LINGUISTICS
I.
SECTION I. THEORY OF LANGUAGE

A.V. Korneeva®   <u>**Does the category of verbal aspect exist in the Spanish language?**</u>

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Abstract. The pertinence of the topic stems from the fact that there is no single point of view on the category of verbal aspect in the Spanish language among grammarians. The very existence of this category is often denied by scientists. The problems are caused by the confusion of grammatical concepts of tense and aspect of verbs, as well as by different interpretations of conveying aspectual meanings in Spanish. The purpose of this article is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the grammatical category of verbal aspect in Spanish, which can be useful both for translators and for teachers working with Spanish-speaking students. In this study, we consider concepts of well-known scientists, as well as the collective works by authors of the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language, regarding the category of verbal aspect.

In Spanish studies, the category of verbal aspect is debatable. The very existence of this category in Spanish is often questioned. The ramified system of tenses in Spanish, owing its origin to Latin, gives reason to assert that the category of tense is of paramount importance among the verbal categories of the Spanish language. However, a strong relationship between the category of tense and the verbal aspectual meanings in Spanish can be noted. The aspectual and temporal forms of the Spanish language are divided according to their morphological structure, temporal correlation, and aspectual characteristics. The categories of aspect and tense in grammarians' studies have gone through three stages: the stage of "traditional grammar" in its classical period, the stage of traditional grammar immediately before the spread of structuralism, and the modern stage. At the last stage, there is a clear decrease in the value of temporality as a structuring element of the verbal system, and the category of aspect is becoming increasingly important; there are contemporary theories that considerably reduce the role of the category of tense. Three ways of conveying aspectual meanings in Spanish are described in the article: the lexical aspect (aspecto lexico), or the mode of action (modo de accion); the syntactic (aspecto sintactico), or periphrastic aspect (aspecto perifrastico); the morphological aspect (aspecto morfologico). The following research methods are used in the article: theoretical analysis, synthesis, comparison, analysis of scientific

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and methodological literature on the grammatical category of verbal aspect in Spanish. As a result of our work, we conclude that the Spanish verbal system has ample opportunities to convey a wide variety of aspectual meanings, but at the same time it is considered in close connection with the category of tense and in some cases is not singled out by scientists into a separate grammatical category.

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Introduction

The grammatical category of verbal aspect in Spanish is very controversial and generates a discord among grammarians. This fact was indicated both by Russian (Vasilyeva-Shvede O.K., Vinogradov V.S., Gorbova E.V., Miloslavsky I.G., Stepanov V.G., Tseplinskaya Yu.E., etc.) and international researchers (Aparicio E., Boske I., Vendler Z., Comrie B., Rojo G., Fernandez L.G. and others). Thus, in some studies on Spanish verb the very existence of this category in the Spanish language is in question. "There is no consensus on the question whether the category of verbal aspect in Romano-Germanic languages exists or not; it was discussed more widely in relation to Germanic languages than in relation to Romanic languages" (Vasilieva-Shvede, 1971: 195).

The Spanish linguists who made a great contribution to the publication of grammar by the Spanish Royal Academy (Real Academia Espanola, RAE), Ignacio Bosque Munoz and Violeta Demonte Barreto did not dedicate any of their 78 chapters to the verbal aspect (Moreno de Alba, 2003: 74). In Spanish,

"recognition of the verbal aspect category as such is considered unjustified, and the various aspectual meanings that appear in the forms of verb tenses are interpreted as a secondary effect of tense meanings" (Alimova, 2010: 60). At the same time, "the absence of the formally expressed grammatical category of verbal aspect in the Spanish language is compensated by various means. Verbal meanings are inherent primarily in Spanish verb tenses" (Vinogradov, Miloslavsky, 1986: 94).

Indeed, the ramified system of verb tenses in Spanish, owing its origin to Latin, gives reason to assert that the category of verb tense is of paramount importance among the verb categories of the Spanish language. Alexandre Veiga notes that grammatical interpretations and descriptions on certain temporal and aspectual contents assigned to the Spanish verb are not always appropriate and "some aspectual characterizations [^] disregard the reality of specific uses of certain forms and are concomitant with temporal characterizations" (Veiga, 2015: 119). It is not possible to deny the specific meanings of the verb as such. We can notice a strong

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relationship between the category of tense and the verbal aspectual meanings in Spanish. Thus, examining the grammatical category of Preterito Imperfecto, Elena Gaspar Garc^a analyzes the unique meanings of this tense from the point of view of the verbal and lexical aspects (Gaspar Garc^a, 2015: 76-86). M.V. Alimova notes that "the category of verbal aspect in Spanish is conveyed through a system of forms and meanings of tenses, which include the concepts of the limited / unlimited time of action, its duration and momentariness, multiplicity and timeliness, limitation and non-limitation, i.e. through the elements of aspectuality" (Alimova, 2010: 57). Further we will analyze the ways of transferring aspectual meanings in the Spanish language.

Main part

The purpose of this article is to conduct a comprehensive analysis of the grammatical category of aspect and to identify ways of conveying aspectual meanings in Spanish.

Materials and Methods

The category of verbal aspect in Spanish has been described and discussed in the works of Aparicio E., Bosque I., Comrie B., Demonte V., Fernandez L.G., Gili Gaya S., Gonzalez V., Rojo G., Vendler Z., Westerholm D. and others. Also, a number of Russian scientists devoted their works to the grammatical category in Spanish: Alimova M.V., Gorbova E.V., Miloslavsky I.G., Stepanov V.G., Tseplinskaya Yu.E., Vasilyeva-Shvede O.K., Vinogradov V.S., and others. In the course of this work, we will analyze some important scientists' concepts concerning the category of Spanish verbal aspect.

In the article, we used the following **research methods**: theoretical analysis, synthesis, comparison, analysis of scientific and methodological literature concerning the category of aspect in Spanish.

Talking about the system of verbal aspect and tenses in the Spanish language, grammarians use such terms as "temporality and aspect" *("temporalidad y aspecto" -*

Guillermo Rojo) and "the aspectual-temporal system" (E.V. Gorbova).

According to Gramatica Nueva (2009: 1675-1680) the aspect and tense forms of the Spanish language are divided according to the following principle:

1) according to the morphological structure: simple (*simples*) and analytical (*compuestos*) forms are distinguished; analytical forms are formed by combining the auxiliary verb *haber* with a participle formed from a semantic verb;

2) according to the temporal correlation: there are absolute (*absolutos*) and relative / taxis *(relativos)* aspect and tense forms;

3) according to the aspectual characteristics: perfect *(perfectos)* and imperfect *(imperfectos)* tense forms are distinguished.

As reported by Guillermo Rojo (Rojo, 1988: 195-201), the grammatical categories of aspect (aspecto) and tense (temporalidad) have always been considered in interconnection, both in studies of Latin and Romanic languages in general, and of Spanish in particular. Speaking specifically about the Spanish language, these categories in grammar research have gone through three stages.

The first of these stages is that of "traditional grammar" in its classical period (describing this stage, Guillermo Rojo refers to the editions by the Royal Academy of the Spanish language on grammar before 1917). At this stage, grammarians structure the verbal system into two main categories: mood and tense, since voice, person and number operate in areas different from these categories and do not form the basis of the structural system. The category of verbal aspect was not yet featured at that time. Of course, grammarians talk about "preteritos imperfectos, perfectos y pluscuamperfectos" (the imperfect tenses, perfect tenses and pluperfect tenses), as well as "futuros imperfectos y perfectos" (imperfect and perfect future tenses), and generally, these terms denote the complete or incomplete nature of a situation, which is expressed by

the verb form. However, this does not imply aspect as a grammatical category. Thus, in accordance with Guillermo Rojo , "it can be assumed that at this stage there are only two categories that play an important role in the configuration of the verbal system: mood and tense" (Rojo, 1988: 196).

The second stage occurs at the stage of traditional grammar just before the spread of structuralism. This stage is reflected in publications by the Royal Academy of the Spanish Language (GRAE) after 1917, including The Essay (el Esbozo), by Gili Gaya, and others. In general, the authors of that time already consider three categories that play an important role in structuring the verb system: mood, tense and aspect. Guillermo Rojo believed that the main reason for introducing the third category was the existence of differences between completed and not yet completed action. That is, the question arose how to distinguish the notions that had previously been designated by a broader concept (category of tense), and how to allocate a separate category (Rojo, 1988: 197).

However, by separating the aspect as an independent category of the Spanish verb, grammarians did not solve all the problematic issues. For example, Gili Gaia noted that the Academy "confuses the concept of perfectiveness (perfeccion) of an action with the time of its completion" (Gili, 1961: 291). Guillermo Rojo believed that even greater difficulties were caused by the fact that the Academy considered *llegue,* the form of the simple past tense of the verb *llegar* (to arrive), to be a perfect form, which completely violated the symmetry of the system, since this form is simple, not perfect, and it cannot be opposed to the corresponding complex form On this basis, the Academy calls this consideration "indefinite", because the verb "sometimes expresses the beginning of an action, and sometimes its completion, depending on the meaning of the verb" (Rojo, 1988: 197).

According to Guillermo Rojo, the traditional view of the structure and functionality of the Spanish verb is inflexible and hierarchical, because it suggests a sequence of categories. The Spanish verb system has a specific structure: voice, moods, tenses, aspects, persons and numbers. Thus, each mood should include forms of a present, past and future tense, each tense group - perfect and imperfect forms, etc. (Rojo, 1988, pp. 195, 198).

Speaking about the third stage of the verbal system, Guillermo Rojo states that the spread of structural approaches in Romanic linguistics in general, and in Spanish in particular coincided with a clear decline in the importance of temporality as a structuring element of the verbal system. Moreover, the category of aspect "occupied the territory that, to a significant extent, had been taken away from temporality". Guillermo Rojo emphasizes that the categories of aspect and tense are undoubtedly two different categories, but they are closely related to each other, so that any expansion of the field of application of one of them will most likely result in a decrease in the influence of the other (Rojo: 1988: 199). The grammarian noted that in the traditional concept the factors of temporality which influenced the verb were exceedingly associated with the extralinguistic concepts of the present, past and future. This connection gave rise to insurmountable contradictions. For example, the form "de preterito" ("past tense") should describe situations that precede the time of speech, but can refer to present or future situations, and a verb in the future tense can refer to the present, for example: *Tendra (ahora) veinte anos.* The verb "tener" in the future tense here means "must be": He must be (now) twenty years old (example by Rojo, 1988: 200).

Thus, "the traditionally used labels "past", "present" and "future" are inadequate, on the one hand, and insufficient, on the other hand. They are inadequate because they associate a grammatical concept with extra-grammatical categories. They are insufficient, because they cannot reflect the temporal

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relations expressed by Spanish verbal forms" (Rojo, 1988: 202).

According to Guillermo Rojo, the stated above and other contradictions in the traditional system in the last thirty years have led to the introduction of various theories that greatly reduced the role of the category of tense. They can be arranged into two large groups:

a) On the one hand, this is the way followed first by Benveniste and later by Weinrich. A common factor for both of them is the creation of two groups of verbal forms (history and discourse in the first case, commentary forms and narrative forms in the second case). This distribution is the great organizing principle of the system for both authors.

b) According to the other branch, a verb has so-called "levels, or plans of reality". It was formulated already by Damourette and Pichon and reworked by Burger in 1961, and later adopted by Pottier and Lam^quiz. Independently, but in much the same way, Coseriu regards "plans of reality" as one of the most characteristic factors of the Romanic verbal system (Rojo, 1988: 200).

Guillermo Rojo, however, notes that with regard to the category of aspect, recent developments basically have not brought important innovations. Despite the fact that Coseriu and his followers made a lot of efforts to establish differences in aspectual meanings, the category of aspect is still not a clearly defined concept on which there is a consensus. On the contrary, the countless definitions of aspect that have been given in recent years and the almost endless classes and subclasses that have been proposed suggest that we are dealing with a category in need of strong revision, at least in Romance languages.

"The innumerable definitions of aspect, the huge number of different and contradictory classes and subclasses accumulated by linguists, or the paradoxical definition of some verb forms as perfective, and others as imperfective, indicate that we are dealing with a misunderstood category.

Indeed, [...] Latinists and Romanists disagreed on this issue, considering it in a wide range of possibilities, coming to the conclusion about the great structuring principle of the verb, or denying its functionality, and at the same time they passed all conceivable intermediate stages" (Rojo, 1988: 204).

Characterizing the categories of tense and aspect of the Spanish verb, E.V. Gorbova notes that "unfortunately, it is not possible to talk about any tradition in describing the structure of the aspectual and temporal system in the Spanish language, as well as about the tradition of using aspectological terminology in studies based on this language" (Gorbova, 2012:   153). The author examines the aspectual and temporal system of the Spanish language, relying on the concept of binary grammatical opposition. At which point it is noted that binarity is interpreted either as an opposition of perfective and imperfective (this approach is typical for describing aspectuality in the Russian language, meaning perfective and imperfective aspect), or perfectiveness and imperfectiveness (which implies that there are two zones in aspectuality which contain a variety of partially different aspectual meanings) (Gorbova, 2012: 149-150).

E.V. Gorbova identifies the following main trends in the analysis of the aspectual and temporal domain (Gorbova, 2012: 156-157):

1. The tradition of distinguishing an aspectual opposition of the temporal verb forms in Spanish (Gramatica 1931; Rojo 1988, 1990; Rojo, Veiga 1999; Weinrich 1974). The authors believe that the aspectual meanings of the tense forms of the Spanish verb are derived from the temporal values.

2. The position of "lexical aspectuality" (Bello 1951; De Miguel 1999; Nueva Gramatica 2009). There are two significant groups of verbs: terminative verbs and non-terminative verbs.

3. The point of view that recognizes only one opposition: Imperfect - Aorist (Westerholm 2010).

4. The tendency to consider peripheral constructions, in particular, *estar + gerundio,* as the central component of the aspectuality of the Spanish language (Dietrich 1973; Bosque , Demonte 1999; Nueva Gramatica 2009; Vasilieva-Shvede 1957; Vasilieva-Shvede, Stepanov 1963, 1990).

E. V. Gorbova emphasizes that these concepts are almost not presented in their pure form and that they are not mutually exclusive. The author also points out some concepts of other authors (V.I. Siletsky, A.A. Pravdzivy, B. Comrie, etc.) thereby confirming her own words: "the presence of aspectuality (as a set of very different means of expressing "the internal time" of a situation) in Spanish verb is not questioned, but opinions on the question of the structure of these means, on determination of their status can be very different" (Gorbova, 2012: 154).

E. V. Gorbova proposes a multilevel model for describing the aspectuality in Spanish by distinguishing three binary grammatical aspect oppositions: Imperfect - Aorist, Perfect - Nonperfect, Progressive - Non-progressive (Gorbova, 2012: 163).

The New Grammar Manual (Manual de la Nueva Gramatica de la Lengua Espanola: 2010) states that the question of amount of the category of verbal aspect in Spanish is controversial. According to this manual, the verbal aspect (el aspecto verbal) has the following characteristics: it informs about the internal structure of events, allows us to know whether they begin, end or repeat; whether they are perceived as an action from beginning to end, or it is an action that occurs only in a specific moment in time, i.e. which is incomplete. The verbal aspect, therefore, affects the internal time (tiempo interno) of the situation, but not its relationship with the moment of speech.

Taking this quality in consideration, the aspect is also characterized as a grammatical means that allows you to focus on some components of situations, and at the same time hide or skip others. In support of what was said in the manual, two sentences are given to compare: *Arturo lee elperiddico* and *Arturo estd leyendo el periddico* (Manual de la Nueva Gramatica de la Lengua Espanola: 2010: 430). These phrases are translated accordingly as: "Arthur reads the newspaper" and "Arthur is reading the newspaper". The first sentence shows repetition of the action being performed, while the second one indicates the fact that the action is taking place at this particular moment. It is emphasized that the difference in these two statements is not in the tense (since the verb "leer" is used in both cases in the present tense), but in the aspect.

According to New Grammar Manual (Manual de la Nueva Gramatica de la Lengua Espanola, 2010, p. 430), the verbal aspect in Spanish is traditionally divided into three groups:

1) The lexical aspect (aspecto lexico) or the mode of action (modo de accion) , which is also called the quality of action (cualidad de la accion accionalidad);

2) syntactic (aspecto sintactico) or periphrastic aspect (perifrastico);

3) morphological aspect (aspecto morfologico or desinencial).

It should be noted that in scientific publications there are also other definitions related to these groups. Thus, the lexical aspect is called the German term Aktionsart; the morphological aspect is sometimes called verbal or inflectional (flexivo) (Gonzalez, Alberto, 2017: 130).

We shall consider these groups in more detail.

The lexical aspect is conveyed by meaning of the predicate. Thus, a verb can describe both a long-term situation (situacion durativa) and a punctual situation in time (situacion puntual): the sentence *Luis vivid en Caracas* (Luis lived/was living in Caracas) is opposed by the authors to the sentence *Luis llegd a Caracas* (Luis arrived at Caracas), where the verb "llegar" expresses a punctual action, and the verb "vivir" is an action extended in time.

The syntactic or periphrastic aspect corresponds to verbal paraphrases, first of all

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to phasal ones (de fase, fasales), as well as aspectual and temporal (tempoaspectuales), sequential (escalares) and gerundial (las de gerundio) (Manual de la Nueva Gramatica de la Lengua Espanola, 2010: 430).

The term "a verbal paraphrase" means "a verbal construction". In Spanish, there is a large number of verbal paraphrases. Most of them have aspectual meaning. In paraphrases with aspectual meanings the semantics of the auxiliary verb is important. Such paraphrases are often formed with verbs denoting movement, change of place in space. Periphrases are usually grouped according to the principle of semantic meaning. Thus, inchoate paraphrases (per^frasis incoativas) mean the beginning of action (for example, comenzar a / ponerse a / echarse a / romper a + infinitive, etc.); terminative periphrases (per^firasis terminativas) mean the moment the action ends (for example, acabar de / terminar de / llegar a + infinitive, etc.), etc.

The morphological aspect is expressed with the help of verbal endings. It implies the grammatical tradition of dividing tenses into perfect (perfectos) and imperfect (imperfectos), although now more often it is said about the perfective (perfectivos) and imperfective (imperfectivos) tenses.

The perfective aspect (some authors call it the aorist) focuses on situations in general, from beginning to end, and presents them as completed or finished. For example: *Vimos la pelicula* (We watched the movie.) The exception is inchoate (incoativo), or ingressive (ingresivo), which only indicates the beginning of a situation, for example: *Vimos la pelicula a las nueve* (We started watching the movie at nine o'clock).

The perfective aspect is expressed by the following forms (using the example of the verb "sing"): cante (Preterito Indefinido - the simple past tense describing a completed action), hab^a cantado (Preterito Pluscuamperfecto - the pluperfect tense which describes an action that occurred before another action in the past), habre cantado (Futuro Perfecto - the future perfect tense, showing an action that must be completed before another action in the future).

The imperfect forms "canto" (Presente de Indicativo - the present simple) and "cantaba" (Preterito Imperfecto - the imperfect tense) show an action in its process without any reference to its beginning or end, for example: *Arturo leia una novela* (Arthur read/was reading a novel) as opposed to *Arturo leyo una novela* (Arthur has read a novel.) The forms "cantare" (Futuro Imperfecto - the future simple tense) and "cantar^a" (Condicional Simple - the simple conditional mood tense) can be perfective tenses in some contexts, for example, *Proximo numero de nuestra revista saldra el 17 de julio* (The next issue of our magazine will have come out on July 17), and imperfective - in other contexts, for example, *Todos viviremos mejor* (We will all live better). Also, in the Manual de Nueva Grammatica it is said that the imperfective aspect has three varieties: progressive (progresiva), iterative (iterativa) or cyclical (c^dica), constant (continua) (Manual de la Nueva Gramatica de la Lengua Espanola, 2010: 430-431).

Vasquez Gonzalez tends towards radical changes and insists on distinguishing between grammatical categories of tense and aspect: he proposes to cease using the terms "perfect" and "imperfect" (which are also used to characterize the tenses) and to introduce the terms "continuous" and "discontinuous" in relation to Spanish aspect (Vasquez Gonzalez 2017: 127-161).

Results and Discussion

It is obvious that the grammatical system of the Spanish language is capable of conveying imperfective and perfective meanings in various ways. It should also be noted that along with the imperfective and the perfective aspects, some authors point out the perfect aspect, but other authors believe that it is a kind of the perfective one. The perfect aspect refers to a situation that is the result of a previous process. Thus, the phrase "El director ya se ha marchado /^ ya se marcho" (Director has already left) implies that "the

director is no longer here", which means that the fact that the director is absent is the result of the fact that he has already left. The so-called perspective aspect (aspecto prospectivo) is characteristic of the paraphrase ir a + infinitive.

Emphasizing the fact that grammarians often interpret the aspectual and temporal system of the Spanish language in different ways, it should also be noted that "in Spanish studies there is a long "tradition" of mixing on the semantic level within the concept of "aspect" what is usually called the verbal aspect, that is, aspecto verbal (grammatical verbal category), and modes of action, *modos de accion,* which can be expressed lexically (sometimes even in the lexeme of the verb itself), lexico-grammatically (for example, derivationally), grammatically (primarily by numerous periphrases with aspectual meanings) and syntactically (for example, by the argument structure). [^] The situation is further complicated by the fact that the verb form expressed by the same morphemes as tense is often confused with the latter" (Tseplinskaya, 2016: 26).

Conclusions

From the above, we conclude that although the Spanish verb system has ample opportunities to convey a wide variety of aspectual meanings, there are many contradictions and interpretations in its description and classification. The grammatical category of verbal aspect is considered in close connection with the category of tense, and in a number of cases is not singled out by Hispanists as a separate grammatical category.

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