| Title | Grammaticalization of the Verb imam 'have' in Bulgarian: The ima da construction |
|---|---|
| Author(s) | Sugai, Kenta |
| Citation | , 1, 94-106 |
| Issue Date | 2024-03-29 |
| DOI | 10.14943/110405 |
| Doc URL | http://hdl.handle.net/2115/91816 |
| Type | article |
| File Information | 1_08-SUGAI.pdf |

# Grammaticalization of the Verb *imam* 'have' in Bulgarian: The *ima da* construction[1]

Kenta Sugai

## 1. Introduction

This study discusses the modal usage of the verb *imam* 'have' in contemporary Bulgarian. It is well known that the verb *imam*, whose lexical meaning is possession in contemporary Bulgarian, is used not only as a verb of possession but also as an auxiliary verb for the future tense in the negative. In some dialects, it constitutes part of the past passive participle, a construction denoting the perfect tense (Georgiev 1957, Marinov 2017, etc.). It has been suggested that the *imam*, in combination with the subordinating particle *da* and a conjugated main verb, that is, a *da*-subordinating clause (although traditionally considered a part of the predicate), also denotes a modal meaning. However, due to the colloquial nature of the construction, it has not been described in detail in the Bulgarian grammars published thus far (Assenova 2002: 206). In this study, I discuss the construction within the framework of grammaticalization theory to disclose the distribution of the modal meaning that the construction bears in relation to the degree of grammaticalization of the construction. The analysis primarily relies on data drawn from the Bulgarian National Corpus (BulNC).

The remainder of this paper is organized as follows. Section 2 reviews general information on the *imam da* + main verb construction with reference to previous studies. In Section 3, the framework of the analysis adopted in this study is briefly introduced, and the construction in question is analyzed based on the data extracted from the BulNC in Section 4.

## 2. Brief Introduction of Discussions in Previous Studies

Previous studies have provided sporadic descriptions of the *imam da* construction. In this section, I briefly review the relevant literature.

The *imam da* construction is generally considered a form of the future tense. Bolocan (1967: 200) points out that "in Bulgarian, like in Romanian, there are constructions formed with the

verb *imam*, inflected or uninflected,[2] that have the meaning of future" and provides examples such as ***imam***[have.PRS.1SG] ***da***[SMP] *piša*[write.PRS.1SG] 'I have to write' ∕ *ima*[have.PRS.3SG] ***da***[SMP] *piša*[write.PRS.1SG] 'I (will) have to write',[3] although he admits that most Bulgarian linguists do not include these constructions in the future tense paradigm. Haralampiev (2001: 146–147) insists that the construction with the uninflected *ima* such as *ima*[have.PRS.3SG] ***da***[SMP] *čakaš*[wait.PRS.2SG] 'you'll (have to) be waiting', *ima*[have.PRS.3SG] ***da***[SMP] *se čudite*[wonder.PRS.2PL] 'you'll (have to) be wondering', should be considered a future tense since the verb *ima* in this construction has completely lost its lexical meaning and functions as a grammatical marker denoting the future tense. However, he recognizes that this is accompanied by nuances of continuousness and obligatoriness. He also pays attention to the differences between the construction with uninflected *ima* and with inflected *imam*; he contends that the latter may have the meaning of "I have a kind of task, I am to accomplish something". Assenova (2002: 206) also seems to consider the uninflected "*ima da* + main verb in present tense" construction a future tense that expresses "continuousness, abundance of actions," but she admits that the construction is restricted in its use and is also characteristic of colloquial speech (*cf.* also Mladenova 2018: 805). Interestingly, she points out that the construction with the inflected verb *imam* expresses a future event but refrains from characterizing it as future tense. Instead, she concludes that both inflected and uninflected "have" constructions, that is, *imam da* and *ima da* constructions, are accompanied by the nuances of "obligatoriness and necessity" (*cf.* also Georgiev 1977: 11). Krapova (1999: 80–82), who probably does not distinguish between the inflected and uninflected forms, argues that the verb *imam* is synchronically an auxiliary and, therefore, lacks semantic content and is used for purely functional purposes. Therefore, she calls the construction "a periphrastic future." However, at the same time, she considers the verb *imam* quasi-modal and points out that it "has a deontic meaning and predicates obligation to its external argument." Cyxun (1981: 160–162) lists the "have" future tense construction in several varieties of Bulgarian, but he convincingly argues that the examples he quotes might not have the function of denoting pure future tense due to the modal nuances. Mladenova (2013: 8), who has conducted research on the grammaticalized uses of verbs with the meaning of possession in Slavic languages, points out that the construction with uninflected *ima* in Bulgarian expresses a future event but with an overt expression of emotion that could sometimes convey the notion of threat; thus, it is not an affirmative correspondence of the future construction with *n'ama*[4] *da* + main verb that is highly grammaticalized. She distinguishes it from the inflected form of *imam*, emphasizing its crucial modal meaning, although she acknowledges its connection to future events.

---

[2] The uninflected form is *ima* which has the same form as the 3SG form of *imam*.

[3] As will be discussed further, there seems to be a slight difference in meaning between the inflected and uninflected "have" constructions.

[4] *n'ama* is the negative form of *ima*, and it constitutes the negative future marker in contemporary Bulgarian, though the affirmative future marker is *šte*, derived from the verb 'want'. Thus, for instance, *šte četa* 'I will read', but *n'ama da četa* 'I will not read'.

Most researchers distinguish between the inflected and uninflected "have" constructions and consider the latter, the uninflected form *ima da*, as a kind of future tense construction. However, most admit that this is accompanied by additional nuances. It is worth noting that Krapova (1999: 86) points out that the verb *imam* is "in the process of grammaticalization which involves a transition into a lexical auxiliary," as it constitutes an impersonal construction, that is, the uninflected *ima da* construction. However, it still competes with the personal one (i.e., the inflected *imam da* construction). Hence, it is suggested that differences in meanings and functions of the construction are related to the degree of grammaticalization. In the present discussion, the more grammaticalized uninflected *ima da* construction is primarily analyzed; however, in the course of the discussion, the inflected *imam da* construction will also be considered when necessary.

## 3. Method and Data
### 3.1 Parameters of Grammaticalization

In this study, I examined the construction in question within the framework of grammaticalization theory to determine the correlation between the meaning and function of the construction and the degree of grammaticalization. Narrog and Heine (2021) proposed the following four parameters of grammaticalization, which are adopted to measure the degree of grammaticalization of the construction in question:

(1) Parameters of grammaticalization (Narrog and Heine 2021: 55):
　　a. (Context) extension
　　b. Desemanticization
　　c. Decategorialization
　　d. Erosion

These four parameters are typically applied sequentially. Context extension is a prerequisite for changes in meaning and form, and erosion is the last to be addressed (Narrog and Heine 2021: 56). I will analyze the *ima da* construction mainly based on the first parameter, context extension, but during the analysis, I will refer to the others as well.

### 3.2 Corpus Data

A database was compiled to study the *ima da* construction in contemporary Bulgarian. I randomly extracted 311 examples with *ima da* from the written corpus of the BulNC. I listed them together with the context in which they appeared since the context helps determine the function of the *ima da* construction itself. All the examples in this study are provided with glosses, English translations, and source information. In principle, translations are made literally to clarify changes in meaning.

## 4. Analysis

In Bulgarian, the lexical verb *imam*, denoting possession, is also utilized as a verb of existence in the impersonal 3sg form. The existential meaning appears to have derived from

that of possession through a cross-linguistically attested grammaticalization process (*cf.* Have-possessive > Exist, Kuteva et al. 2019: 338–340), although this study does not delve into this process. In principle, I assume that the lexical meaning of the verb *ima* in the *ima da* construction is existence, but when it seems more appropriate, I may also take possession as a lexical meaning. The meaning is ambiguous because there are no distinctive formal features between impersonal and personal *ima* in the 3SG form; the meaning then crucially depends on the context in which it appears.

In sentences with the verb *ima*, the complement, that is, the object that one has or that exists, typically occupies a post-verbal position, as in (2a). The argument can be modified by a subordinating clause led by the subordinate modal particle *da*, as shown in (2b).

(2) a. *Ima　　　　smisăl.*
　　 have.PRS.3SG　meaning
　　 'There is a meaning.'
　 b. *Ima　　　　smisăl　　da　　sporim.*
　　 have.PRS.3SG　meaning　SMP　argue.PRS.1SG
　　 'There is a meaning that we argue about.'

However, sometimes the verb *ima* and the *da*-subordinating clause may take an adjacent position where *ima da* construction is formally realized, as in (3).

(3) *Kakăv　　　　smisăl　　**ima**　　　　**da**　　sporim?*
　 what_kind_of　meaning　have.PRS.3SG　SMP　argue.PRS.1PL
　 'What is the point of us arguing?' *lit.* 'What kind of meaning is there that we argue?'

　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　(Y. Xadjiev "Semeen portret," 1989)

In this example, the verb *ima* can be interpreted as having a lexical existential meaning with a modified subordinate clause. Although there seems to be only one possible reading, without introducing new meanings, the observed word order in this context can prompt a new context of use through the reanalysis of sentence elements, as in (4b), potentially leading to a new interpretation.

(4) a. [Kakăv smisăl ima][da sporim]
　 b. ?[Kakăv smisăl][ima da sporim][5]

The former (4a) is the original structure of the sentence, whereas the latter (4b) is a possible interpretation of the sentence as a result of reanalysis. Theoretically, the *da*-subordinating clause can be considered a complement of the main verb *ima*. Reanalysis of sentence elements

---

[5] The question mark placed at the beginning of the sentence means that the given interpretation is questionable but theoretically possible.

may not occur in a sentence such as (3), but the word order could be connected to the initiation of context extension.

According to the context extension model proposed by Narrog and Heine (2021: 58–61), there are four stages of context-induced reinterpretation. The salient characteristics of each stage are as follows:

**Table 1: The Context Extension Model** (Narrog and Heine 2021: 59)[6]

| STAGE | | CONTEXT | RESULTING MEANING |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | INITIAL STAGE | Unconstrained | Source meaning |
| II | BRIDGING CONTEXT | There is a new context triggering a new meaning. | Target meaning foregrounded |
| III | SWITCH CONTEXT | There is a new context which is incompatible with the source meaning. | Source meaning backgrounded |
| IV | CONVENTIONALIZATION | The target meaning no longer needs to be supported by the context that gave rise to it; it may now be used in new contexts. | Target meaning only |

The sentence in (3), which I discussed earlier, could be placed at the initial stage because the source meaning, that of existence, is clearly sensed, and the *da*-subordinating clause is syntactically connected to the argument *kakăv smisăl* 'what kind of meaning', rather than to the verb *ima* itself.

However, (5) seems to have advanced further in the extension process because the sentence can be understood in two ways, as in (6).

(5) *Nali    smetka    **ima**         **da**    oprav'ame.*
　　IP　　 bill　　 have.PRS.3SG　SMP　 fix.PRS.1PL

(D. Kirkov "L'ubov v ada," 1989)

(6) a. [smetka ima] [da oprav'ame]
　　　Source: 'There is a bill that we (have to) take care of.'
　 b. [smetka][ima da oprav'ame]
　　　Target: 'We have to take care of a bill.'

The verb *ima* adjacent to the *da*-subordinating clause can be interpreted as having the source meaning of existence, whose structure is shown in (6a). In this case, *smetka* 'bill' is an argument related to the verb of existence *ima*, while *da oprav'ame* 'to fix' is a modifier that describes *smetka* 'bill'. However, another interpretation, as shown in (6b), seems compatible.

---

6　Although the table in Narrog and Heine (2021: 59) is indicated as quoted from Heine (2002), there is a slight difference in the way of explaining, when the table in both literatures are compared. Thus, I quote the latest version (Narrog and Heine 2021: 59) instead of the original table in Heine (2002: 86).

This view implies that *smetka* 'bill' is a complement of the complex verbal form *ima da oprav'ame* 'we have to take care of'. This is clearly the case in which the new modal meaning of *ima* is triggered by a new context, in which *ima* constitutes a complex verbal form with a *da*-subordinating clause. The target meaning is an equally plausible interpretation, but the source meaning is explicitly retained. Therefore, the target meaning can always be canceled. This feature characterizes the bridging context, that is, Stage II (Narrog and Heine 2021: 59–60). This new meaning is apparently associated with deontic modality.

Another example that represents the bridging context is shown in (7).

(7) *Ubedena   b'ax,        če     mnogo   **ima**        **da**   uča...*
    confident  be.PST.1SG  that   a_lot   have.PRS.3SG  SMP    learn.PRS.1SG

(J. Zlatkova "Măže za epizodi," 2006)

(8) a. [mnogo ima][da uča]

   Source: 'There is a lot (of things) that I (will have to) learn.'

   b. [mnogo][ima da uča]

   Target: 'I (will) have to learn a lot.'

Here it is more apparent that a new context may generate a new meaning. *mnogo* is used not only as a noun phrase that denotes 'a lot (of things)' but also as an adverb that means 'a lot, much'. While in the former case, as in (8a), the verb *ima* is to be understood as carrying a source meaning, taking *mnogo* 'a lot of things' as its complement, in the latter it is inevitably interpreted as related to a new meaning, considering *mnogo* a mere adverb that modifies the complex verbal form *ima da uča* 'I have to study'. Thus, in this case, the polysemy of the word *mnogo* plays a vital role in inviting a new context. It should be noted that the context extension of *ima* crucially depends on the context.

One of our database's most attested patterns of a bridging context is the combination with *kakvo* "what" (43 out of 311 examples), as in (9). The collocation *kakvo ima da* in Bulgarian is most frequently used in rhetorical questions, but the following examples are given only as literal translations to discuss the meaning of *ima* itself:

(9) a. *Ama   kakvo   **ima**        **da**   oprav'ame   be?*
      but   what    have.PRS.3SG  SMP    fix.PRS.1PL   VP

   Source: 'But what is there for us to fix?'

   Target: 'But what do we have to fix?'

(S. Kisyov "Ne budete somnambula," 2000)

   b. *Kakvo   **ima**        **da**   misl'a?*
      what    have.PRS.3SG  SMP    think.PRS.1SG

   Source: 'What is there to think?'

   Target: 'What should I think?'

(B. Raynov "Lyudmila... Mečti i dela," 2003)

In these examples, as in earlier cases of the bridging context, there are two possible

interpretations of the verb *ima*. While a native speaker is likely to understand them with the lexical meaning of existence, the deontic reading cannot be entirely ruled out. Therefore, it can be argued that *ima da* constructions that occur in bridging contexts can be associated with a deontic meaning, although the source meaning is also retained.

The emergence of a new modal meaning due to context extension strongly suggests that another parameter, desemanticization, is also involved in Stage II, in which deontic modality seems to have an effect. As Narrog and Heine (2021: 69) insist, "the degree to which desemanticization takes place correlates with the degree that context extension has advanced." The verb *ima* seems to have been extended to contexts where the possession/existence meaning was not as appropriate as before, yielding an interpretation in terms of modal meaning. In other words, lexical meaning has been lost to a certain extent in favor of a modal meaning through desemanticization.

According to Narrog and Heine (2021: 60), the switch context refers to the use of a linguistic form in a new context that highlights a new meaning and is incompatible with its earlier meaning. Stage III of the extension process is illustrated using the following examples:

(10) a. [*Može i da săžal'avaš, če ne si părva hubavica. No edin den šte razbereš, če ne bilo gol'ama beda, če izobšto ne e beda!*]

    *E,    dotogava  **ima**      **da**    stradaš...*
    well   until_then  have.PRS.3SG  SMP   suffer.PRS.2SG
    '[You may regret that you are not such a beauty. However, one day you will realize that it was neither a big problem nor a problem at all.]
       Well, until then you'll be suffering (a lot).'

                                                              (Y. Xadjiev "Semeen portret," 1989)

 b. – *Sega   e    săbota,   **ima**      **da**    gi    tărs'at         po   kabaretata.*
    now   is   Saturday  have.PRS.3SG  SMP   them  look_for.PRS.3PL  in   the_cabarets
    'Now it's Saturday. They'll be looking for them in the cabarets (for a long time).'

    – *Znači,   lesno   šte   gi    namer'at.*
    so      easy    FUT   them  find.PRS.3PL
    'So, they'll find them easily.'

    – *Ne   e   tolkova  lesno. Tova  ne   e   Sofija,  tuk   kabaretata    sa   stotici.*
    NEG  is   so       easy   this  NEG  is  Sofia    here  the_cabarets  are  hundreds
    'It's not so easy. This is not Sofia; hundreds of cabarets are here.'

                                                              (P. Vežinov "Noštem s belite kone," 1981)

 c. *Šte   ti       zadavat   suma   glupavi  văprosi,*
    FUT   you.DAT  ask.PRS.3PL  a_lot_of  foolish  questions
    ***ima***        **da**   *se čudiš*      *kakvo  da   otgovar'aš.*
    have.PRS.3SG  SMP   wonder.PRS.2SG  what   SMP  answer.PRS.2SG
    'You will be asked a lot of foolish questions, you'll be wondering how to answer.'

                                                              (Y. Xadjiev "Semeen portret," 1989)

Unlike earlier cases, in these sentences *ima* is extended to a context in which it is syntactically

connected to a *da*-subordinating clause without a specific referent connecting them. Without an explicit referent of possession or existence, *ima* is not necessarily related to the source meaning in these examples; instead, it is more plausible to interpret *ima* as having a new meaning related to modality. Bužarovska and Mitkovska (2019: 271) argue that the Bulgarian uninflected *ima da* construction expresses "prediction expressing strong speaker conviction in the fulfillment of the event." Indeed, the examples in (10) can be interpreted as the *ima da* construction expressing an unavoidable or inevitable event from the speaker's perspective.[7] Such a meaning is related rather to epistemic modality, which is "concerned with the speaker's attitude to the truth-value or factual status of the proposition" (Palmer 2001: 8). In addition, the notion of "continuousness" or "abundance of actions" pointed out by several Bulgarian scholars is clearly sensed in these examples, given the contexts in which the *ima da* construction appears. However, this does not necessarily imply that the deontic reading is impossible at this stage. This depends crucially on the context in which the given construction is used. What is significant at this stage is that the source-meaning interpretation is no longer possible.

It should also be noted that modal verbs usually have a future time reference (Palmer 2001: 104–105, *cf.* also Krapova 1999: 81–82), and epistemic modality is also easily associated with future events. Therefore, most scholars attribute the construction in question to the future tense. However, it might be argued that as far as epistemic modality is concerned, it is hard to consider it a "pure" future tense. In this respect, it is noteworthy that *ima da* frequently co-occurs with the highly grammaticalized future particle *šte*. Of the 311 examples in this study's database, 77 such examples occur, 2 of which are shown in (11). The compatibility of the *ima da* construction with the future tense particle strongly suggests that the construction in question has not developed into a pure future tense (*cf.* also Haralampiev 2001: 149, Mladenova 2013: 8).

(11) a. *Izgležda,  če  <u>šte</u>  **ima**  **da**  tegl'a*
　　　 it_seems  that  FUT  have.PRS.3SG  SMP  struggle.PRS.1SG
　　　 *i  se măča  ot  tazi  bolest.*
　　　 and  suffer.PRS.1SG  from  this  disease
　　　 'It seems that I'll be struggling and suffering due to this disease.'
　　　　　　　 (G. Kazandjiev "General-leytenant Ivan Kolev – epopeya na edin jivot," 2006)
　 b. *Za  koeto  ot  dnes  natatăka  <u>šte</u>  **ima**  **da**  săžal'avate!*
　　　 for  REL  from  today  onwards  FUT  have.PRS.3SG  SMP  regret.PRS.2PL
　　　 'For which you'll be regretting from today onwards!'
　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　 (M. Karbovski "Edno 1," 1999)

---

[7] In fact, the *ima da* construction is not likely in most cases to be compatible with adverbs such as *verojatno* 'probably' expressing lower probability (as for Macedonian, see Mitkovska and Bužarovska 2012: 98).

In addition to the two parameters of grammaticalization already discussed, it can be argued that decategorialization, another parameter listed in (1), is also observed. Narrog and Heine (2021: 72–73) define decategorialization as the loss of morphological and syntactic features that a linguistic item experiences in the course of grammaticalization. One of the most salient features of this parameter is inflection loss. This feature is illustrated in the following sentences.

(12) a. *Bălgarskata*    *kultura*   *i*    *izkustvo*   **ima**        **da**   *mu*   *blagodar'at*
     the_Bulgarian   culture   and   art      have.PRS.3SG   SMP   him   thank.PRS.3PL
     *i*    *da*    *go*    *vencexval'at*    *mnogo*   *i*    *mnogo*   *godini.*
     and   SMP   him   glorify.PRS.3PL   many    and   many    years
     'Bulgarian culture and art will be thanking him and glorifying him for many years to come.'
                                              (Čudomir "Dnevnik (1947–1967)," 1994)
   b. *Rodopčani*        **ima**      **da**    *gledat*     *i*    *da*    *se div'at.*
     Rhodope_people.PL   have.PRS.3SG   SMP   look.PRS.3PL   and   SMP   marvel.PRS.3PL
     'People from the Rhodope region will be looking and marveling.'
                                          (B. Dimitrova "Pătuvane kăm sebe si," 1985)

The lexical meaning of the verb *ima* in these sentences seems to be possession rather than existence because both *Bălgarskata kultura i izkustvo* 'Bulgarian culture and art' in (12a) and *Rodopčani* 'people from the Rhodope region' in (12b) can be interpreted as the subjects of the verb *ima*, but not as complements.[8] In this interpretation, *ima* is expected to be inflected, agreeing in number with the plural subject, similar to the verbs in the following *da*-subordinating clause. Therefore, it is in an impersonal 3SG form or an invariable form in these

---

[8] Here, the other interpretation, i.e., that of existence, is questionable. As for (12b), for instance, the verbs in the *da*-subordinate clause, i.e. *gledat* 'look' and *se div'at* 'marvel', agree with the noun phrase *Rodopčani* 'Rhodope people', which eventually requires *Rodopčani* to be interpreted as the subject of the sentence. In fact, the context that comes after the given sentence is as follows: *Može po radioto da sa čuvali, no sega šte vid'at na živo piano!* 'Maybe they have heard (about the piano) on the radio, but they will see a piano in real life.' Thus, this context indicates that *Rodopčani*, instead of other possible noun phrases in the plural, is the one who will be looking and marveling at the piano, i.e., the subject of the verbs. So the literal translation of (12b) would be 'Rhodope people have *something* to look at and marvel,' but not 'There are Rhodope people to look at and marvel.'

     Incidentally, the existential reading of *ima* would require a relative pronoun instead of the subordinating modal particle *da*, as in (i)

(i) *Ima*        *Rodopčani,*      *koito*   *gledat*    *i*    *se div'at.*
   have.PRS.3SG   Rhodope_people.PL   REL.PL   look.PRS.3PL   and   marvel.PRS.3PL
   'There are Rhodope people who look and marvel.'

The word order is another suggestive (though not obligatory) factor, as the existential verb *ima* is more likely to precede its complement, as in (i).

sentences, and decategorialization can be considered to be involved. According to Narrog and Heine (2021: 73), this is a case of "internal decategorialization." Regarding decategorialization at a syntactic level, or in Narrog and Heine's terminology, "external decategorialization," the verb *ima* itself is now better interpreted as related to the *da*-subordinating clause instead of the other argument (i.e., subject). This is the effect of the reanalysis of elements in a sentence triggered by context extension, as stated earlier. To some extent, this process has probably resulted in a decrease in independence as an autonomous form. In addition, the verb *ima* is more dependent on *da*-subordinating clauses in both meaning and syntax, although it is still far from the status of full decategorialization. Nevertheless, this should be regarded as the first step toward the total loss of independence as an autonomous form, such as affixation.

However, the last parameter of grammaticalization — erosion — does not seem to have occurred,[9] although this point needs further analysis. Although erosion is not yet involved in the construction of *ima da*, this does not necessarily mean that the construction has not undergone grammaticalization. Often erosion does not occur, leaving the grammaticalized and source forms phonetically indistinguishable (Narrog and Heine 2021: 79).

In addition, it is suggested that contemporary Bulgarian has not gone beyond Stage III without reaching the stage of conventionalized usage of a given form because the *ima da* construction observed in both bridging and switch contexts is always context-dependent. The context extension model for the *ima da* construction is shown in Table 2. There are no clear boundaries between the stages presented in the table; rather, these stages constitute a continuum. Depending on the context, the same sentence may be understood with more than one specific meaning at each stage.

---

[9] It is reported that in a Bulgarian dialect spoken in Băleni-Sârbi in Romania, there is a future construction formed with *ma* 'have', which as a phonetically reduced varint of *ima* clearly reflects erosion (Bolocan 1967: 206, Stojkov 1970: 143, Mladenov 1993: 141–142, 378). Erosion, usually the last process to be involved, according to Narrog and Heine (2021: 56), seems to have had this effect. This result suggests that the construction observed in this dialect seems to have grammaticalized further. It is also connected to the main verb without the help of subordinating particle *da*, which can be considered another feature showing a higher degree of grammaticalization. In an earlier study, I argued that language contact with Romanian, where a highly grammaticalized future construction with "have" exists, played a certain role in advancing the grammaticalization process (see Sugai 2023).

Table 2: The Context Extension Model of the Verb 'ima'

| STAGE | | CONSTRUCTED EXAMPLES | MEANING |
|---|---|---|---|
| I | INITIAL STAGE | *Kakăv smisăl **ima da** sporim?* (=3) | |
| | | 'What kind of meaning is there that we argue?' | Possession/Existence |
| II | BRIDGING CONTEXT | *Mnogo **ima da** uča.* (=7) | |
| | | 'I have/There is a lot (of things) to study.' | Possession/Existence |
| | | 'I (will) have to study a lot.' | Deontic modality |
| III | SWITCH CONTEXT | *Dotogava **ima da** stradaš.* (=10a) | |
| | | 'Until then, you (will) have to suffer.' / 'Until then, you'll be suffering (a lot).' | Deontic / Epistemic modality |

This suggests that the function of *ima da* varies from lexical to grammatical. Two modal meanings were found for the grammaticalized usage of the construction: deontic and epistemic. Although the latter seems to have become widely used in contemporary Bulgarian, the deontic meaning of the observed construction should not be ignored, especially in bridging contexts.[10]

I would argue that such a distribution of functions corresponds to the cross-linguistically well-attested pathway of grammaticalization shown, for example, by Kuteva et al. (2019: 289) as OBLIGATION > PROBABILITY, suggesting that the epistemic meaning is derived from the deontic meaning (*cf.* also Bybee et al. 1994: 199–205). Hence, it can be asserted that the variation in the functions of the *ima da* construction reflects the degree of grammaticalization. In other words, the degree of grammaticalization is relevant to the distribution of modal functions of the construction in question.

## 5. Conclusion

In this study, I attempted to demonstrate that the *ima da* construction has various functions, both deontic and epistemic, and to determine how these new meanings emerged from the source meaning of possession/existence that the verb carries through the prism of grammaticalization theory. The grammaticalized *ima da* construction seems most frequently related to epistemic modality (*cf.* Bužarovska and Mitkovska 2019: 271, 274), which triggers an interpretation in favor of the future tense; however, deontic modality is another function observed, especially in the bridging context, where the source meaning is explicitly retained. Therefore, it can be argued that the latter is not as grammaticalized as the former because of equally possible interpretations based on the source meaning. The degree of grammaticalization of *ima* is related to the distribution of the two modal functions.

One of the two tasks that I could not deal with in this study in detail was the notion of "continuousness" or "abundance of actions" pointed out by several Bulgarian scholars, and observed in most examples in switch context. How this specific nuance emerged and why the *ima da* construction — especially in the switch context — involves this nuance, has not been

---

[10] Bužarovska and Mitkovska (2019: 271) reported that they "found no deontic examples" in their Bulgarian corpus.

investigated. It seems that one needs a certain period to exist; hence, the notion of existence itself has probably been extended, generating the notion of "continuousness." However, this requires further investigation. The second task is related to the last grammaticalization parameter. As the examples analyzed in this study were from a written corpus, precisely determining whether erosion is involved in spoken language is challenging. Further analyses based on data reflecting the phonetic characteristics of the respective verb forms are necessary. I leave these issues for future studies.

**List of Abbreviations:**

| | |
|---|---|
| DAT | dative |
| FUT | future tense marker |
| IP | interrogative particle |
| PL | plural |
| PRS | present tense |
| PST | past tense |
| REL | relative pronoun |
| SG | singular |
| SMP | subordinating modal particle |
| VP | vocative particle |

**Bibliography**

Assenova, Petya (2002) *Balkansko ezikoznanie: osnovni problemi na balkanskija ezikov săjuz*. Veliko Tărnovo: Faber.

Bolocan, Gheroghe (1967) Observaţii cu privire la viitor în limba română şi în bulgară. *Romanoslavica*, XIV: 199–207.

Bužarovska, Eleni and Liljana Mitkovska (2019) Modal habere-Constructions in the Balkan Slavic Context. In: Iliyana Krapova and Brian Joseph (eds.) *Balkan Syntax and (Universal) Principles of Grammar*, 250–277. Berlin: De Gruyter.

Bybee, Joan, Revere Perkins, and William Pagliuca (1994) *The Evolution of Grammar: Tense, Aspect, and Modality in the Languages of the World*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

Cyxun, Gennadij A. (1981) *Tipologičeskie problemy balkanoslavjanskogo jazykovogo areala*. Minsk: Nauka i texnika.

Georgiev, Vladimir (1957) Văznikvane na novi složni glagolni formi săs spomagatelen glagol 'imam'. *Izvestija na Instituta za bălgarski ezik*, kn. V: 31–60.

Georgiev, Vladimir (1977) L'union linguistique balkanique l'état actuel des recherches. *Linguistique balkanique (Actes du colloque international sur les problèmes de la linguistique balkanique, Varna 11–16 octobre 1976)*, XX, 1–2: 5–15.

Haralampiev, Ivan (2001) *Istoričeska gramatika na bălgarskija ezik*. Veliko Tărnovo: Faber.

Heine, Bernd (2002) On the role of context in grammaticalization. In: Ilse Wischer and Gabriele Diewald (eds.) *New Reflections on Grammaticalization*, 83–101. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Krapova, Iliyana (1999) The System of Auxiliaries in Bulgarian. In: Mila Dimitrova-Vulchanova and Lars Hellan (eds.) *Topics in South Slavic Syntax and Semantics*, 59–89. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Kuteva, Tania, Bernd Heine, Bo Hong, Haiping Long, Heiko Narrog, and Seongha Rhee (2019) *World Lexicon of Grammaticalization: Second extensively revised and updated edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Marinov, Vladislav (2017). Načini za izrazjavane na minalo rezultativno vreme v bălgarskite dialekti. *Orbis Linguarum (Ezikov svyat)* 15 (1): 30–37.

Mitkovska, Liljana and Eleni Bužarovska (2012) Tipovi modalnost vo nemenlivite *ima da*-konstrukcii. *Makedonski jazik* LXIII: 88–103.

Mladenov, Maksim Sl. (1993) *Bălgarskite govori v Rumănija*. Sofia: Izdatelstvo na Bălgarskata akademija na naukite.

Mladenova, Margarita (2013) Gramatikalizirani upotrebi na glagolite ot semantičnoto pole na pritežanieto v slavjanskite ezici. *Săpostavitelno ezikoznanie*, XXXVIII, No.4: 5–12.

Mladenova, Margarita (2018) *Semantika na pritežatelnite glagoli v bălgarskija, češskija i ruskija ezik*. Sofia: Universitetsko izdatelstvo „Sv. Kliment Ohridski."

Narrog, Heiko and Bernd Heine (2021) *Grammaticalization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Palmer, Frank R. (2001) *Mood and Modality, Second edition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Stojkov, Stojko (1970) Bălgarskijat govor v s. Bălen-Sărb (SR Rumănija). *Bălgarski ezik*, kn. 2–3: 138–146.

Sugai, K. (2023) The Future Tense Construction of 'Have' in the Bulgarian Dialect of Băleni-Sârbi Revisited. Grammaticalization and Language Contact. In: Katarzyna Bednarska, Dorota Kruk, Olga Saprikina, Natalia Siudzinska, Traci Speed, Kamil Szafraniec, Svitlana Terekhova, Radoslav Tsonev, Jasna Uhláriková, and Aneta Wysocka (eds.) *Contributions to the 24th Annual Scientific Conference of the Association of Slavists (Polyslav)*. 360–369. Wiesbaden: Verlag Harrassowitz.

(Kenta Sugai・Hokkaido University, Associate Professor)