

The auxiliary verb in past perfect and present perfect tense in Bulgarian compared to Italian, Spanish, French, English, and German

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When considering the structure of the past perfect tense (and of course the present perfect tense) in Bulgarian compared to the same tenses in Italian, Spanish, French, English and German, there is an interesting phenomenon. In Bulgarian the auxiliary verb invariably used is to be, for example: чел съм/бях чел, ходил съм/бях ходил, порязал съм се/бях се порязал, whereas none of the other languages considered use the verb to be as an auxiliary verb in all cases in the formation of the past perfect or the present perfect tense. Most often or always the verb to have is used, e.g.: Ho letto/Avevo letto, Heleido/Habialeido, J'ai lu/J'avais lu, I have read/I had read, Ich habe gelesen / Ich hatte gelesen.

At this point within this group of languages is essential to make the following distinction: in Spanish and English the auxiliary verb is have in all cases, where as in Italian, French and German the auxiliary verb have is not used with past participles of all verbs but is combined with the majority of the verbs. In other, far fewer cases the used auxiliary verb is to be, for example:(Lui) e arrivato, I've come, Er ist gekommen.

The following issues are studied in their structural and semantic aspect:

- Is it not possible the auxiliary verb for these two perfect tenses in Italian, Spanish, French, English and German to be have, just like in Bulgarian?
- Why for perfect tenses in Italian, French and German two different auxiliary verbs – have and to be – are required?
- Is it not possible for the verb have to be always or sometimes used as an auxiliary one in Bulgarian, too?
- Why is it possible in the formation of these two perfect tenses in Bulgarian to use the verb to be in all cases?

The conclusion drawn in a structural aspect is that in Bulgarian this is only possible because there are two past participles – active and passive. In the other five languages there is only one past participle. In some of them it is sometimes called past passive participle, but no matter its definition, the availability of only one past participle makes it necessary to make the distinction between the passive voice and the perfect tenses somewhere else. The only element, which remains, is the auxiliary verb.