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СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

ЯЗЫКОЗНАНИЕ	6
<i>Efremov D. A., Selmeczy S.</i> The Comparative and the Superlative in Udmurt and Hungarian (<i>Ефремов Д. А., Шелмеци Ш.</i> Компаратив и суперлатив в удмуртском и венгерском языках)	6
<i>Tóth S. J.</i> The Image of the World in Slovak and Hungarian Grammaticalised Categories (<i>Тот Ш. Я.</i> Образ мира в грамматикализованных категориях словацкого и венгерского языков)	15
ФОЛЬКЛОРИСТИКА	28
<i>Крашенинникова Ю. А., Низовцева С. Г.</i> Рождественские обходы в русских традициях горнозаводских поселений Республики Коми (в записях XXI в.)	28
ЛИТЕРАТУРОВЕДЕНИЕ	44
<i>Казакова М. В.</i> Поэтическая география в билингвальной лирике А. И. Мишина (Олега Мишина – Армаса Хийри) 1990-х годов	44
<i>Ванюшев В. М., Степанова Т. С.</i> Жанровая синкретичность художественной прозы Г. Е. Верещагина. К проблеме генезиса удмуртской литературы	54
ИСТОРИЯ, АРХЕОЛОГИЯ, ЭТНОГРАФИЯ	65
<i>Егоров А. В., Загребин А. Е.</i> Бернат Мункачи, война, мир и финно-угорские исследования	65
<i>Туранов А. А.</i> К истории первых вятских переводов христианских текстов на марийский язык	80
<i>Пузанов Д. В.</i> Расправы над колдунами в Поволжье и Прибалтике и социально-политические процессы XII–XIII вв.	88
<i>Анисимов Н., Тулуз Е.</i> Современное бытование обряда вӧсьнерге в д. Варклед-Бодья Агрызского района Республики Татарстан (по материалам экспедиции 2017 года)	101
<i>Сухова М. В.</i> Бесермяне в представлениях и описаниях удмуртов: некоторый опыт наблюдения этнических стереотипов	115
КУЛЬТУРА, ИСКУССТВО	125
<i>Хрущева М. Г.</i> О камерной симфонии Александра Корепанова	125
<i>Мацевский И. В.</i> Традиционный инструментализм в этнической истории: балто-финно-угорский и тюрко-славянский аспекты	141
ИНФОРМАЦИЯ	161
<i>Иванов В. А., Попова Е. В.</i> Обзор работы Всероссийской научной конференции с международным участием «Язык, история, культура бесермян: состояние и перспективы исследований»	161
ЮБИЛЕИ.....	171
<i>Ельцова Е. В., Горинова Н. В.</i> Жизнь, отданная науке (к 85-летию В. А. Латышевой)	171
Указатель статей и материалов, опубликованных в 2018 году в «Ежегоднике финно-угорских исследований»	175

CONTENTS

LINGUISTICS	6
<i>Efremov D. A., Selmeczy S.</i> The Comparative and the Superlative in Udmurt and Hungarian	6
<i>Tóth S. J.</i> The Image of the World in Slovak and Hungarian Grammaticalised Categories	15
FOLKLORISTICS	28
<i>Krashennnikova Yu. A., Nizovtseva S. G.</i> Christmas rounds in the Russian traditions of the mining settlements of the Komi Republic (in records of the XXI century)	28
STUDY OF LITERATURE	44
<i>Kazakova M. V.</i> Poetic geography in bilingual texts by A. I. Mišin (Oleg Mišin – Armas Hiiri) in the 1990s	44
<i>Vanyushev V. M., Stepanova T. S.</i> Genre Syncreticism of G.E. Vereshchagin’s Fictional Prose. To the Problem of Genesis of the Udmurt Literature	54
HISTORY, ARCHAEOLOGY, ETHNOGRAPHY	65
<i>Yegorov A. V., Zagrebin A. Ye.</i> Bernát Munkácsi, War, Peace and the Finno-Ugric Studies	65
<i>Turanov A. A.</i> To the history of the first Vyatka translations of religious texts into Mari language	80
<i>Puzanov D. V.</i> Massacres of Sorcerers in the Volga and Baltic and Socio-Political Processes of the XII–XIII centuries	88
<i>Anisimov N., Toulouze E.</i> The contemporary practice of the ritual “Vös’nerge” in Varkled-Bodya (Agryz district, Republic of Tatarstan) (according to materials from a 2017 expedition)	101
<i>Sukhova M. V.</i> Besermyans in Udmurt Presentations and Descriptions: Some Experience Observing Ethnic Stereotypes	115
CULTURE, ART	125
<i>Khrushcheva M. G.</i> On the Chamber Symphony by Alexander Korepanov	125
<i>Macijewski I. V.</i> Traditional instrumentalism in ethnohistory: Balto-Finno-Ugric and Turkic-Slavic aspects	141
INFORMATION	161
<i>Ivanov V. A., Popova E. V.</i> Overview of the All-Russian Scientific Conference with International Participation «Besermyan Language, History and Culture: State and Prospects of Research»	161
ANNIVERSARIES	171
<i>Eltsova E. V., Gorinova N. V.</i> A Lifetime Dedicated to Science (for the 85th anniversary of V. A. Latysheva)	171
Index of articles and materials published in 2018 in the “Yearbook of the Finno-Ugric Studies”	175

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S. J. Tóth

**THE IMAGE OF THE WORLD IN SLOVAK
AND HUNGARIAN GRAMMATICALISED
CATEGORIES**



Most cognitive linguists focus on lexical semantics in one or more languages from the aspect of culture. Yes, word derivation, especially the motivation of the lexemes shows much from the cognitive base of the linguistic image of the world. However, besides researching lexical semantics in different cultures, it is also possible to find the linguistic image of the world in morphology. In this paper we use the methods of cognitive linguistics and the method of comparing analysis of Slovak and Hungarian morphology – two genetically and typologically different languages in one area.

The outputs of the paper show the cognitive relevancy of what is grammaticalised in the compared languages. The interpretation is based on the theory of linguistic relativity, analogy in bilingual language usage. The conclusion is that long time cultural convergence results in cognitive analogy even in typologically different languages. Bilateral and trilateral symmetry is also an important formal aspect of the stability of the grammaticalised categories: in a bipolar system (e.g. numerus) is the developing of different degrees more possible as in a stabile “triangle-like” grammaticalised category (e.g. Slavic and Finno-Ugric tense). The grammaticalised cognitive domains can be bilateral and trilateral, the study shows which of them differ and which converge in Slovak and Hungarian.

Keywords: linguistic image of the world, morphology, Slovak language, Hungarian language, contrastive grammar, grammaticalised categories

1. Theoretical background and methodology

Two parallel publications of Slovak and Hungarian linguistics [Tolcsvai Nagy 2013, 17; Kyseľová – Ivanová 2013, 7] present the main questions of cognitive linguistics:

(1) How structures of languages are developed on the basis of the knowledge about the world?

(2) What is the relation between discovering the world and its manifestation in language?

(3) How the image of the world appears in certain languages referring to conceptualisation in different cultures?



Cognitive grammar is one of the most transparent and innovative directions of functional linguistics, but Aikhenvald [2007, 6] warns that the total description of the linguistic image of the world is impossible. Giving up the vision to find the spirit of languages according to Humboldt's theory, she considers the reconstruction of cognitive structures by analysing language contacts and comparing of languages for real. From this comparative aspect, Slovak and Hungarian are interesting, because of their genetic and typological differences and areal convergence [Furdík 1976, 83].

Convergence was built by a long time bilingual situation. „Every language interprets the world differently, ... bilingual speakers have the possibility to change these glasses and see the world structured in two versions. The difference between the images can be smaller or bigger, depending on the distance of languages in a cultural sense” [Vaňková 2005, 49–50]. Bilingualism is a base of cognitive transfer: “A person using more than one language in everyday contact, is somewhat different from those using only the mother tongue. ... The language usage of bilinguals, their norms and conventions differ from those who live in a monolingual milieu” [Šenkár 2008, 83].

These statements are confirmed by Hegedús [2012, 219], when he writes about the feeling of strangeness during learning a second language [on xenism in language see Dolník 2015, 13–172]. The sight in a foreign language is meant by Hegedús [2012: 124] as a switching of the images of the world according to the different logic of the other language.

The research fields of the linguistic images of the world have a large diversity. To make them more transparent, here we make two groups of them according to theoretical sources of Slovak and Hungarian linguistics. The two main aspects are: lexical semantics in 1.1. and grammatical conceptualisation in 1.2.

1.1. Ethnolinguistic aspects of meaning – cognitive lexicology

From the multiple manifestations of the linguistic image of the world, the first that even a layman recognises is the different or equal meaning of the words [Hegedús 2012, 197–218]. This cognitive field is about components and paradigm of lexical fields [Danesi 2004, 100–120, Orgoňová – Dolník 2010, 52], e.g.: *ruka* 'hand + arm' is in Slovak polysemic, means *kéz / kar* 'hand / arm' in Hungarian.

Another big topic of the lexical side of the linguistic image of the world is the interlingual aspect of connotative meanings. These kinds of research focus mostly on one word and present a deep semantic analysis. Some examples in Hungarian – Slovak relations: Bańczerowski [2001, 397–407] and Dudová [2017, 33–42]: *earth*, Bańczerowski [2008, 213–228] and Tolcsvai Nagy [2013, 242–246]: *head*, Bańczerowski [2008, 165–180] and Kysel'ová – Ivanová [2013, 161–188]: some feelings. The Slovak – Hungarian relation of the above lexical bits of research is based on the theoretical works of Wierzbicka [1994] and Bartmiński [1999]. The cognitive aspects of lexemes are endless, even more when also phraseology is involved [see Tölgyesi 2017, 303–310] and the lexical level of language is very dynamic, that is why we do not give a deeper reflection on this problematic and focus on morphology.

1.2. Conceptualisation in grammar

The amount of morphemes is countable, but morphemes are more abstract elements, deeper structures of language, whereas dynamic changes and uncountability



are characteristics of the lexical field. Grammar dedicates the conceptual structures of a system [Talmy 2000, 21–22]. Conceptualisation in grammar differs from language to language [Bańcerowski 2010, 155–156; Pokorný 2010, 220–221], the same categories can be expressed with different tools like affixes, accent or word order, etc. depending on the typological features of the given language [Van der Auwera – Nuyts 2007, 1082–1083]. The main question of cognitive grammar is what is grammatically expressed in a given language, e.g. the category of space [Ondrejovič 1997, 157–160; Pokorný 2010, 249–272]. If some grammaticalised categories lack or function otherwise in different languages, we are confronted with the feeling of strangeness. The same reality is expressed different ways, e.g.: *fázom – je mi zima – I'm cold* – the content is the same, the conceptualisation is different [Kövecses – Benczes 2010, 157–158]. The question is why languages categorise the reality exactly in a certain way, not otherwise [Szilágyi N. 1996, 59].

According to Duranti [1997, 174] grammar replicates cognitive relations, so in the reconstruction of the linguistic image of the world, grammar is basic. The claim of Čulenová [2012, 29] is the same: comparing grammaticalised categories is the best method of detecting differences of structures of languages, Karčová [2014, 226] recommends an intercultural scale of the compared grammaticalised categories. Everything that is conceptualised participates in grammar and every language has an individually coded grammatical meaning [Wierzbicka 2014, 420–426].

The above arguments confirm our choice why to compare grammaticalised categories and not lexemes of Slovak and Hungarian in this paper.

1.3. Hypothesis, method

After having theoretically proven that the image of the world appears in grammaticalised categories too, and it is worth comparing them, we sketch the frame of the methods of the present paper. Our research is based on resources of comparative structural grammar of Slovak and Hungarian recently systematised by Misadová [2011, 18–129] and Tóth [2017, 50–241], and on the other hand on cognitive functional grammars of both languages, which are not comparative though: Ladányi [2017: 503–660], Tolcsvai Nagy [2017, 207–499] and Hegedűs [2004, 2018] of Hungarian, resp. Dolník [ed. 2010] and Závodný [2016] of Slovak. It is needed to involve the cognitive aspect, because of the different typological character of Slovak and Hungarian – it is not possible to compare them just structurally, like in the relation of Czech and German [Štícha 2015] or Romanian and Slovak [Luță Tiprișan 2017, 61–76].

We are looking for the answer to how plural, possession, time or gradation is expressed in Slovak and Hungarian and if there is a different conceptual background for them. We measure the degree of xenism or convergence of grammaticalised categories of the both languages.

Our **hypothesis** is that Slovak and Hungarian show many common conceptualisations in grammar, despite their differences in genealogy and typology. The reason is the common image conceptualised in language, which has developed during the long time areal coexistence and cultural convergence.

There is one question of terminology left: The discipline of morphology in Hungarian linguistics traditionally works with the term 'category' in the sense 'parts of

speech', we found only Lotz [1974, 344–347] and Hegedűs [2000, 129–136] to use it with the meaning in germanistics [Forgács 2007; Hegedűs 2010, 210–228] or in Slovak linguistics Kačala [2014]. In this paper *grammatical category* (*gramatická kategória*, *grammatische Kategorie*) means **grammaticalised cognitive domain**. The main question is: what is grammaticalised [see Múcsková 2009, 131–144; Szczepaniak 2017, 39] and how these categories work in Slovak and Hungarian.

2. Grammaticalised categories in Slovak and Hungarian – a cognitive preview

A quantitative description of grammaticalised categories in Slovak and Hungarian is given by Buzássyová [1972, 191–199; 1977, 134–148], Furdík [1977, 21–59] and Szabómihályová [1989, 479–494; 2010, 287–292], but they stopped at presenting nominal categories. Independently of Buzássyová [1977, 142–144] Hegedűs [2010, 214–226] offers comparison of grammaticalised categories of German and Hungarian. Both authors have the same conclusion: in the researched Indo-European languages verbal and nominal categories are divided clearly, but in Hungarian this border is not so well defined. Their claim is that it is a character of Hungarian that categories of person and possession appear on nominal word classes and verbs too (*eszem* 'I eat it' – *könyvem* 'my book' – *mellettem* 'next to me') and also definiteness is a complex verbo-nominal category (*látom az almát* 'I see the apple' – *látok egy almát* 'I see an apple'). Yes, the grammaticalisation of these cognitive aspects are specific for Hungarian, but Slovak also offers the possibility of transferring a category to another word class: number has a thing (noun) and a person (verb) too, in past tense there is congruence between the gender of the noun and the verb (masc. *pracoval* / fem. *pracovala* / neutr. *pracovalo* 'worked'). It means, neither in Slovak is a verbo-nominal category rare. In this paper we offer another concept of categorising grammaticalised categories, then binding them on word classes. Subsequently, the categories are ordered due to their difference from the aspect of the conceptualised image of the world in Slovak and Hungarian. In first place is a category, which is totally different, which represents xenism from the point of view of the other language. Nearing to the end there are more and more convergent categories with less degree of requirement of „switching” those „glasses” [Deutscher 2010] well known by cognitive linguists.

2.1. Gender is an abstract category in Slovak, there is no sense to try to find a reference with real sexus, because it can result in misunderstanding. Speakers of Hungarian, an ageneric language, often ask why *dievča* 'girl' is neutral and *chlapec* 'boy' is masculine. These „why” questions tell much about the difference between the images of the world. Lehečková [2003] analysed gender in Finno-Ugric – Slavic relation with the question: Does category-explicitness have any correspondence in cognition? Gender is a classifying category in Slovak [Krupa 1980, 156–158] – in Hungarian nouns can be also classified (concrete – abstract, animate – inanimate, propriat – appellative), but these aspects of lexical semantics are not grammaticalised. In Slovak even grammaticalisation processes are a reason why this category got far from real sexus [Kačala 2014, 25–28]. Diachrony is notable because a newer subcategory of Slovak masculine nouns (animate – inanimate) is still bound with reality.



Although classic grammars mention 3 genders, Slovak gender system can be symbolised not as triangle but as a straight having two end points: masculine and feminine. Between these extremes there is the neutrum and the living masculine. Neutrum takes the suffixes from masculine and feminine, due to Pálaš [1994, 74] only 2 suffixes (-*iu*, -*ím*) are exclusively neutral, the other 21 used in singular are „borrowed” from masculine and feminine Slovak says *stredný rod* 'middle gender' for neutral, this signals its position somewhere in the middle of the imaginary line between masculine and feminine.

The main role of gender categorisation in Slovak is not dividing the things of the world in 20 to 40 categories like in some exotic languages [Pokorný 2010, 228–229; Aikhenvald 2017, 363–367] but it is a syntactic tool of congruence: Slovak *Kováč vstúpil do triedy a Eva sa postavila. Spievala krásne a on ju počúval*. 'K. came in the classroom and E. stood up. She sang **fem.** and he listened **masc.**' ↔ Hungarian *Kovács bejött az osztályba és Éva fölélt. A lány szépen énekelt, a tanár pedig hallgatta*. 'K. came in the classroom and E. stood up. The **girl** sang and the **teacher** listened'). Gender is lexicalised in Hungarian and not obligatory in all contexts. Congruence exists of course in Hungarian too, but the category of number is in this role [Furdík 1977, 48 – 50]: sg. *a lány énekel* 'the girl is singing' – *a lányok énekelnek* 'the girls are singing'. Redundancy [see Horváthová 2017, 93–95] of congruence appears in Slovak ↔ in Hungarian affixation only once:

mojou veľkou čiernou kávou ↔ *az én nagy fekete kávémmal* 'with my big dark coffee'

Vladimírovi Putinovi udelili vyznamenanie ↔ *Kitüntetést adományoztak Vlagyimir Putyinnak* 'an order was given to V. Putin.'

2.2. Definiteness was thoroughly analysed by Buzássyová [1972, 191–199], we have to notice that this category is very important from the aspect of the image of the world in Hungarian, because in this language it appears grammaticalised on articles, pronouns, verbs and in both languages semantically in word order and numerals. In Slovak it is expressed facultatively with pronouns and is not considered to be a grammaticalised category. The binary opposition definite ↔ indefinite is as important in Hungarian as the verbal aspect perfective ↔ imperfective in Slovak. These categories are also reverse: whichever is obligatory in Hungarian, is expressed only situationally in Slovak and vice versa.

2.3. A part of the verbal categories (genus verbi, aspect, intention, reflexivity) show significant difference of view in the researched languages. Verbs in Hungarian are explicitly active, constructions with subject are preferred in those situations too, while Slovak (and other Indo-European languages) express deagental occurrences with a supernatural view. The actions controlled to be happen from outside in Slovak *sníva sa mi* '*it's dreaming for me', *je mi zima* '*it's cold for me', *bolí ma ruka* '*my hand aches me', *na streche sa pracuje* 'it's being worked on the roof', *uvidí sa* 'it will be seen' represent a more mythic image than Hungarian *álmodom* 'I dream', *fázom* '*I cold', *fáj a kezem* '*my hand aches', *a tetőn dolgoznak* 'they work on the roof', *látszik* '*it's looking'. In Hungarian these actions are expressed actively, while in

Slovak they are obscure from the Hungarian point of view. In Hungarian, gerund and infinitive constructions have the possibility to express condensed deagental actions – these only have a periphrastic equivalent in Slovak: *elintézendő feladatok – úlohy na vybavenie* 'tasks to be solved', *hasznos odafigyelni – dávať pozor je užitočné* 'it is useful to take care', *egérrágtá könyv – myšou pohryznutá kniha* 'a book chewed by a mouse'.

Verbal aspect offers, according to Hegedüs [2012, 115], a possible interpretation of the view of the world. „In Slavic languages, verbal stems do not exist without aspectual markers – this means that Slavs do not talk about activity without designating aspect“ [Janda 2002, 16]. In Slovak aspect is clearly and obligatory marked grammaticalised as a binary opposition offering an expression of the definiteness of the action [Paliga 2017, 8–11], in Hungarian it is a question of semantics on a lexical or syntactic level [Tuska 2011, 62–71] with no explicitly marked grammaticalisation but a possible continuum of verbal meaning. Hungarian has an inherent holistic image of the world of verbs.

2.4. Numerus is a category connected to reality. In spite of this, reflections of reality can be different in languages. After the Slavic dual merged with the plural in Slovak [see Múcsková 2011, 278], the two end points of the straight line of numbers are singular ↔ plural, like in Hungarian. Although dual does not exist anymore, in Slovak and other Slavic languages there is a formal distinction between a smaller amount of plural (2 to 4) and above 5. This may be a grammatical marking of a category of small amount called paucal [Duranti 1997, 184–186], and represents a grade between singular and plural on the straight line of numbers. Such a grammaticalised differentiation inside plurality is impossible in Hungarian: neither pluralia tantum exist. The semantic category of countability, material names or paired, double things are not grammatically relevant in Hungarian. Hungarian prefers singularity [Lőrincz 2017, 39; Schreierová 2018, 187] not only in the case of pairs: Slovak plural *okuliare, nohavice, nožnice* 'glasses, trousers, scissors' ↔ Hungarian singular *szemüveg, nadrág, olló* '*glassØ, trouserØ, scissorØ' represent one unity, also Slovak *jednonohý* 'one legged' ↔ Hungarian *féllábú* '*half legged' [in Russian – Estonian context see Haspelmath – Karjus 2017, 1213–1235]. Pluralia tantum are neutralised in a process of transnumerisation [Ološtiak 2011, 219] of loanwords borrowed from Slovak to Hungarian, e.g. Slovak plural *šuštiaky* → variant of Hungarian in Slovakia *sustyáki* singular → *sustyákik* plural [Lanstyák 2013, 11].

In case of verbal congruence plural marking is more redundant, e.g. Slovak *Dievčatá sa hrajú* = Hungarian *A lányok játszanak* 'The girls are playing' [Magyari 2017, 55], *-k* is not an independent verbal morpheme but it appears analogically on plural of verbs, so number is a supraparadigmatic domain. However, the congruence of number of the nominal group shows differences: Hungarian *négy almát vettem* '*I have bought four appleØ' ↔ Slovak *kúpil som štyri jablká* 'I have bought four apples' [Hegedüs 2004, 222].

The combination of nominal classification categories (genus) and numerus is another xenism for Hungarians in Slovak: 'they': *oni / ony* (exclusively fem.), 'two': *dva / dve* (fem. + neutr.). The subcategory of nominal class *masc. animate* is marked



on numerals: fem. *triØ ženy* '3 women', neut. *triØ mestá* '3 cities', masc. inanimate *štyriØ stoly* '4 tables' ↔ masc. anim. *traja muži* '3 men', *štyria hasiči* '4 firemen'. This is strange for the Hungarian linguistic image of the world.

2.5. The case system of the researched two languages seems to be extremely different, but we do not concentrate on the formal side (number of cases, polysemy, homonymy, synonymy of suffixes, prepositions vs. postpositions). From a cognitive aspect the conceptualisation of time, space and other semantic adverbial constructions offer a basis of comparison. Contrastive grammars conclude that the 3 directions in time and space are basic for both Hungarians and Slovaks. Slovak case instrumental and local have a narrower meaning than the other cases, so they are close to Hungarian semantic cases. Cases of both languages can be classified in three groups [Páles 1994, 110–113; Kiefer 2003, 201]:

(1.) zero casus, subject: N

(2) dominant syntactic function, object: Hungarian: A, Slovak: A, D, G – (both languages are non-ergative)

(3) semantic function, adverbs: Hungarian: all other cases, Slovak: prep.+L, I, prep.+G, prep.+D

Bigger differences of the image of the world manifested in language are performed by petrified adverbial cases lexicalised with different rections. Tóth [2017, 155–169] offers exemplification with word-to-word translation:

opierat' sa o niečo '*lean of sg.' – *támaszkodik vmihez / vmire* '*leans on sg.'

prispôsobovat' sa niečomu '*adjust himself for sg.' – *alkalmazkodik vmihez* '*adjust to sg.'

pozastavít' sa nad niečím '*stop above sg.' – *megütközni vmin* '*stop on sg.'

Szabómihályová [1989, 489] reports about the three dimensions of space in both languages: from (dynamic) – in (static) – to (dynamic). These main dimensions are represented in several directions: surface, inside, behind, etc. The conceptualisation of space [Levinson 1998, 2–24] and its grammaticalisation [Sipőcz 2005, 412–423] shows parallels in Slovak and Hungarian.

2.6. Possessive is not part of the Hungarian casus system according to the academic grammar of Hungarian [Keszler 2000, 449–451], but Ladányi [2017, 585–586] reports about a genitive in Hungarian. Possession is expressed with dative and genitive [Buzássyová 1979, 321–327] in Slovak as well. In Slovak we have a type of adjective [Kačala 2018, 14–30], which is special for its possessive meaning: Slovak *vtáčie pero* – Hungarian *madártoll* 'bird feather' (compositum of the noun and its possessum in Hungarian). In this case the order of possessor – possession is the same, but in Slovak is the order possession – possessor is more neutral: *pero vtáka* 'feather of a bird' ↔ *a madár tolla*. '*the bird feather of'. The variability of possessive constructions is characteristic of both languages [Szabómihályová 2010, 287–292], e.g. Slovak has a *habeo* verb, Hungarian does not: *mám pero* 'I have a pen' ↔ *(nekem) van tollam* '* (for me) is pen'. The rich grammaticalisation of the possession is an argument for considering possessive as an independent grammatical category, not a simple casus. Alienation does not have a role in the Slovak and Hungarian possessive [Dryer – Haspelmath et



al. 2013, chapter 59], but in Hungarian the image of possessivity is connected with the person and marked formally parallel: *látom a labdám* 'I see **my** ball', *eszed az almád* 'you eat **your** apple', *nézik meg a filmüket* 'they are watching **their** film'.

2.7. Tense, person, gradation and mode are the most similar categories of Hungarian and Slovak, they are the mirrors of the same image of the world in language. Aspect and Aktionsart are separated from time, so tense has a more narrow meaning than in Western European languages [Magyari 2011, 17–22]: only time. For Slovaks and Hungarians the trial of past, present and future means the same, there is no semantic explanation needed and even the formal expression is analytic in both languages [Newerkla 2017, 19]. Bláha [2015, 173–175] reports about a synthetic future in Slovak connected with verbal aspect: *zajtra pôjdem, ráno to zjem* 'tomorrow I go, in the morning I eat it' The same future construction with present verb form + prefix exist in Hungarian: *holnap elmegyek, reggel megeszem*. This formal fact does not change the 3-dimensional thinking about time in both languages [Čulenová 2013, 206–207].

The category of person consists of three entities in both languages, there is no split of the 1st person plural into exclusive and inclusive *we*. The gradation of adjectives and adverbs is an identical category of Slovak and Hungarian [Buzássyová 1977, 138], modes do not need logical transfer either. The grammaticalisation of these lastly mentioned categories show the biggest convergence of images of the world.

3. Conclusion

According to the above analysis, we conclude that typological and structural differences recently explained by Bláha [2015, 154–157, 171–182; 2018, 18–21] do not block the researched languages in having similar semantic background of grammaticalised categories. In spite of the different number of cases and no total formal equivalence [Szabó Mihályová 1989, 480], all sentence parts can be expressed equivalently in both languages. As we have seen, these categories represent the way the world is seen through the glasses of the given language. The image of the world manifested in language shows the causal motivation and logic of the language, not only on the lexical but also on the grammatical level. We do not have to pay extra attention to learning or translating elements of grammar, which are of the same logic in both languages and show cultural convergence, characterised generally by Šenkár: „Besides the proximity of individual historical fates, it is also the historical-cultural-geographical character of differentiation and the cohesive stability of the cultural code“ (Šenkár 2017, 190).

Researched grammaticalised categories can be divided in two groups: the binar and the ternar ones. Those consisting of three dimensions (space, time, mode, gradation, person) are more convergent when comparing Slovak and Hungarian. The linear categories can be bipolar or can have different degrees between two points of an imagined straight. Clearly polarised categories are definiteness and number in Hungarian, verbal aspect and genus verbi in Slovak, possession in both languages (possessor and possessum). The bipolar ones appear in the other language in a more differentiated way: scales of Aktionsarts, factitive, causative, medial, reflexive verbs in Hungarian. In Slovak we are confronted with such grades in:



gender: masc. – masc. anim. – neutr. – fem.

and

number: singular – 2-5 – plural – pl. tantum.

We also conclude that besides the areal convergence and typological xenism of our proved hypothesis, there is another aspect playing a role in measuring similarity and importance of grammaticalised categories in Slovak and Hungarian. The categories, which show a triangular dimension are fixed in both researched languages, because it would be hard to press a fourth or fifth category in one of the sides of the triangle. On the other hand, between two poles it is possible to make differenced grades. These polar or linear categories show bigger difference of the image of the world in the Slovak and Hungarian language.

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