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THE POLYSEMY OF ENGLISH PARTICLES STILL AND ALREADY AND THEIR MACEDONIAN EQUIVALENTS CÈ YUŠTE AND BEĆE

Abstract

The aim of this paper is, first, to examine the wide range of meanings and usages of English particles *still* and *already* and their Macedonian equivalents *cè yume* and *beće* and to determine their radial networks. Second, by contrasting the particles in both languages, it aims to shed new light on the semantic network of the Macedonian particles. These particles are highly polysemous lexical units in both languages and as such they present problems especially in determining the prototypical meaning that underlies their wide range of different usages. The focus will be on the concept of time as being the most relevant one in interpreting the different senses of the particles. The concept of time appears as the prototypical meaning in the English particles *already* and *still* and their Macedonian equivalents *cè yume* and *beće*.

Key words: scalar particles, temporal meaning, adversative meaning, concessive meaning, marginality sense

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1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is, first, to examine the wide range of meanings and usages of English particles *still* and *already* and the Macedonian equivalents *çè yume* and *veke* and to determine their semantic networks. These particles in both languages are highly polysemous lexical units and as such they present problems especially in determining the prototypical meaning that underlies their wide range of different usages. By contrasting the English particles and their Macedonian equivalents we tend to shed some new light on the uses of the particles in Macedonian and the range of meanings associated with them.

Therefore, first, English sentences containing *still* and *already* and their Macedonian translations are compared, and afterwards, Macedonian sentences containing *çè yume* and *veke* and their English translations are also compared.¹

The focus will be on the concept of time as being the most relevant one in interpreting the different senses of the particles. The concept of time appears as the prototypical meaning in the English particles *already* and *still* and their Macedonian equivalents *çè yume* and *veke*.

These particles are named scalar since they are used to identify events as if they were composed of many different components ordered along one scale. In other words, they are used to denote continuation of the state of affairs along a scale. The scale can belong to different domains: temporal domain, abstract domain, adversative or concessive domain and the domain of comparison.

2. Temporal uses of scalar particles in English and in Macedonian

According to Huumo (1997) and Michaelis (1996) the basic function of the scalar particles *still* and *already* is to express temporal meaning; i.e. to denote continuation of a state of affairs through time. The Macedonian

¹ English sentences containing examples with *still* and *already* were taken from the articles by Declerk (1994), Michaelis (1996), and Huumo (1997) and translated in Macedonian by experts in English linguistics and translation. Macedonian sentences containing examples with *çè yume* and *veke* were extracted from Macedonian fairytales, political speeches and dictionaries and their official translations in English.

language shows correspondence, as both Macedonian equivalents imply a continuation of a certain state of affairs through time.

1. E. Mary is *still* in England.
M. Марија е *cé yume* во Англија.
2. E. Grandma *still* lives on the Lower East Side.
M. Баба ми *cé yume* живее на Источната страна.
3. E. Mary is *already* in England.
M. Марија е *веќе* во Англија.
4. E. At five o'clock I was *already* back at home.
M. Во пет часот *веќе* бев дома.

These examples are simple, yet they exhibit the basic temporal meaning of the particles. The English *still* and the Macedonian *cé yume* imply that a certain state of affairs existed prior to the reference point of time and continues to exist. Michaelis (1996: 201) states that temporal *still* functions at two levels; at one level it shows that the state of affairs “overflows” the bounds of the reference time, and at the second level it highlights the persistence of the same state of affairs across time. So, it is at this level where the scalar nature of temporal *still* emerges most clearly.

One important characteristic of *still* and *cé yume* is that their use is restricted only to imperfective events, which is quite natural, as they denote continuation through time. Therefore, the following examples are unacceptable:

5. E. John *still* recognized Harry.*
M. Јован *cé yume* го препозна Иван.*
6. E. John is *still* recognizing Harry.
M. Јован *cé yume* го препознава Иван.

While *already* and *веќе* express the existence of the state of affairs at the reference point of time plus the information that the state of affairs happened prior to the expected reference time. These two particles (the English and the Macedonian ones) contain the information that the presupposition of the existence of another state of affairs is cancelled. The particles confirm that the state of affairs continues to exist and automatically excludes the start of a new activity.

7. E. Stephen is *already* at school.
M. Стефан е *веќе* на училиште. (He is in school and not at any other place.)
8. E. The news has *already* been released.
M. Веста *веќе* беше објавена. (It can't be concealed any more.)

The contrast between the imperfective and perfective nature of the activity does not play an important role with *already* and *веќе* since the emphasis when using these two particles is on the anteriority i.e. the event appeared before it was expected.

The contrastive analysis of the original Macedonian examples and their English translations in the examples 9–12 shows that the Macedonian particles *сè уште* and *веќе* are used with the temporal meaning in the same way as their English counterparts.

9. M. Тој *сè уште* го држеше чадорчето над глава оти не знаеше што сила го направи толку убав. (BK: 54)
E. He was *still* holding the sunshade over his head for he didn't know what had changed him (VK: 54)
10. M. за него *ке* ја врзеше нашата сестра која сега *уште*² спие и (СЧ: 109)
E. we shall bind our sister to it who is *still* asleep now (SC: 109)
11. M. „Тогаш врати се дома“ – рече рибата „таа *веќе* е кралица“. (BK: 83)
E. “Go home then” – said the fish “she is the queen *already*”. (VK: 83)
12. M. Сестра ми *веќе* ми кажа за нив. (BK: 95)
E. For my sister warned me about them. (VK: 95)

Сè уште implies that a certain state of affairs existed prior to the reference point of time and continues to exist. In most of the cases *сè уште* is translated by *still*.

Веќе expresses the existence of the state of affairs at the reference point of time plus the information that the state of affairs happened prior to the expected reference time and most often is translated by *already*. In the example 12, *already* is omitted and the semantic information is

² The Macedonian particle *уште* is used as a synonym of *сè уште*.

transmitted by the verb “warn” which carries the component of meaning of ‘already mentioned’.

3. Ambiguous interpretation of temporal *already* / *веќе*

Declerck (1994: 307) focuses on the difference in meaning of the particle *already* when used in similar contexts³.

13. a. It was *already* FIVE O’CLOCK.
- b. We were *already* back at FIVE O’CLOCK.

Declerck (1994: 308) states that the meaning of *already* in 13.a. is ‘as late as’, while in 13.b. is ‘as early as’. The difference, according to Declerck, results from the different perspective the speaker holds. In 13.a., the meaning of *already* is ‘as late as 5 o’clock’, as the event is evaluated in relation to the time which serves as a reference point. As for 13.b., the meaning of *already* is ‘as early as 5 o’clock’ because the event serves as a point of view from which the time is evaluated. Also, 13.a. and 13.b. involve different events.

The contrastive analysis of English and Macedonian examples show that the Macedonian equivalent *веќе* is interpreted in the same way.

14. a. *Веќе* е ПЕТ ЧАСОТ – време е да си одиме. (It was as late as 5 o’clock)
- б. *Веќе* во ПЕТ ЧАСОТ бевме дома. (It was as early as 5 o’clock)

The same interpretation of meaning of the particle *already* and *веќе* that belong to two completely different languages show that there is a universality in the languages which is based on the universal human behavior and perspective. From a cognitive linguistic point of view, where perspective plays an important in deconstructing the meaning, people view the time reference as a limit that shouldn’t be exceeded. When people relate the event to the time reference, they see it as one that takes place before the time allowed for accomplishing the event.

³ The examples are taken from her study “*The only/already puzzle: A question of perspective*”.

4. Temporal meaning extensions of Macedonian *веќе*

The Macedonian particle *веќе* can be used to show that the event should be accomplished at the time of speaking, but at the same time it emphasizes the irritation by the persistence of the event. This usage is based on the temporal meaning as the particle *веќе* expresses the persistence of the event through time and as a result it causes irritation.

15. M. Доста *веќе*.
E. It's enough. (Time Mk)

The English *already* is not used with the sense of 'persistence and irritation', so the English translation just transmits the message.

When used with a negative adverb *веќе* expresses the existence of the state of affairs at the reference point of time plus the information that the state of affairs will not be repeated after the reference point.

16. M. Бегушка и мајка ѝ *веќе*⁴ не беа сиромашни. (BK: 72)
E. Betuska and her mother were *never* poor *again*. (VK: 72)

Therefore, the English translation uses the collocation *never again*.

5. Concessive use of *still* / *сè уште*

The temporal *still* and *сè уште* further developed their meaning and they are used with concessive or adversative meaning. The development of the concessive or adversative sense of *still* and *сè уште* results from the basic idea of continuation of a certain state of affairs that persists in spite of a certain adversative activity. Consequently, the meaning of *still* and *сè уште* strongly integrates the two senses – the temporal and the concessive sense.

17. E. I studied all night, and I *still* don't understand it.
M. Учев цела ноќ и *сè уште/сепак* не го разбираам (материјалот).
18. E. Mary has starved herself for a month, and she's *still* 20 kilos overweight.
M. Марија гладува цел месец и *сè уште/сепак* има 20 кила повеќе.

⁴ In the example 16. *веќе* can be replaced by the synonym *повеќе*.

The English sentences 17. and 18. containing *still* might be interpreted as ambiguous since *still* can be interpreted with the temporal meaning ‘continuation of the activity through time’ or with a concessive or adversative meaning ‘the activity persisted in spite of the effort involved’. In other words, in spite of studying all night and starving for a month, the outcome was a disaster.

That there is an ambiguity within the sense of *still* is confirmed by the fact that Macedonian equivalents of *still* in the previous examples can be both *çè yuume* and *çenak*. *Çè yuume* is primarily used with temporal sense, while *çenak* is primarily used with adversative sense. The possibility of using both *çè yuume* and *çenak* as equivalents of *still* confirms the fact that temporal and adversative senses are strongly incorporated in the meaning of *still*.

Probably, the most acceptable interpretation of this use of *still* is offered by Norvig (1988), who states that the temporal and adversative understanding of *still* are mutually compatible and that the interpreter does not need to resolve the ambiguity in favour of one or the other reading. Macedonian translations confirm this view because both temporal *çè yuume* and adversative *çenak* are acceptable.

The same solution can be offered for *çè yuume*. Although it primarily expresses the temporal sense *çè yuume* conveys the sense of a persistence of the event in spite of the arguments against it, so the temporal and adversative senses are mutually compatible. This conclusion is based on the fact that *çè yuume* appears only when temporal and concessive senses are integrated.

Yet, *still* can appear with a true concessive or adversative meaning. This use of *still* focuses on the element of persistence of the activity in spite of the existence of certain reasonable counterarguments.

19. E. John beats his dog. *Still* he is a nice guy.

М. Јован го тепа своето куче. Сепак, тој е фино момче.

The only possible Macedonian equivalent is *çenak*. *Çenak* introduces an event that is opposed to what has previously been confirmed as a fact or persistence of an event in spite of the arguments against it. (In spite of the fact that he beats his dog, he is a nice guy.) The use of *çenak* as the only equivalent of *still* confirms the fact that *still* is not ambiguous in the above example as it contains only the adversative sense.

In the sentences 17. and 18, where the temporal and adversative senses are compatible and where the possible Macedonian equivalent is *çè yume*, the aspect in the sentences is imperfective. This is natural for Macedonian as *çè yume* emphasizes the continuation of the event in time or persistent existence of the event through time.

Michaelis (1996:206) states that temporal *still* codes the continuation of an imperfective process from one moment to the next while concessive or adversative *still* codes the persistence of an outcome (or state of affairs) from one set of circumstances to another. Therefore in the example 20 *still* codes the persistence of the outcome the state of affairs. The Macedonian equivalents are *çè yume/cenak*.

20. E. Even if the political climate was improved the times would *still* be difficult in Israel.

М. Дури и да се подобри политичката клима, времињата *çè yume/cenak* би биле тешки во Израел.

This means that both particles express concessiveness or adversity because both of them assert that the outcome of the activity will be negative no matter if the political climate is improved.

Unlike *still*, that has a precisely determined concessive meaning, *çè yume* does not have a precisely determined concessive meaning. The temporal sense prevails but on the basis of translations of the English examples that contain *still* it can be concluded that *çè yume* appears as equivalent which means it can be used in certain contexts with concessive or adversative meaning. Yet, the examples in which *çè yume* appears as the equivalent of *still* are those where the temporal and concessive senses are amalgamated.

The contrastive analysis of Macedonian sentences and their English translations shows that *çè yume*, just like its English counterpart *still*, is used to imply that a certain state of affairs persists in spite of the effort involved.

21. М. Се израдувал царот и им дал една одаја да живеат иако *çè yume* не сакал да го гледа келешот пред очи. (СЧ: 82)

E. The emperor was very happy and he gave them a room in his palace, although he *still* didn't want the bald-headed in front of his eyes. (SC: 82)

22. М. Но котлето со трите дебели ноциња се сврте и потрча по патот со човекот *сè уште* на себе. (БК: 35)
E. But the pot on its three fat little legs turned and ran down the road with the man *still* on top. (VK: 35)

The usage of *сè уште* in the Macedonian sentences is a combination of temporal and concessive meaning, because it refers to the persistence of the activity through time. Hence, we can draw a conclusion that the Macedonian particle *сè уште* has extended its meaning into a concessive or adversative one just like its English counterpart *still*, while at the same time maintaining its basic temporal sense. In the example 21. the concessive meaning of *сè уште* is supported by the usage of the concessive conjunction *иако*.

The English *still* appears as the most frequent translation of *сè уште*.

6. Non-temporal sense – Marginality sense

Still and *already* can be used as scalar particles in non-temporal domains. They establish a relationship between various entities that are comparable to one another. In other words, *still* and *already* are used to rank entities along a scale and to distinguish prototypical cases from peripheral ones on the basis of a certain property.

Michaelis (1996) states that this sense of *still* and *already* was perhaps first noted by the German linguist König who analysed the German particles *noch* and *schon*. Huumo (1997) analysed this sense of *still* and *already* from a cognitive linguistic point of view and he states that this sense is in fact extension of the temporal sense. The temporal sense is the prototypical or core meaning as it orders the locative state of affairs along a continuum or a scale. This prototypical meaning is transferred into a non-temporal domain and construed as ordering various entities along one imagined scale and at the same time the entities are compared and evaluated with the prototypical entity on the same scale. By using *still* and *already* the compared entities are located at the periphery of the scale – while the prototypical entities are located in the central position on the scale. This sense developed from the temporal one because the continuation through time is seen as continuation and extension up to the periphery of one scale. Michaelis (1996) named this sense *marginality sense* or *marginality*

instances within the scalar region. The following sentences are examples of marginality sense.

23. E. Carlisle is *still* in England.
M. Гевгелија е *сè уште* (во) Македонија.
24. E. Dumfries is *already* in Scotland.
M. Евзони е *веќе* (во) Грција.
25. E. Compact cars are *still* fairly safe, while vans are *already* dangerous.
M. Компактните коли се *сè уште* сосема сигурни возила, додека комбињата се *веќе* опасни/несигурни возила.

This sense is named *marginality sense* as the entities are located along the periphery of the scale (marginal elements on the scale) and as such they are compared to entities which are closer to the central part of the scale.

Thus, in the geographical examples 23. and 24. *still* and *already* and the Macedonian equivalents *сè уште* and *веќе* locate the places as marginal instances or peripheral places within the geographical region. The comparison of the place location is carried out in relation to more central places of the same region. In 25, the compact cars are at the end of a scale of safe cars and vans are at the beginning of the scale of dangerous vehicles.

When used with the marginality sense, *still* and *already* usually go in pairs as they locate the entities on two scales which are continuation one of another. While *still* locates the entities at the end of the scalar values, *already* locates the entities at the beginning of the scalar values. Basically, the entities being located by *still* and *already* are close one to another but they belong to two different, but closely connected scales. Therefore, the marginality sense is precisely expressed when they are used together, in pairs, as they complement each other when determining the peripheral location of the entities.

The Macedonian equivalents *сè уште* and *веќе* exhibit absolutely the same marginality sense as their English counterparts. They locate the entity at the periphery of the scale and at the same time the entity is compared with the central member of the category.

26. M. Лекарите се *сè уште* пристојно платени, но *веќе* професорите се слабо платени.

E. Doctors are *still* decently paid, while professors are *already* beyond it.

27. M. На зима, 4 саат е *сè уште* ден, но 5 саат е *веќе* ноќ.

E. In winter, 4 o'clock is *still* a day, but 5 o'clock is already night.

The examples 26.M. and 27.M. prove that *сè уште* and *веќе* are used with the marginality sense, which is based on the core temporal meaning. By using *сè уште* and *веќе* the values are located at the periphery of the scale of values and thus compared with the prototypical values of a certain category.

Sometimes, the scalar particles can cause ambiguity in both languages; i.e. the meaning of *still*, *already*, *сè уште* and *веќе* can be interpreted as examples of either temporal or marginal sense.

28. E. Paul is *still* moderate.

M. Павле е *сè уште* умерен.

In the example 28, *still* and *сè уште* can be interpreted, on the one hand, with temporal meaning stating that individuals maintain their attitude through time and at the same they imply that the attitude might change. On the other hand, *still* and *сè уште* can be interpreted with marginality sense showing that their attitude is at the periphery of a scale of values compared to the neighboring scale of values – his attitude is rather extreme but still moderate compared with the attitude of radicals.

29. E. Peter is *already* radical.

M. Петар е *веќе* радикал.

In the example 29, *already* and *веќе* can be interpreted with temporal meaning stating that individuals maintain the same attitude at the reference point of time plus the information that the attitude happened prior to the expected reference time. Or they can be interpreted with marginality sense stating that the attitude of the individual is at the periphery of the scale compared to the neighboring scale of values – his attitude is regarded as a mild form of radicalism.

7. Conclusion

Taking into account the analysed examples, it can be concluded that English *still* and *already* and Macedonian *çè yume* and *beke* are polysemous lexical units whose prototypical – core meaning is a temporal one. The temporal meaning denotes a continuation of an event through time, and is regarded as a prototypical one because it is the most prominent one and serves as a basis for the development of the other non-temporal senses. The main segment of meaning is the ordering of the components of the event along a temporal scale and serves as a basis for developing the concessive or adversative sense and the marginality sense. The concessive sense is seen as a persistence of an event in spite of a certain adversative activity, while the marginality sense is perceived as a continuation and extension of an event up to the periphery of one scale.

On the basis of the analysed corpus we can conclude that the scalar particles in Macedonian have the same or at least similar semantic networks. Macedonian *çè yume* and *beke* have:

1. **Temporal meaning.** Both of them denote continuation of an event through time. *Çè yume* focuses on the moment that the event started prior to the reference time and continues to exist through time. *Beke* focuses on the fact that the event started prior to the expected reference time and continues to exist through time. Both *çè yume* and *beke* cancel the presupposition that another event might have taken place.
2. **Ambiguous temporal meaning.** Temporal *beke* can be interpreted in two different ways: ‘as early as’ or ‘as late as’. To disambiguate the ambiguity, addressees rely on the perspective when determining the time of the event.
3. **‘Persistence and irritation’ meaning.** *Beke* expresses irritation out of the persistence of the event through time. This sense of *beke* is not part of the semantic network of *already*.
4. **Concessive meaning.** *Çè yume* has concessive and adversative meaning but only when temporal and adversative senses are mutually compatible. When *still* is used with true adversative sense the only Macedonian equivalent is *çenak* which confirms the fact that *çè yume* has not developed a full adversative sense. This is the only instance where *still* and *çè yume* do not overlap in meaning.

5. **Marginality meaning.** *Cè yuime* and *veke* express the location of an event at the periphery of a scale and at the same time they compare the event with the central member of the same scale.

The Macedonian particles have extended their meanings in the same way as the English particles. The overlap of the semantic networks of the English and Macedonian particles confirms the fact that there is always a cognitive motivation behind each extension of meaning. Both languages perceive the continuation in time as a persistence through time in spite of the adversative activity or the effort involved, or they perceive it as an extension of the continuation to the upper or periphery boundary of a scale. As one of the aims of this analysis is to shed some new light on the uses of the particles in Macedonian, we can conclude that the contrastive analysis helped us to identify precisely the concessive and the marginality sense of the Macedonian particles *cè yuime* and *veke*.

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Received: 10 July, 2013

Accepted for publication: 25 October, 2013

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ПОЛИСЕМИЈА ЕНГЛЕСКИХ ПАРТИКУЛА *STILL* И *ALREADY* И ЊИХОВИХ МАКЕДОНСКИХ ЕКВИВАЛЕНАТА *СÈ УШТЕ* AND *ВЕЌЕ*

Сажетак

Циљ овог рада је, прво, да се испита широк спектар значења и употреба енглеских партикула *still* и *already* и њихових македонских еквивалената *сè уште* и *веќе* и да се утврде одговарајуће зракасте мреже. Други циљ рада је да се на основу контрастирања посматраних партикула додатно осветле значењске мреже македонских партикула. Посматране партикуле су у оба језика изразито вишезначне језичке јединице и као такве представљају проблем за одређивање прототипичног значења које лежи у основи широког распона њихових употреба. У овом раду фокус је на појму времена као најрелевантнијем појму за тумачење различитих значења пос-

матраних партикула. Показује се да је управо појам времена пресудан за прототипична значења енглеских партикула *still* и *already* и њихових македонских еквивалената *сè уште* и *веќе*.

Кључне речи: скаларне партикуле, темпорално значење, адверсативно значење, концесивно значење, значење маргиналности