

Reported speech in English and Slovene news items

Silvana Orel Kos, University of Ljubljana

Povzetek

Članek analizira predstavitev govora, še posebej odvisnega govora, v angleškem in slovenskem časopisnem poročanju. Poročevalski slog zaznamujejo posebne zgradbe, še posebej glagoli, s katerimi označimo način, kako avtoritativni govorniki, inštitucije, organizacije, strokovnjaki ali predstavniki splošne javnosti upovedujejo svoje izjave. Odvisno od avtoritete vira informacij se v angleščini lahko uporabi sosledica glagolskih časov pri glagolih rekanja v glagolskem času za preteklost *Past tense*. Ker v slovenščini načeloma ne uporabljamo sosledice glagolskih časov, se prevajalci slovenskih novic v angleščino težje odločijo glede rabe te slovnične funkcije. Na osnovi angleško-slovenskega korpusa, ki ga v obsegu 300,000 besed sestavljajo članki poročevalskih agencij, kakovostnih in popularnih časopisov, se posvečamo slovničnim in slogovnim vidikom časovnega umeščanja informacij v strukturo časopisnega članka, pri čemer smo še posebej pozorni na sosledico glagolskih časov v angleščini. Izpostavimo tudi nekaj težav z izbiro leksike pri prevajanju slovenskih časopisnih prispevkov v angleščino.

Ključne besede: poročevalstvo, angleščina, slovenščina, informacijski vir, sosledica glagolskih časov, poročevalske zgradbe

1 INTRODUCTION

News reporting is a type of discourse in which the reporter functions as a mediator between the original or earlier source of information and the target reader. The reporter's job is to report other people's statements. The source consists of two types of information: the original speaker or earlier (written) source, and the message. The reporter communicates the message to the reader in such a way that the reported statement can be ascribed a degree of factual probability, while the presence of the original author in the report accounts for the reliability and traceability of the information source.

The reporter's authorial involvement consists in choosing relevant means of processing the original message, which involves both the selection and packaging of information. Information selection consists of (a) textual inclusion or exclusion, and (b) textual chunking with highlighted passages, statements or phrases, embedded in the reporter's own text. Information packaging shows the reporter's involvement in processing the surface linguistic realisation of the original text, i.e. by paraphrase or adaptation. By applying these two general textual processes, the reporter weaves the original statements into a new *text-ure*. The reporter is believed to be a 'careful craftsman', a weaver of stories, and an objective and invisible mediator, as indicated by Biber et al. (1999: 9) in their presentation of journalistic style:

Newspaper stories are written, and the language used is carefully edited and revised. They have a relatively focused purpose: to convey and evaluate information about recent events and newsworthy people. They claim a relatively objective presentation of information, often adopting an institutional voice. These situational characteristics typically result in carefully crafted texts with little overt evidence of personal opinions.

Despite the overall tendency towards objectivity, the surface texture may bear evidence of authorial presence, for instance in the journalist's choice of reporting verbs or his/her personal or institutional interpretation of the reported statements. The diversity of voices becomes evident when several reports are compared. The following three excerpts show different interpretations of David Cameron's utterance regarding the UK's involvement in the 2015 refugee crisis, from a seemingly committed statement to a less favourable one:

David Cameron said today that «as a father I felt deeply moved» by the pictures of Syrian boy Aylan Kurdi lying dead on a Turkish beach **and promised that Britain would fulfil its «moral responsibilities»**.¹

¹ <http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/petition-demanding-uk-accept-more-6372214> (Access: 5 September 2015.)

David Cameron has said he felt “deeply moved” by pictures of the dead Syrian boy Aylan Kurdi washed up on a Turkish beach, **but he gave no details** of any new UK plans to take in more refugees.²

With the story all over the front pages and critics urging a step change in the number of Syrians being offered sanctuary, Cameron said he was “deeply moved” by the harrowing image **but defended the government’s record and stuck to his position.**³

Sometimes, different reporting verbs are the only contributions to the passages or articles that are either attributed to an earlier information source or plagiarized. The Slovene news outlets *Delo* and the MMC RTV Slovenija attribute the article below to the STA press agency in the by-line. The MMC RTV Slovenija uses a more expressive reporting verb *opozoriti* (literally: ‘point out’, ‘warn’) for the neutral verb *povedati* (‘tell’, ‘say’). *Delo* further mentions the original source in the reporting clause, while the *Večer* article uses no links to the STA:

Kot je takrat povedal za STA, bi nadaljnje raziskave lahko pomembno osvetlile pozno obdobje majevske civilizacije.⁴

Kot je takrat opozoril, bi nadaljnje raziskave lahko pomembno osvetlile pozno obdobje majevske civilizacije. (MMC RTV SLO/STA)⁵

Kot je povedal, bi nadaljnje raziskave lahko pomembno osvetlile pozno obdobje majevske civilizacije.⁶

This study focuses on speech presentation in written (on-line) news items that process information sources usually provided orally, either in spontaneous situations or at arranged and organized meetings such as press conferences. It concentrates on intralingual and interlingual points of contrastive relevance which should help students of translation gain greater awareness of the relevance of indirect discourse in the analysis and translation of news items and press releases.

² <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/aylan-kurdi-david-cameron-says-he-felt-deeply-moved-by-images-of-dead-syrian-boy-but-gives-no-10484641.html> (Access: 5 September 2015.)

³ <http://uk.reuters.com/article/2015/09/03/uk-europe-migrants-cameron-idUKKCN0R31J320150903> (Access: 5 September 2015.)

⁴ <http://www.delo.si/kultura/razno/unesco-na-seznam-dodal-obmocje-kjer-je-sprajc-odkril-majevsko-mesto.html> (Access: 30 August 2015.)

⁵ <http://www.rtvlo.si/kultura/drugo/sprajcevo-odkritje-na-unesovem-seznamu-dediscine/344014> (Access: 30 August 2015.)

⁶ <http://www.vecer.com/clanek2014081306051401> (Access: 30 August 2015.)

2 METHODOLOGY

The article presents a detailed discussion of news reporting as outlined in Orel Kos (2014), which provides the general parameters of reported speech in different types of discourse. The findings presented in this article are based on a 300,000 word English-Slovene corpus of recent news articles provided on-line by press agencies, quality and popular newspapers. The corpus consists of four subcorpora. The Slovene subcorpus includes news articles from *Delo*, STA, MMC RTV Slovenija (MMC RTV SLO), *Slovenske novice* and *Demokracija*. The subcorpus with items translated into English is based on the STA and MMC RTV SLO sources. The British subcorpus relies on articles published by the BBC, Reuters UK, *The Guardian*, *The Independent*, *The Telegraph* and *The Daily Mail*, while the US subcorpus includes news items by the AP, Reuters US, *The New York Times*, *USA Today*, *The New York Post*, and *The New York Daily News*. Most articles were published in 2015 or in the previous two years. For reasons of supplementary comparison, there are references to a separate subcorpus consisting of news items by the fake news outlet *The Onion* and press releases by the White House as well to some illustrative passages from newspapers not included in any corpora.

3 TEMPORAL STRUCTURE IN NEWS ARTICLES

One of the most prominent grammatical or stylistic features of news items in both English and Slovene is the absence of the first-person singular and the second person with verbs forms outside direct discourse, which means that the reporter is formally excluded from the news narrative, whereas the absence of the second-person implies that the news item is a report rather than an interview or an announcement to the readers (be it in the syntactic roles of the Subject or the Object). The story is usually written in the 'narrative' Past tense, but other temporal settings are not excluded. Both the person and the tenses are included in the analysis of indirect speech and English tense backshift is a contrastively relevant topic. A statement is usually furnished with a (short) linguistic context or reporting structure that expresses the type of the speech act which connects the source with their statement. The reporting structures are chosen by the reporter and present a textual niche where the reporter's interpretation might be felt. The reporting structures do not overlap completely in the languages studied, which contributes to another contrastively relevant topic.

3.1 Internal textual structure

The structure of a news article consists of the following sub-structures: headline, subheading, by-line, highlights, lead, the main body (divided into paragraphs), section headings, highlighted quotes and photo captions. News reading is marked by the need for speedy information processing, which is warranted by recurrent patterns such as particular placement in the textual area, typography and lexicogrammatical features.

The reported news in English articles tends to be structured in terms of time-related understanding of relevance, which is reflected in the psychological character of the tenses: the Present tense is used with news items that are presented as having either current or general (atemporal) relevance. The Present Perfect suggests the recentness of the ‘breaking news’, while the neutral Past tense narrates the events in their past temporal setting.

Headlines, subheadings and section headings present past events and references to sources in the Present Simple Tense to highlight the immediate impact of the news. The Present Simple verb form and verbless structures also reduce the number of certain grammatical features to present the news in a space-saving, expressive and condensed way.

From the structural point of view, the Present Perfect bridges the temporal cline from the present time sphere in the headline or subheadline to the past time sphere in the main body. The standard narrative tense of the events presented in the main body is the Past tense. Yet depending on the general, current or future relevance of the described events, other tenses are used in the main body. The highlighted reporting verb forms in the passage below show the temporal progression in indirect statements from the Present tense *says* and the rudimentary headline information, via the Present Perfect *has said* and more developed headline content, whereas the main body Past tense forms *told* (*the BBC/the BBC Jim Muir*) and *said* provide a detailed account of the ideas outlined in both the headline and the lead:

Iraqi-Kurdish leader says Paris attacks a ‘wake-up call’

The head of intelligence and security in Iraqi Kurdistan has said he hopes last Friday’s attacks in Paris will act as a wake-up call to Western powers.

Masrour Barzani **told the BBC that** the Islamic State group (IS) could be defeated within months if the world community became fully engaged.

He was speaking after Kurdish forces drove IS out of the strategic Iraqi town of Sinjar.

IS still controls large areas of Syria and Iraq.

Speaking at a command headquarters near the Sinjar front, Mr Barzani **told the BBC's Jim Muir that** despite setbacks, IS had not been significantly weakened.

And he **said** he hoped that the attacks in Paris, in which 129 people died, would be a game changer, spurring Western powers to become more involved in fighting the militants.

“It’s very difficult to say that Isis (IS) has weakened. They might be losing some ground here and there, but to terrorise of course they are using different methods,” he **said**.

“I think this is probably a change of tactics. They might try to do more of this if they are not stopped and they are not kept under pressure.”⁷

The statements by an authoritative political source are presented in the Past tense with the sequence of tenses observed. The authoritarian voice of the political figure is further on complemented by that of a correspondent. The statement of the press agency’s institutional voice is presented in the Present tense, since the comment is not tied to a particular social event in the past: ***Our correspondent says the US-led coalition, which has been bombing IS in Syria and Iraq for more than a year, has had problems finding reliable ground forces to partner with.***

The news article reflects the tendency in on-line news items to present the content in short paragraphs, mostly consisting of single sentences. The paragraphs can be identified by their type of speech presentation: indirect speech, reporter’s representation of speech, direct speech, free direct speech. Since there are no lexical or grammatical source indications, the single sentence paragraph *IS still controls large areas of Syria and Iraq* appears to be the reporter’s ‘own’ narration or a presentation of a fact. The discursual placement of the statement, however, indicates that the information source might be the authority connected with the message in the adjacent paragraphs.

⁷ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-34853377> (Access: 18 November 2015.)

3.2 The authority of the information source

Carter and McCarthy (2006: 811) provide the following definition of English tense-backshift, also known as the sequence of tenses: “When the indirect report is perceived as referring to the past, the tense in the reported clause usually changes to a past form of the tense of the original speech. This process is known as tense backshift.” As outlined in Orel Kos (2014: 345-346), tense-backshift in indirect news statements indicates that the reporter adopts a distanced attitude towards the original source of information. This device may be used subjectively, yet the majority of our subcorpora show that tense-backshift in such cases closely follows both narrative and ideological stylistic rules. In the reported statements of past events, tense-backshift is found with political figures or authorities as well as with other individualized institutional voices if these appear to have been present at the event from which statements have been sourced. In addition, the statements of authoritative sources are often presented in direct speech or with (increasingly popular) partial quotes embedded in indirect statements. Collective institutional voices and unofficial individual sources tend to be used with no sequence of tenses. Their statements are often not linked to a particular past event, so the reporting verbs tend to appear in the Present tense, which gives the message an even more general import. There is a noticeable difference in backshift observation with regard to the content: political statements made at specific relevant recent events generally observe the sequence of tenses, while scientific statements, for example, made by experts tend to be treated as generally valid, so tense-backshift might suggest a certain degree of doubt or caution.

Statements by political figures are frequently presented as individually highlighted items of information and possibly independently of the actual temporal progress. However, news articles, especially in popular newspapers, love featuring riveting *stories*. For this reason, the original speakers, be it identified or unidentified persons or institutional voices, are often presented in final sentence position as formal source tags, especially in the US newspapers. This tendency is illustrated by a passage from a crime report in the *New York Daily News*. Each one-sentence paragraph is furnished with its information source:

The son of former Virginia state Sen. R. Edward Houck shot and killed his estranged wife’s boyfriend at a motel before taking his own life Tuesday morning, **police said**.

The ex-senator had previously said his son, Todd, had a criminal history and suffered from mental illness.

Todd, 36, confronted his wife and her boyfriend at the Relax Inn at Bowling Green around 8 a.m., **the Richmond Times-Dispatch reported**.

He fatally shot the boyfriend — Jeremy Gift, 36 — then abducted the woman and fled north on Interstate 95, **police said**.⁸

Unlike collective institutional voices such *police*, identified officials and witnesses appear in either final or initial sentence positions. This is illustrated by the following excerpts from an account of a shooting incident, published by the British BBC:

When a French passenger tried to enter a toilet on the train, he encountered the gunman, tried to overpower him and the gun was then fired, **Mr Cazeneuve said**.

A French-American passenger was injured by the bullet, and the American passengers intervened shortly afterward, **he said**.

/.../

In an interview with Paris Match magazine, **Mr Anglade said** train staff entered a private cabin and locked it when they heard gunshots, leaving the passengers alone.⁹

While the above examples feature non-backshifted indirect statements in a story in the easy-to-read narrative Past tense, there are contexts in which no sequence of tenses occurs with authoritative voices. In such cases, the statements are no longer perceived to be tied to the time and event of enunciation, but rather contribute to the understanding of currently developing situations. Both the news institution and the general public appear to be personally or emotionally involved in the developing situation, such as a terrorist drama. Another context in which tense backshift is not normally observed is sentences or excerpts taken from delivered speeches. In this way, the news article appears to focus on the speech as a source text. The following example taken from an STA article in English presents the jury's (written or spoken) statement on the work of an award-winning poetess:

The jury said that Kušar's poetry collection *Vrt* (Garden) is a sentential collage of lyrical intuition, dream-like images, and reflections on the soul mixed with flashes of people, the condition of today's world, her nation, and poetry in general.¹⁰

The subcorpus of articles translated by the STA and MMC RTV SLO shows that the STA is largely aware of the above preferences regarding the sequence of tenses,

⁸ <http://www.nydailynews.com/news/national/son-va-ex-sen-edd-houck-kills-murder-chase-article-1.2369935> (Access: 29 September 2015.)

⁹ <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-34023361> (Access: 30 August 2015.)

¹⁰ <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/meta-kusar-wins-veronika-poetry-prize> (Access: 30 August 2015.)

while the MMC RTV SLO translations greatly disregard tense-backshift, which is especially noticeable with statements made by authoritative public figures.

Grammatical discussions that treat tense backshift without a particular focus on its functions in different types of discourse, such as news reporting, are not helpful in developing the translator's competence. The STA translations show a very high awareness of the reporting style, in terms of news rewriting and the use of appropriate reporting verbs and the sequence of tenses. There are, however, news articles that include examples which feature different tense backshift principles. This appears to give different weight to the speakers, which may result in a specific ideological interpretation. The following paragraphs are taken from an article that presents statements regarding the resignation of Slovenia's border-dispute arbiter after leaked tapped phone calls. In a series of reported statements by Slovene and Croatian key political figures, the sequence of tenses is regularly observed except in the case of Croatia's president. All statements observe the same pattern of indirect speech statements with the source given in initial position and most reported statements follow the reporting structure *said that*:

The resignations came after PM Miro Cerar **said** earlier today **that** the alleged contacts between the pair had been inappropriate and that he expected them to accept responsibility.

Both Cerar and President Borut Pahor, who was prime minister in 2009 when the border arbitration agreement with Croatia was signed, **said that** they wanted the tribunal to complete its work.

Similarly, Danilo Türk, who served as Slovenia's president in 2007-2012, when the arbitration tribunal was formed, **said** the issue did not affect the validity of the arbitration agreement.

President Kolinda Grabar-Kitarović **said** during a visit to Israel **that** the incident questions the objectivity of the procedure, while Foreign Minister Vesna Pusić **confirmed that** the possibility of a withdrawal from the agreement was being discussed.¹¹

Grabar-Kitarović's statement is presented in the non-backshifted Present tense and thus appears to be given most general validity. Note that it would be appropriate to mention that Grabar-Kitarović is *Croatia's* president, since the news was written by the Slovene press agency, which might help English readers to identify her role in the context involving several political figures representing the two countries.

¹¹ <http://www.sloveniatimes.com/scandal-sweeps-away-slovenia-border-arbiter-croatia-thinking-of-pulling-away>
(Access: 30 August 2015.)

4 REPORTING STRUCTURES

While the STA mostly uses the speech act verb *say*, which is the most frequently used verb in English newspaper reporting, the MMC RTV SLO translators have a tendency to stick closely to both the news content and the lexico-grammatical structures characteristic of Slovene news reporting. The differences between the two Slovene news outlets are confirmed by our corpus for the Past tense *said*, where STA along with other press agencies ranks among the highest users of the neutral verb, whereas MMC RTV SLO comes at the lowest end, followed only by, surprisingly, *The Independent*, the fake news outlet *The Onion* and the press releases by White House with only 5 occurrences of *said*:

Table 1

<i>said</i> per 12,500 words	140-130	129-120	119-110	109-100	89-80	79-70	69-60	9-1
	AP	<i>USAToday</i>	<i>NY Daily News</i>	<i>The Guardian</i>	The UK Govt	MMC RTV SLO	<i>The Independent</i>	The White House
	Reuters US	BBC	Reuters UK STA	<i>The NY Times</i> <i>The Telegraph</i>	<i>The Daily Mail</i> <i>The NY Post</i>		<i>The Onion</i>	

In a 304-word MMC RTV SLO news article, there are ten instances of communication verbs used with direct and indirect statements (*said* (2x), *stressed* (2x) *assured*, *maintaining*, *believes*) as well as with the reporter's speech report (*promises*, *welcomed*, *praised*), as illustrated by the first paragraph in the main body:

Cerar **assured** Stoltenberg **that** Slovenia would gradually increase its defence budget, which saw a drop in the past few years after the economic crisis began to bite. Following his meeting with Stoltenberg, Cerar **stressed** at a press conference **that** Slovenia's defence spending would not decrease in 2015.¹²

Although the leading paragraph introduces the topic and mentions both politicians, it sounds abrupt since the first sentence in the main body begins with an assurance, which is further fortified by the statement introduced by *stressed*. The majority of the verbs used in the article are direct translations of the Slovene reporting verbs. Illocutionary expressives such as *stress*, *assure*, *promise*, *welcome*, and *praise* are found in brief press releases issued by the White House or the Slovene government (the governmental corpora are not included in the present discus-

¹² <http://www.rtv slo.si/news-in-english/cerar-promises-to-bump-up-slovenia-s-defence-budget/369635> (Access: 20 September 2015.)

sion). These expressive verbs, used primarily in the condensed speech reports rather than fully reported statements, contain an emotional diplomatic slant, thus showing a particular ideological attitude, which is not used in mainstream English news reporting. In comparison with this article, a comparably long portion of the above-mentioned STA news contains four different verbs in eight occurrences of reported statements (*said* (5x), *agreed*) or condensed speech reports (*is thinking*, *expected*), showing a clear preference for the ideologically neutral verb *say*:

Table 2

<i>say(s)/ saying</i> per 12,500 words	34-30	29-25	24-20	19-15	14-10	9-5	4-1	0
News- paper	BBC The Daily Mail	<i>The Guardian</i> The Inde- pendent	<i>The Telegraph</i>	<i>The NY Post</i>	<i>NY Daily News</i> <i>USA- Today</i> <i>The NY Times</i> Reuters UK Reuters US	AP STA	MMC RTV SLO	<i>The Onion</i> The White House The UK Govt

The structure *according to* (+ source) is used to point out the news source, while the focus remains on the message, so the verb forms show no tense backshift. No tense-backshift rule can also be attributed to the inanimate, institutional or generalized sources. In the US subcorpus, *according to* is followed by indication of written sources such as *texts, records, court papers, documents, research*, newspapers, press agencies, institutions and organisations. Animate sources tend to be the general public (*people, witnesses*), spokespersons, and in some cases references are made to field experts, either through their surnames or functions. The British subcorpus contains only half as many references with *according to*, and these mostly point out some research, newspapers, agencies, institutions, organisations, spokesmen, while named persons occur in only few instances. In comparison, the occurrences of the phrase in the Slovene-English subcorpus exceed those in the US and British subcorpora by two or three times respectively, with the most frequent references being made to high-ranking political figures or individual authorities, not attested by our English news texts. The high percentage and the references to individual authorities most likely result from the frequently used structures in Slovene *po besedah/mnenju* (+ animate subject), or *po poročanju/podatkih/navedbah* (+ e.g. agency, newspaper, institution); note the additional

reference to the mode of delivery in Slovene *besede, mnenje, poročanje* etc. The *according to* structure may refer to direct or partial direct quote, as well as indirect speech.

In Slovene news style, the reporting clause, which indicates the news source and introduces the indirect *da*-statement, is often replaced by a *kot*-dependent clause, eg. *Kot je dejal/pojasnil/povedal* (+ animate subject), or *Kot piše/poroča* (+ press agency), literally ‘As he said/explained/told’ or ‘As written/reported’.

While in Slovene indirect statements the conjunction *da* cannot be omitted, the English subcorpora support the overall observation that there is an increasing tendency to omit the conjunction *that*. For example, the Past tense *said* is followed by *that* in only 4% of the *said* occurrences in the US corpus and 7% in the British corpus, while in English translations by the MMC RTVO SLO and the STA the percentage is as high as 16%, which may be interpreted either as a formal observance of the prototypical English pattern or Slovene syntax influence.

5 TENSES IN SLOVENE NEWS REPORTING

Toporišič (1991: 529-531) discusses features marking discoursal and syntactic shifts from direct discourse to indirect discourse in Slovene, such as the use of reporting clauses and modal particles (*baje, bojda, češ*), changes in the mood, temporal and person deixis, and changes and omissions in vocabulary (notably concerning interjections). With reference to tense usage, Toporišič (ibid.: 529) observes that tenses used with speech act and mental verbs in reporting clauses depend on the time of reporting, where the *preteklik* (i.e. the most frequently used past tense in Slovene) indicates an anterior point of reporting, the *sedanjik* (i.e. the Slovene present tense) simultaneity, whereas the *prihodnjik* (i.e. the most frequently used future tense in Slovene) and the *pogojnik* (i.e. the Slovene conditional tense) are used to express posterior points of reporting. For the purpose of illustrating the Slovene tense system with reporting verbs, a random sentence is given:

Rekla je, da bo prišla. (*preteklik* – anteriority)
(Translation: She said that she will(/would) come.)

Reče/Pravi, da bo prišla. (*sedanjik* – simultaneity)
(Translation: She says that she will come.)

Rekla bo/Rekla bi, da bo prišla. (*prihodnjik, pogojnik* – posteriority)
(Translation: She will/would say that she will come.)

There is a corresponding system of tense usage with communication verbs in English. For pragmatic reasons, someone's original statement is naturally reported after it has been made, so both Slovene and English use mostly those tense forms with communication verbs that indicate the anteriority of the indirect event to the time of reporting.

Unlike English, indirect discourse in Slovene observes no backshift of tenses, so Toporišič (1991) does not discuss this grammatical process. However, in his discussion of the Slovene tenses in the indicative mood, Toporišič mentions the relative temporal relations of anteriority, simultaneity and posteriority. The *sedanjik* in "subordinate clauses" expresses either simultaneity or posteriority in relation with the "action in the superordinate clause" (ibid.: 326, 330). His examples *Rekel je, da stanuje v študentskem domu* (translation: He said that he is/was living in a student hall of residence) and *Pravi, da pride jutri* (translation: He says that he will come (literally: 'comes' tomorrow) show that the superordinate and the subordinate clause refer to the relation between the reporting and the reported clause. In the section about the functions of the *preteklik* and *prihodnjik*, Toporišič makes a more direct reference between the notions of anteriority and posteriority and verbs expressing speech acts or mental activities (ibid.: 334). His example illustrating the notion of anteriority *Pravi (Pravil je, Pravil bo), da je imel delo* (translation: He says (+ He said, He will say) that he (had) had work) and his example illustrating the notion of posteriority *Pravi (Pravil je, Pravil bo), da bo imel delo* (translation: He says (+ He said, He will say) that he will (would) have work) feature different tenses in the reporting verbs and the same tense with the indicative finite verb forms in the reported clauses, i.e. *da je imel delo* and *da bo imel delo*. In the section on the *pogojnik*, Toporišič mentions the notion of uncertainty. His illustrative sentences include two examples with mental verbs in the reporting clause: *Ne veš, kako bi rekel?* (translation: You don't know what to say?) and *Ugibal je venomer, kaj bi.* (translation: He kept wondering what to do).

Further, Toporišič (ibid.: 526-527) illustrates different reporting modes by transposing a literary paragraph in free direct speech into indirect speech with communication verbs in the *preteklik*. The finite verb forms in reported sentences show that, except for the changes in the imperative mood and the person, the original tenses are not affected by the narrative shift:

a) *Free direct speech*

- K frizerju bom morala.
- Le pojdi, le, Barbara.
- Ti, Marjeta, nikar me ne priganjaj! Saj grem sama. /.../

b) *Reported speech*

Lepega dne **je** Barbara **rekla** sama sebi, da bo morala k frizerju. Marjeta jo **je** slišala in jo **spodbudila**, naj le gre. Skoraj malo jezna jo **je** Barbara **zavrnila**, naj je ne priganja, ker gre vendar sama.

Toporišič's examples and corpus data show that tenses in the Slovene reporting verbs do not affect the use of the finite verb form(s) in the reported message, which supports the linguistic fact that the sequence of tenses is alien to the Slovene language system. Since the sequence of tenses, in principle, is not observed in Slovene, reporters use modal adjuncts or particles (slov. *členek*) to indicate their disbelief or distanced attitude to the credibility of the information. By far the most frequently used, sometimes as a mere discourse marker, is the conditional structure *naj bi*. The distanced attitude is also indicated through the modal adjuncts *domnevno*, *menda*, *predvidoma* and the *da*-modalized subordinate conjunctions, notably *češ da*, *saj da*, *ker da*, *ki da*. The English corpora do not return high frequencies of corresponding modal structures, *allegedly* shows a rather even tendency throughout the subcorpora. Almost all the hits of *alleged* were found in *The New York Daily News*, while the majority of the adjunct *reportedly* appear in *The Independent* or the British newspapers, and in the English editions of Slovene news outlets.

On the basis of several years of analytical observation of Slovene texts found in the news media and the internet I have, however, noticed a syntactic pattern which can be said to use the sequence of tenses. The pattern occasionally appears in indirect discourse with the past tense of the sense perception verb *videti* ('see') in the *preteklik*, followed by the nominal clause introduced by the adverb *kako* ('how'). The adverb *kako* can be regarded as the more expressive substitute for the conjunction *da* ('that') in the nominal clauses after verbs of sense perception such as *videti*, *slišati*, *čutiti*. In the following example taken from the Gigafida subcorpus "Newspapers", the reported proposition is introduced by the conjunction *da*. The factual *da*-conjunction could be substituted by the adverb *kako*, which would result in a more descriptive or expressive interpretation:

Seveda je takoj dobil gradbeno inšpekcijo na vrata, saj ga je prijavila soseda iz bloka, ko **je videla, da** nekaj dela na strehi.¹³

Translation: /.../ was reported by his neighbour who saw him working on the roof. /'who saw that he is working on the roof'.

Or:

/.../ saj ga je prijavila soseda iz bloka, ko **je videla, kako** nekaj dela na strehi.

Translation: /.../ 'who saw how he is working on the roof'.

¹³ <http://www.gigafida.net/Concordance/Search?q=%22je+videla%2c+da%22&ft=6>

In reported *kako*-statements that function as nominal clauses to the *preteklik* of the verb *videti*, the Imperfective *sedanjik* expresses an action simultaneous with that in the main clause, eg.:

V nedeljo naj bi iz Rösszkeja odpeljali najmanj trije takšni vlaki z najmanj 2000 migranti, predstavniki UNHCR pa **so** tudi ponoči **videli, kako** policisti budijo ljudi v zbirnem centru v Rösszkeju ob madžarsko-srbski meji in jih nekam vozijo.¹⁴

(Translation: /.../ the UNHCR representatives **saw** **how** police officers wake up people in the Rösszke refugee centre next to the Hungarian-Serb border and transport them to a different location.)

However, the following examples from the *Gigafida* corpus show that reported statements in which imperfective actions simultaneous with the verb of sense perception are expressed in the *preteklik*. This indicates a grammatical feature that might be termed the sequence of tenses:

Prav tako v Cairnu **je** neka druga ženska videla, kako **je** piton že požiral glavo njenega psa, mladička bulteriera. (Newspapers)¹⁵

(Translation: /.../ a woman **saw how** a python was devouring the head of her dog.)

Z dragim imava zadovoljivo spolno življenje, zato me je zadnjič močno presenetilo in prizadelo, ko **sem** ga slučajno **videla, kako se je samozadovoljeval**. Kaj neki je narobe? (Magazines)¹⁶

(Translation: /.../ when I **happened to see how** he was masturbating.)

In such contexts the overall impression is that the narrator would like to distance him- or herself from the reported statement since the content may be too sensitive for direct presentation. The *sedanjik* may enhance the vividness of presentation, as in eg. *ko sem ga slučajno videla, kako se samozadovoljuje*.

The distanced connotation, however, may not be always due to the narrator's emotional response; in some contexts the *preteklik* seems to indicate that the simultaneously viewed action refers to a temporally distanced situation, as is the case in the following example:

Logarski Jurče se je nekoč peljal iz Logarske doline proti Solčavi. V tesni soteski pri Žibovčem je videl, kako **je** skobec lovil vodnega kosa. Ustavil je konja in opazoval to, za kosa nevarno tekmo. (Gigafida, Newspapers)¹⁷

¹⁴ <http://www.delo.si/svet/sosescina/tudi-avstrija-in-slovaska-krepita-nadzor-na-mejah.html> (Access: 15 September 2015.)

¹⁵ <http://www.gigafida.net/Concordance/Search?q=%22videla%2C+kako%22>

¹⁶ <http://www.gigafida.net/Concordance/Search?q=%22videla%2C+kako%22>

¹⁷ <http://www.gigafida.net/Concordance/Search?p=2&q=%22je%20videl,%20kako%22&ftt=6>

(Translation: /.../ In the narrow ravine at Žibovče he **saw** ‘how a sparrowhawk was chasing a dipper.’ He stopped his horse and observed this game so dangerous for the dipper.)

The use of the ‘backshifted’ *preteklik* in the reported message may also be interpreted as a grammatical device to circumvent the action of sense perception in the main clause: *V tesni soteski pri Žibovčem je videl, kako je skobec lovil vodnega kosa.*

While the verb of sense perception with the reported message in the *sedanjik* enables the Slovene reader to observe the happening directly, the *preteklik* presents the action as anterior directly to the point of the writer’s report.

Many of the Slovene ‘tense-backshift’ examples found in newspapers and magazines may not have been crafted by professional writers, yet they hint at a linguistic development in Slovene.

6 CONCLUSION

Some parameters governing speech presentation in news reporting have been discussed. The corpora show that, unlike in Slovene, English news reporting tends towards the presentation of short paragraphs with individual statements presented as indirect reports, although there are numerous instances of direct speech and partial direct quotes, especially if made by authoritative individuals.

Since the primary pedagogical aim here was to heighten the awareness of Slovene students of translation to grammatical and stylistic parameters in news translation, the focus was on the use of tenses in English reporting and reported clauses with regard to the overall textual structure of a newspaper article and with regard to the sequence of tenses. Tense-backshift appears to closely observe the authority of the original source of information, while the collective institutional voices or the general public may not trigger the sequence of tenses. With regard to content, political statements are more frequently subject to tense-backshift than scientific, financial or health topics, which seem to be presented in terms of their current relevance. In Slovene, the reporter’s distanced attitude is indicated by modal structures such as *naj bi*, *domnevno*, *menda*, *češ da*, *saj da*, but we noticed that the pattern with the *preteklik* of the verb of sense perception *videti* and the conjunction *kako* may present statements as temporally backshifted.

The subcorpus of English translations by two Slovene news providers show that the MMC RTV Slovenija translations too closely follow the original texts both in

terms of content and style, which results in awkwardly crafted news items with reporting verbs that are used in Slovene news reporting and US governmental press releases, but not in the general press. Their translations show a low awareness of the tense-backshift parameters in news reporting.

Due to the limited space, the article focuses on the temporal and tense relations in news reporting, while a detailed analysis of reporting structures, especially verbs in English and Slovene, will be treated in a separate publication.

Bibliography

- Axelsson, Karin, 2009: Research on fiction dialogue: Problems and possible solutions. Jucker, Andreas H., Daniel Schreier and Marianne Hundt (eds): *Corpora: Pragmatics and Discourse. Papers from the 29th International Conference on English Language Research on Computerized Corpora (ICAME 29). Ascona, Switzerland, 14-18. (Language and Computers: Studies in Practical Linguistics 68)*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 189-201.
- Bal, Mieke, 2006: *A Mieke Bal Reader*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Biber, Douglas, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey Leech, Susan Conrad and Edward Finegan, 1999: *Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.
- Carter, Ronald and Michael McCarthy, 2006: *Cambridge grammar of English: a comprehensive guide: spoken and written English grammar and usage*. Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press.
- Downing, Angela and Phillip Locke, 2006: *English Grammar: A University Course. 2nd ed.* Abingdon and New York: Routledge.
- Garretson, Gregory and Annelie Ädel, 2008: Who's speaking? Evidentiality in US newspapers during the 2004 presidential campaign. Ädel, A. and R. Reppen (eds.): *Corpora and discourse: The challenges of different settings*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. 157-188.
- Karttunen, Laura, 2012: Events *Can* Be Quoted (and Words Need Not Be) Lehtimäki, Markku, Laura Karttunen and Maria Mäkelä (eds.): *Narrative, Interrupted. The Plotless, the Disturbing and the Trivial in Literature*. Berlin/New York: de Gruyter, 57-74.
- Korošec, Tomo, 1998: *Stilistika slovenskega poročevalstva*. Ljubljana: Kmečki glas.
- Landert, Daniella, 2014: *Personalization in Mass Media Communication*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- Leech, Geoffrey, Michael H. Short, 1981: *Style in fiction: a linguistic introduction to English fictional prose*. London, New York: Longman.
- Mozetič, Uroš, 2000: *Problem pripovednega gledišča in žariščenja pri prevajanju proznih besedil*. Ljubljana: Znanstveni inštitut Filozofske fakultete.

- O’Keeffe, Anne and Michael McCarthy (eds.), 2010: *The Routledge Handbook of Corpus Linguistics*. London – New York: Routledge.
- Orel Kos, Silvana, 2014: Discovering English tense-backshift parameters through discourse. Odkrivanje parametrov sosledice glagolskih časov v angleščini skozi diskurz. Lah, Meta (ed.) *Skupni evropski jezikovni okvir - navzkrižni pogledi = Cadre européen commun de référence pour les langues - regards croisés*. Ljubljana: Znanstvena založba Filozofske fakultete. 339–352.
- Poler Kovačič, Melita, 2005: *Kriza novinarske odgovornosti*. Ljubljana: FDV.
- Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech and Jan Svartvik, 1985: *A comprehensive grammar of the English language*. London: Longman.
- Toporišič, Jože, 1991: *Slovenska slovnica*. Maribor: Založba Obzorja.

On-line sources

- Marchi, Anna, 2015: A corpus-assisted analysis of reported speech in news discourse. The case of civil liberties and the Patriot Act in the American quality Press. Duguid, Alison and Anna Marchi, Alan Partington and Charlotte Taylor (eds.): *Gentle Obsessions: Literature, Linguistics and Learning. In Honour of John Morley*. Rome: Artemide. 99–118. http://www.academia.edu/11441547/A_corpus-assisted_analysis_of_reported_speech_in_news_discourse._The_case_of_civil_liberties_and_the_Patriot_Act_in_the_American_quality_press
- Erjavec, Karmen and Melita Poler Kovačič, 2013: Abuse of Online Participatory Journalism in Slovenia: Offensive Comments under News Items. *Medijska istraživanja*, 19/2, 55-73. pdf (356 KB), English, Pages 55
- Vežjak, Boris (ed.), 2013: *Neznosna teža medijske pristranosti. Dialogi 9/13*. <http://www.aristej.si/slo/PDF/Dialogi%209%2013.pdf>