war, that was the last day of
> work, and the **bombing began like tomorrow**.*

Although N. Norrick speaks of potential lacunae in memory, he points out
that as tellers retrieve information, they get back in touch with scenes from
the past, and they may comment on the clarity of the images recalled, as

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[37] Smith 2003, 2007, 430.

[38] I use the terms "speech time", "reference time" and "situation time" in the meaning
in which they are used by the linguist Carlota Smith: Speech Time is the centre of the
system and is the basic default orientation point for temporal expression; Reference
Time represents the temporal perspective of a sentence; it is simultaneous with, before
or after Orientation Time, which is Speech Time unless otherwise noted; Situation
Time is the time of occurrence of a situation: it is simultaneous with, before or after
Reference Time (Smith 2007, 421). Smith takes on the cited definitions by following
Reichenbach's (1947) triad, which reflects the mutual relation of verbal tenses and as-
pects in the description of an event. The importance of this theory also stems from its
being implemented in linguistic studies of temporality, and even in foreign languages
teaching. For more, see Ašić 2007; Stanojević 2007; Popović 2008a.

well as on difficulties in remembering.[39] It is obvious in our example that the participant has to go back into the past so as to specify the situation in time, and that she uses the temporal adverb "tomorrow" from this perspective.

Besides data from the participant's personal history which are temporally defined by political events, her discourse also shows that daily chores, which were an integral part of life in the area from which she fled, are defined by these same political events:

> I made bread, I baked it in the crepulja *until recently. Until now, until this time, I baked bread in the* crepulja. **Before we fled, before the bombing**.

The sequence of sentences in this part of the conversation can show the perception of time between events: the first sentence uses the temporal adverbial "until recently", which is a substitute for the adverb "now", and the following one explicates the thus used temporal adverbial "until now" and, consequently, the perception of the adverbials used — "before we fled", "before the bombing". The last phrase *Before we fled, before the bombing* may be seen as defining the use of the temporal adverbials: *until recently*, *until now*, *until this time*. This way of defining and expressing time best shows the participant's perception of time and her relation to it.

3.5. Autobiographical datum as a time marker

In the participant's discourse new events belonging to the sphere of everyday life are localized in time in relation to important events from her personal history:

> Er, if there had been television like this, radio, there was nothing. **Until recently** *there was nothing. When I was already married,* **perhaps ten years after the wedding**, *television and radio arrived*.

Speaking of the past, the participant says that daily life involved no radio or television, and she localizes the advent of both radio and television in the same period.[40]

In the two successive sentences, my collocutor looks at past events from two completely different angles and, as a result, their locations in time differ. On the one hand, if I assume that in order to describe past events my collocutor must use memory to transpose matters into the time in question, then her use of the time expression "until recently" becomes understandable;

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[39] Norrick 2005, 1819.

[40] I shall not deal with the facts about radio and television and the time of their introduction in Serbia, and especially in the villages in Kosovo.

from the past perspective, television and radio are recent developments. On the other hand, if I look at this in relation to her wedding — "ten years after the wedding" — then the introduction of television and radio is a remote past.

The relativity of localizing technical developments may be seen from the time in which the conversation took place: it was recorded in 2003, the participant could have married in the 1950s, and television broadcast first appeared in Serbia in the 1960s. If I take into account that many events occurred in her life in the remote and recent past, I may ask what the period from her wedding up to the moment of the conversation looks like in the participant's time map. Any discussion of what "until recently" could mean to the participant and what to the researcher, who belongs to another generation and thinks in another cultural code, faces an entanglement of different and non-comparable angles of time perception.

However, if I take into account that during the interview the researcher insists on the reconstruction of past events or practices which the participant may not even remember, but instead reconstructs them from stories heard from her elders, then the appearance of television and radio can be considered recent in relation to the remote past.

4. Possibilities for further research: male vs. female time

The material I gathered in various places (not only in Kosovo and Metohija) in the course of my research has led me to ponder on the gender division of interview topics, on the ways we approach field research and on the extent to which the analysis of the material is gender dependent. In one of my earlier papers,[41] I find that a precise line could not be drawn between the types of topics in field interviews, even though practice indicated that the topics usually discussed with my male collocutors concern history and genealogy, *gusle*-playing (traditional one-stringed instrument), traditional crafts, myths and legends, while with my female collocutors usually discussed weddings, folklore heritage related to weddings, children, incantations and folk medicine.

And yet, the existence of a gender division in traditional culture as a concept can be taken as a subject to reflect upon and research further.[42] According to Carrasco and Mayordomo, analysis of the behaviour of men

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[41] Ćirković 2008.

[42] Feminists A. Leburić and I. Zalović-Troskot 2002, 235, believe that feminist research differs from other kinds of research not only in method but also in the viewpoints which form a constituent part of the researcher's theoretical approach. Feminists share their methods with other researchers, but what is unique to them is the fact that women and

and women throughout the human life cycle is fundamental to any study of the effects of work times on either sex. In a gender analysis of labour, there are some other significative variables such as educational level, occupation category and socio-economic status. Both the availability of individuals and their time distribution possibilities vary depending on responsibilities in terms of caring for others. The rhythm of work of women responds to what we could call a "natural rhythm" (governed by need): they work more in proportion to the number of dependents in the home.[43]

Bearing in mind the traditional organization of time typical of the Serbian community in Kosovo where my participant used to live, I may suggest that the discourse expresses local "female time concept". Male participants, even those coming from the same background, probably could organize the same time period in a different way and locate the same event in relation to different time markers. Unfortunately, the hypothesis about the possible existence of a local "male time concept" cannot be tested because I do not have a comparable recorded material with a male refugee participant. Any kind of relevant conclusions concerning the male and female time concepts, therefore, requires a better and more detailed research.

Conclusion

Military and political events in Serbia in 1999 led to the displacement of Serbs from Kosovo. Many Serbs found themselves in refugee camps in other parts of Serbia, staying with relatives or friends or in private accommodation. Because of the forced spatial dislocation, I believe it exceptionally important to study the ways in which the past, present and future are expressed in the discourse of displaced persons, as well as whether a "shift" has occurred in the meaning of adverbs of time (such as now, tomorrow, yesterday) in relation to, according to my hypothesis, a new point of reference.

The focus of my analysis of the autobiographical discourse of a collocutor originally from Suva Reka was on the time markers that seemed most striking to me. Thus, for example, the traditional calendar, used for time markers, triggers her recollection of a tragic event from her recent past. But the traditional calendar is also used for time markers both for other autobiographical events (e.g. her wedding) and for rituals involving the whole community. This use of the traditional calendar fits in with MacLaury's Vantage Theory about constructing categories and adding new elements to the existing ones.

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their problems are placed at the centre of the research carried out about them and for them.

[43] Carrasco and Mayordomo 2005, 238–239.

Also, my analysis of the autobiographical discourse encompassed tra-
ditionally female daily chores referred to by my collocutor, but the analyzed
examples show that they form part of a ritual and that thus used cannot be
analyzed for their real use. As potentially interesting in further research, I
suggest the study of male and female time with respect to everyday activi-
ties given their existing division into male and female in traditional culture
at large (not only in the culture of the displaced persons from Kosovo and
Metohija).

Elements from the outside world used as time markers in the ana-
lyzed autobiographical discourse may be defined as traditional by compari-
son with the modern measuring of time, but the discourse shows a com-
bination of the traditional and modern systems. Therefore, my collocutor's
time map cannot be defined as strictly traditional and archaic. Remote or
recent historical events are also used as time markers, but in the whole auto-
biographical discourse the boundary event relative to which past and pres-
ent are determined is the war and bombing.

The analyzed discourse is but a pilot study within a more extensive
research on expressing time in the discourse of the displaced persons from
Kosovo and Metohija. A larger corpus of examples would likely show more
clearly and systematically the realization of time categories and the use of
time markers. Given the double "translation" of the original discourse —
from dialect into standard Serbian and from standard Serbian into English
— it is possible that the analysis of verb forms and their transposition would
show different results.

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