

Title: Semantics of Embedded Tense in the Balkan Subjunctive
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This paper addresses the question about the distribution of tense in subjunctive complements in Bulgarian and Albanian. Examples (1) and (2) show that the two languages differ with respect to what tense can appear in embedded subjunctive complements; while imperfective verbal forms are ungrammatical in subjunctive clauses in Bulgarian (1), no such restriction exists in Albanian (2):

(1) Bulgarian

Planira-x [da *otido-x/ *otid-ex / otid-a vāv Francija]

plan-1SG.PAST SUBJ go-1SG.PAST/go-1SG.IMPERF/go-1SG.PRES to France.

'I planned to go to France.'

(2) Albanian:

Planifiko-va [të *shko-va / shko-ja /shko-j në France].

plan-1SG.PAST SUBJ go-1SG.PAST/ go-1SG.IMPERF/go-1SG.PRES to France

'I planned to go to France'.

Subjunctive complements as in (1)-(2), present a challenge for the majority of semantic frameworks, since the meaning of embedded tense in these constructions seems to differ from the meaning of tense in the matrix clauses. In particular, it is assumed that embedded tense in the Balkan subjunctive is 'defective', i.e. that it does not have any semantic contribution, and necessarily is interpreted with respect to the matrix clause event time (e.g. Watanabe 1993, Iatridou 1993, Tomić 2004, Giannidou 2007). In this talk I argue for the opposite view, and show, that tense in Bulgarian and Albanian subjunctive is semantically contentful. At the theoretical level this paper contributes to the discussion about properties of embedded tense cross-linguistically (see Ogihara 1996, Arregui & Kusumoto 1998). From the typological perspective, this paper raises the question about the status of subjunctive in Balkan languages.

References

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