

Diachronic Universals and the Future Marker Position in Ukrainian

The relationship between the distribution of morphemes in a word and word order in a language has received considerable attention in different areas of linguistic research (Givon 1971, Comrie 1980, Baker 1985, Hawkins & Gilligan 1988, Roberts 1993 *inter alia*). Some linguists (e.g., Siewierska & Bakker 1996) suggested that the formal realization of morphemes can be better accounted for with the Diachronic Syntax Universal as stated by Givon (1971): there is a direct correspondence between “today’s morphology” and “yesterday’s syntax” in terms of the basic order of constituents. Comrie (1980), however, argued that *the morpheme order X-Y could derive from a non-basic word order X-Y, when the basic word order was Y-X*.

Numerous examples of the change *lexical word* => *morpheme* come from future tense forms. The inflectional (also termed synthetic) future can be found in several Indo-European languages, such as Irish, Latvian, Lithuanian and Romance languages (Dahl 2000). Among Slavic languages only Ukrainian exhibits a fully grammaticalized future structurally similar to the more famous Romance future. Each grammatical form is derived from two words: the infinitive of the main verb and present tense forms of ‘have’ (e.g., 1).

The goal of the present paper is to explore the Ukrainian synthetic imperfective future formation in order to argue that Givon’s position, interpreted strictly, is not universally acceptable and suggest that Comrie’s hypothesis provides a more accurate account for the position of the future marker.

Contemporary Standard Ukrainian (CSU) has the future marker as a suffix, and thus exhibits the Verb+Affix order of morphemes. Accepting Givon’s claim would relate the order of morphemes in the modern imperfective future to the analogical basic order of constituents in Old Ukrainian, which is predicted to be VAux. Although it is true that Old Ukrainian and Old East Slavic (OES), from which it descends, had this word order, it was not the only order used in the languages. Examination of Ukrainian future formation shows that there is no clear evidence allowing us to state that at any time before the consistent use of morpho-syntactically bound imperfective future in the 17th century Ukrainian had a basic VAux order.

First of all, even the oldest OES manuscripts do not show a consistent VAux order (e.g., 2). Furthermore, AuxV constituents with possibility, obligation, inevitability, and future event meaning have been commonly used throughout the history of Ukrainian hand in hand with VAux (examples in 3 and 4). And most important, at the time of the fusion of the future marker with the lexical word to form one morphological unit, both orders AuxV and VAux were available in the language (examples in 5 and 6). Moreover, Marčylo’s (1999) examination of historical sources from the 15th century reveals that right before the appearance of the first written examples with inflectional future, the majority of the forms with future meaning in texts from this period had the auxiliary preceding the lexical word. Likewise, in modern Western Ukrainian dialects where the process of grammaticalization of the future marker to an affix remains at the unbounded stage, the word order of auxiliary relative to the verb has two possibilities: AuxV or VAux, although their placement before the verb (as in 7) is highly prevailing.

Therefore, predictions based on Givon’s hypothesis are not supported by the facts from the development of the Ukrainian imperfective future: attested syntactic structures from all diachronic stages do not show a preference for VAux order. Comrie (1980), on the other hand, offers a better explanation of the phenomenon since he limits his hypothesis to only one possible word order (and not necessarily the basic one) from which at a particular historical stage morphological constituent was developed.

Examples:

- (1) a. Latin: (ego) *cantare habeo* ‘I have to sing’ => French: *je chanterai* ‘I will sing’.
b. OES: vsi **imutъ** tvoritъ ‘everyone has to create’ => CSU: vsi tvority**mut** ‘everyone will create’.
- (2) Cy **imutъ** ima-ti i na nas danъ i na iněxъ stranaхъ
these have.3PL have-INF and on us tribute and on other countries
‘They have to /will have tribute from us and from other countries’ (PVL, 12th; M:80)
- (3) I potomъ xto ne **imetъ** xodi-ti, tot imetъ dava-ti svjatomu Nikole vesъ doходъ
and later who not have.3SG go-INF that have.3SG give-INF Saint Nikola all income
‘And later, those who will not go, has to give to St Nikola all his income’ (P.,1362-1392; M:92)
- (4) Какъ izdavna u lěsъ xodili takъ i nině xodi-ti **imějutъ**
as earlier in forest go.PAST so and now go-INF have.3PL
‘As earlier they used to go to the forest, so now also they can/will go’ (R.,1433; M:92)
- (5) A v nebě **mě-ti** **meš** koronu
and in heaven have-INF FUT CL.2SG crown
‘And you will have a crown in heaven’ (UP, 16th c; M:99)
- (6) Oni umrutъ u hrěxoxъ, ta potymъ **mutъ** bažě-ty vydъ našъ dušě ixъ
they die.FUT in sins and then FUT CL.3SG wish-INF from us souls their
‘They will die in sin and then will want their souls back’ (SUM 16-17th, 2,10)
- (7) Biljavka koho xoče, toho **me** **ljuby-ty**
blond who.ACC want that.ACC FUT CL.3SG love-INF
‘A blond girl will love who she wants’ (Folk song <http://www.zakarpatia.rv.ua>)

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