COMRIE'S TENSE*

Review Article

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In 1976, Bernard Comrie published a book entitled Aspect in the Cambridge Textbooks in Linguistics series. This book has been quite influential as a standard reference work. As a natural sequel, C has now written the book under review, which might well obtain the same role. Being one of the people who had access to a pre-publication version of the book, I may have partly forfeited my right to criticize publicly the published volume. However, in view of the fact that I am simultaneously publishing a book in the same area — although of a somewhat different character — the Editor of this journal asked me to relate C's ideas to my own, an opportunity that I am now gratefully accepting.

The book consists of five chapters. The first chapter is called 'Some theoretical and methodological preliminaries'. Here, C discusses the relation between tense and the general concept of time and the status of notions such as grammaticalisation, deixis, basic and secondary meanings and implicature. I shall comment on some of these notions.

To start with, let us look at the definition of the central notion of the book, 'tense'. On p. 1, C defines 'tense' as 'the grammaticalisation of location in time', a formulation which appears to suggest that tense is a process, although this was probably not the author's intention. In other places, formulations such as 'grammaticalised expression of location in time' occur (p. 9). Note the use of 'tense' as an uncountable noun: it is not self-evident how to go from 'tense' to 'a tense', i.e. from 'tense' as a general phenomenon to individual tense categories. It appears from C's text that he wants to say that a grammatical category is a tense if it

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expresses location in time. Such a formulation, of course, leaves a lot of questions unsettled, e.g.: What exactly does ‘express’ mean? Can a category also express other concepts and still be a tense? As far as I can see, C is never quite explicit on these issues: the sections where he discusses the distinctions between basic and secondary meanings and between meaning and implicature suggest, however, that he would subscribe to the claim that the basic meaning of a bona fide tense category should be temporal (although possibly not exclusively so).

C’s definition of tense is semantically based: whenever we meet ‘grammaticalisation of location in time’, we are dealing with tense. Semantic definitions of this kind are a priori in the sense that there is no guarantee that they will correspond to anything in the real world, and even if they do, there is no way of telling beforehand if what they correspond to is a unified phenomenon. More specifically, what is it that says that tense, as defined by C, will be in any sense one unified and clearly discernible dimension of systems of grammatical categories — there is no real reason to assume that a semantic distinction is always expressed by one and the same morphological or syntactic distinction. The cardinality of sets (that is, how many members a set has), for instance, may be relevant both for the grammatical category of number and for e.g. asp ectual categories (although this is less common than is often thought, see Dahl 1985 p. 97), yet these are clearly separate as grammatical categories. Similarly, it is clear that questions of temporal reference are relevant also for many categories that are arguably primarily asp ectual, notably for the ones that can be subsumed under the ‘perfective : imperfective’ opposition (Dahl 1985, chapter 3). I argue in my book that categories traditionally labelled ‘perfective past’ are in general better treated as just ‘perfectives’, with the temporal meaning taken as secondary to the asp ectual one. Also, it is not clear that even the ‘classical’ examples of tense categories form a unified ‘dimension’ in most languages. In many cases, there is just one major tense distinction, ‘past : non-past’ or ‘future : non-future’, in others, there are two, but they are independent from the point of view of the system of marking: in the clearest cases, as in English, one has morphological and the other syntactic expression. Maybe it is better to think of the past and the future tenses in general as grammatically separate although semantically related phenomena. This point of view, I think, puts
the eternal discussion about the nature of the ‘future tense’ (see e.g. pp. 43—47 in the book under review) in a slightly different perspective. If the opposition ‘future : non-future’ is not temporal, there is actually only ‘past : non-past’ left as a clear example of a tense opposition building on ‘absolute’ precedence relations, and that means that the question whether the future is a tense really boils down to whether it is just like the past or not, which we knew from the beginning that it is not.

One property, which according to C characterizes tense in general and distinguishes it from aspect, is that tense is deictic (p. 14). Here, C appears to be in agreement with Lyons (1977, 677 ff.), to whose treatment of deixis he refers in a footnote. However, this agreement may be spurious, since it is not clear if C’s concept of deixis is really the same as that of Lyons. The latter gives the following more or less standard definition of ‘deixis’ (1977, 637): ‘By deixis is meant the location and identification of persons, objects, events, processes and activities being talked about, or referred to, in relation to the spatiotemporal context created and sustained by the act of utterance and the participation in it, typically, of a single speaker and at least one addressee.’ C, on the other hand, says (14) that ‘a system which relates entities to a reference point is termed a deictic system’. Later on (16), he makes clear that this reference point need not be identical to the ‘here and now’ of the speech situation: ‘it is possible to have other deictic centres, provided that they are clarified by the context’. Even if Lyons also allows for the possibility of shifting the deictic centre by what he calls ‘deictic projection’ — ‘the speaker projects himself backwards or forwards in time, as it were’ (1977, 690) — it is fairly clear that his notion of deixis is more narrow than C’s. Thus, he says in connection with the pluperfect in English that ‘anteriority is not of course a deictic notion: so that ‘earlier-in-the-past’ might be more appropriate than ‘past-in-thepast’’. This is in direct contradiction to C’s treatment of the same category: ‘the meaning of the pluperfect is that there is a reference point in the past’ — from which follows that the pluperfect is a deictic category — ‘and that the situation in question is located prior to that reference point, i.e. the pluperfect can be thought of as ‘past in the past’’ (65). The important problem here is of course not whether C is in agreement with Lyons (although the footnote reference may be misleading in suggesting that he is). Rather, the
question is if his generous definition of deixis does not make it a bit too all-comprising, in particular in the absence of a definition of ‘point of reference’. The problem is that is becomes rather hard to see what distinguishes ‘deictic’ from the general notion ‘relative’. Of course, it is not insignificant that the cases which are problematic for the definition of ‘deixis’ coincide with the fuzzy borderline area between tense and aspect (as noted, incidentally, by Lyons 1977, 689). It may be argued that relative tense is in fact a secondary development derived from the ‘prototypical’ cases of absolute tense. Similarly, using other reference points than ‘here and now’ is probably developmentally derived from the ‘prototypical’ cases of deixis. But we should not expect to find clarity where there is none, and we should not expect the borderlines of the imprecise notion of tense to be clarified by the equally imprecise notion of deixis.

In the final section of Chapter 1, C discusses critically the thesis that tense and aspect categories should be defined primarily in terms of their contextual functions. I think that it is possible to agree with his argument in general, although it might be objected that even if tense and aspect categories cannot be defined this way, there may still be some value in the contextual function theory in that one of the raisons d'être of those categories may well be the information they carry about discourse structure.

Chapters 2 and 3 are labeled ‘Absolute tense’ and ‘Relative tense’, respectively. The distinction between absolute and relative tense, which we have already had occasion to mention, is fundamental in C’s theory of tense. The distinction is traditional, although, as C mentions, it can be argued to be misleading, since even absolute tense is relative in a sense — it relates events to the moment of speech. One might defend the traditional terminology, however, by noticing that absolute tenses do have one ‘degree of freedom’ less than relative tenses: since one parameter is given by the speech situation, absolute tenses are for all practical purposes ‘one-place’.

Under the heading ‘Absolute tense’, C treats the traditional categories Present, Past and Future. In this connection, I would like to point to one notion that is conspicuously absent from C’s book, namely that of markedness. This is particularly striking in view of the prominent role of markedness in Comrie 1976. In describing the three ‘classical’ tenses, present, past, and future, it would seem rather near at hand to point to the obvious dif-
ferences between them as to markedness status: the present is by most criteria the unmarked category relative to the others, in most languages. It ought then be possible to dispense with an independent characterisation of the semantic content of this category: it could be defined negatively, in terms of the absence of the others. C however does give a positive characterisation of the meaning of the present tense: he says that its basic meaning is location at the present moment (i.e. the point of speech). He devotes a rather long discussion to showing that in most cases, even if the situation referred to by a present tense does not literally coincide with the moment of speech, it still makes sense to say at least that it includes it. If the present tense is characterized rather as ‘non-past’, ‘non-future’, that discussion becomes less relevant, and it will in addition be easier to accommodate those cases (not mentioned by C) where time reference does not seem relevant at all, such as St. George slays the dragon (as a description of e.g. a drawing).

In Chapter 3, C makes a further distinction between two kinds of relative tense: ‘pure relative tense’ — exemplified by participles in attributive position in English, as in The passengers awaiting flight 26 proceeded to departure gate 5 — and ‘absolute-relative tense’ — exemplified by e.g. the pluperfect (past perfect) in English — whose meaning is said to ‘combine absolute time location of a reference point with relative time location of a situation’.

C notes that pure relative tense at least in English appears to be a phenomenon pertaining to subordinate verbs. However, he claims (p. 63) that ‘there are some languages where even main clause verbs receive relative time reference, for instance Classical Arabic: . . . In addition to aspeccual values, the imperfect has the time reference meaning component of relative non-past, while the perfect has the time reference meaning component of relative past.’ This relative time meaning is said to surface in contexts where some reference point other than the present moment is indicated.

Let us scrutinize this analysis and look at the two aspects in turn. The example C gives for the perfect is

(1) ʕajīku-ka (imperfect) ʔidā hmarra (perfect) ʔl-busru
'I will come to you when the unripe date ripens'

As evidence that Classical Arabic has relative tenses in main clauses the example is not really to the point, since the perfect verb form here is in a (temporal) subordinate clause. It is indeed
a well-known fact about Arabic aspect usage that the perfect may be used with future time reference in adverbial subordinate clauses. But not only is this phenomenon restricted in its scope, it is highly questionable whether it involves relative tense meanings in C’s sense. Ironically, C himself — although in another context — provides us with the counter-arguments to the claim. On p. 26, he discusses the ‘interpretation of sequential events assigned to perfective past verbs in a narrative’. Most frequently, a sequence of perfective verbs in a narrative are interpreted as relating a sequence of events occurring in the order the verbs indicate: however, as C notes, there is no necessity for doing so. Thus, in the Russian sentence (2) the events may have taken place in any order.

(2) V tečenje noči veter sorval kryšu, razbil tri okna i razrubil jablonju  
‘During the night the wind tore off the roof, broke three windows and brought down the apple-tree’

C draws the conclusion that the sequential interpretation is no component of the meaning of the perfective aspect but a conversational implicature. Now, it is clear that there are quite parallel examples with subordinate clauses. There is thus an apparent temporal contrast between the following minimal pair in Russian:

(3a) Kogda ty pročitaes’ knigu, ja pojdu domoj.  
‘When you (have) read the book, I will go home’
(b) Kogda ty budes’ čitat’ knigu, ja budu sedet’ v sosednej komnate.  
‘When you are reading the book, I will be sitting next door’

In (3a), where the verbs are perfective, the action of the subordinate clause is understood to precede that of the main: in (3b), where the verbs are imperfective, the actions are simultaneous. However, it is not difficult to construct examples of simultaneous events being referred to by perfective verbs in such constructions:

(4a) Kogda moj otec umer, izčez mir moego detstva.  
‘When my father died, the world of my childhood disappeared’

There is thus no basis for claiming that the sequential interpretation found in (3a) is a necessary entailment of the perfective aspect. If we now go back to Classical Arabic, we can see that C’s example (1) is in fact quite parallel to the Russian sentence (3a).
The question is if examples like (2) are found in that language too. Indeed, this appears to be the case. Consider (5), which is a slightly modified example from a grammar of Classical Arabic:1

(5) ǧiða safarra (perfect), fa sawfa naðhab (future) macakom
    ‘if we travel, we shall leave with you’

Clearly, our travelling cannot take place before our leaving. It thus appears that what C calls ‘the relative time reference meaning component’ of the Classical Arabic perfect is of the same nature as the sequential interpretation of perfective verbs in narratives, that is, an implicature due to the aspeclual meaning of the perfective forms. As I note in Dahl 1985, it is very common for categories with the basic meaning of perfective aspect to be restricted to past time reference, and it is not uncommon that this restriction is cancelled in some contexts, such as subordinate (temporal and conditional) clauses. The Arabic usage is thus not unique, and there is no need to invoke the concept of relative tense in this context.

As for the imperfect, Classical Arabic, like many other languages in the world, does not systematically distinguish present and past time reference in imperfective contexts, in particular in those cases when the time reference is made clear in some other way. There would thus be no difference as to tense and aspect marking in sentences of the following kind:

(6) Right now, he is playing tennis

(7) Yesterday at this time, he was playing tennis

C says that ‘the basic relative time reference meaning’ of the Arabic imperfect surfaces ‘if the context indicates some other point/than the present moment (.Ui. D)/as reference point’. In cases like (7), then, we would postulate three relevant time points: S, E and R, and the crucial factor for the meaning of the Arabic imperfect (like presumably similar categories in a lot of other languages) would be the relation between E and R. The question, however, is whether we need to postulate any temporal meaning here at all. To make things a bit clearer, let us consider another language, viz. Yoruba. The tense-aspect system of Yoruba is very much like that of English, except for one crucial thing: there is no counterpart to the past tense. Let us for the time being neglect any other possible differences and assume that the two systems are indeed
exactly identical modulo the past tense. Yoruba, then, is a language where the translations of (6) and (7) do not differ as to tense and aspect marking. Should we assume that there is a category in Yoruba with relative non-past meaning? Well, given that there is no such category in English and that the Yoruba system was exactly like the English minus the past tense this seems a bit redundant. A more plausible solution would be to say that time reference is not relevant for the grammatical categories used in (6—7) in Yoruba. Arabic is somewhat more complicated in that time reference seems relevant in some parts of the verbal system: probably those who favor an account like C’s feel that they are somehow obliged to explain the absence of a past time marker in sentences like (7).

Let us now turn to the ‘absolute-relative tenses’. As noted above, C includes under this heading such categories as the pluperfect and also the future perfect in English. The present perfect, however, does not get this treatment: ‘Despite the apparent formal similarity between perfect and absolute-relative tenses, and despite the fact that many linguists have treated all of these in a uniform way, it will be argued here that the perfect is in fact radically different from the absolute-relative tenses, and should not be given a uniform treatment with them’ (p. 78). Even if I would not deny that there are differences between e.g. the present perfect and the pluperfect in English, I think that if C wants to say, as he seems to do, that these categories are of a fundamentally different nature from each other, then he clearly goes too far. To substantiate this, let us look at his arguments. To start with, C claims that there is a difference between the perfect and the absolute-relative tenses in how they relate to other forms such as the simple past with regard to location in time. Specifically, he claims that the perfect and the past do not differ in terms of location in time, since both locate situations as prior to the present moment. As a general statement, this is in fact false of both categories: there are e.g. cases like John will say that he arrived tomorrow (quoted by C on p. 112), where the past tense is used ‘relatively’. More crucial, however, are cases where the perfect but not the simple past can be used, e.g. the following, the first of which is C’s own (p. 79):

(8) Whenever I get here at two o’clock the boss has always left at one-thirty for lunch
(9) Whenever I enter my office my secretary has emptied the ash-tray

In such habitual constructions, the reference point to which the perfect relates the action is not the present moment but rather any moment that meets the condition specified in the temporal clause. There is no necessity for such a moment to precede the moment of speech. Similarly, in languages like German or Swedish, where future time reference is less systematically marked than in English, the perfect is quite frequently marked for events that lie or may lie in the future (C discusses such cases on pp. 31—32):

(10) Bis morgen bin ich schon weggefahren
     ‘(lit.) Until tomorrow I have already departed’

It thus appears false to say that the perfect and the past do not differ in location in time. C goes on to note that the English perfect on one hand and the pluperfect and the future perfect differ in their collocation possibilities with the adverbials, so that I have arrived yesterday is not possible whereas John had left on Tuesday is OK. The constraint on the use of the perfect, according to C, concerns adverbials specifying ‘a specific time point or period in the past’. C admits that the force of the argument is weakened by the fact that the constraint ‘seems to be rather idiosyncratic to English’. (Swedish has a very similar constraint, so it is a bit less idiosyncratic than C suggests.) Still, C wants to see it as an instance of ‘non-correspondence between the perfect and the absolute-relative tenses’. But even for English it is not wholly clear that the constraint is on the (present) perfect as such. As we can see from (9—10), and as C himself says, the perfect may be combined with some kinds of definite time adverbials. C’s explanation is that this is the case when the adverbial is interpreted ‘as referring to a class of time points/periods rather than just to a specific time point or period’. But an alternative would be to assume that the crucial factor is whether the reference point is really identical to the moment of speech or not. Such a hypothesis was put forward in Dahl 1971 and argued for in more detail in Andersson 1977, who supports it by examples like the following, where a definite time adverbial is used in Swedish with a perfect in a future context:
(11) När du kommer till Södertälje Södra, skall du ta det tåg som har avgått från Stockholm 9.17
   ‘(lit.) When you arrive at Södertälje South Station, you shall take the train which has departed from Stockholm at 9.17’

This sentence may be uttered before or after 9.17 — in other words, the departure of the train from Stockholm may equally well be in the past or in the future. The point of reference — your arrival to Södertälje — is indisputably in the future. If no future reference point can be assumed, (12) is significantly less acceptable:

(12) ? ?Var befinner sig just nu det tåg som har avgått från Stockholm 9.17?
   ‘(lit.) Where is now the train which has departed from Stockholm at 9.17?’

If the hypothesis discussed now is correct, the fact that the pluperfect and the future perfect are not touched by the constraint on definite time adverbials follows more or less automatically from the fact they are not used when the point of speech is the reference point. The constraint can thus not be used as an example of a non-parallelism between these categories and the present perfect.

C goes on to point out that ‘some languages have a distinct perfect while lacking a distinct pluperfect and future perfect, while others have a distinct pluperfect and future perfect but no perfect, while in yet others the formation of perfect on the one hand and absolute-relative tenses on the other does not show parallelism of compositionality’. These statements are true, but they do not really invalidate the general tendencies: if a language has a perfect, and in addition past and/or future tenses which can cooccur with the perfect, the combinations of these forms will be used as a pluperfect and a future perfect, respectively. In my material, there seem to be no counterexamples to this generalisation. It should be noted that the examples that C provides of perfects which have no pluperfect counterparts (Swahili, LuGanda) are morphologically expressed categories, which makes it more difficult to combine them with past tenses. Even in those languages which have pluperfects but no perfects (such as many Romance languages) the pluperfects are usually historically derived from past tenses of a perfect category, which has then either expanded its domain to become a general past or perfective past (as in French) or otherwise changed its
function (as in Portuguese). In languages which have a perfect but no general past tense, the perfect is normally used in the contexts where other languages have pluperfects. Similarly, as we have seen (ex. 10), when a language allows the use of the present tense for future time reference the present perfect can be used in cases where English has a future perfect. In other words, it is natural to see the pluperfect and the future perfect as the past and the future of the perfect, respectively.

Again, I do not want to deny the differences between the categories. It is of course worth-while to point out, as C does, that historical developments often affect the perfect and e.g. the pluperfect in different ways in one and the same language. There are also plenty of examples that one of the categories may develop special uses that the other does not have, e.g. the use of the pluperfect as a general remote past in many languages. However, I think it is important to see that this is a special case of a rather general tendency for composite or complex grammatical categories to show what could be termed ‘emergent’ qualities, i.e. features that cannot be derived from the features of the simplex categories that they are built up of. For instance, what is structurally a ‘past of a future’, e.g. the English constructions involving forms like would and should, is in many languages used in various modal uses not derivable from the meanings of the past and the future (hence denominations like ‘conditional’).

In Chapter 4, ‘Degrees of remoteness’, C discusses tense categories which do not only locate a situation relative to a reference point but also indicate the temporal distance between the two points in time. This is a topic which has until recently been largely neglected in the literature and which I have myself discussed (among other places) in Dahl 1983. C’s account adds in an admirable way a lot of empirical detail to the rather skeletal picture given in the earlier treatments.

Chapter 5 is entitled ‘Tense and syntax’ and treats problems such as tense neutralisation, sequence of tenses, and time reference in subordinate clauses.

In sections 5.2—5.3, C discusses temporal reference in subordinate clause and the phenomenon of ‘sequence of tenses’, well-known from traditional grammar. He says that there are in principle two ways of accounting for the choice of tense in the subordinate clause in a sentence such as John said that he would leave: the first — ‘the
deictic centre’ analysis — says that ‘the verb is in this form because of its time interpretation relative to the present moment’, the second — the ‘sequence of tenses’ analysis — postulates a rule ‘whereby after a main clause verb in the past tense the verb in the subordinate clause must be shifted back into the past relative to the tense used in indirect speech’. C shows that there are conclusive arguments against the ‘deictic centre’ analysis — for instance, it would imply that if John said the day before yesterday I will come tomorrow, that would be reported as John said that he came yesterday rather than John said that he would come yesterday. However, there is in fact a third possible analysis, which C does not mention, and which is in a sense half-way between the two analyses that he treats. The essence of C’s own analysis is that tense, as opposed to other deictic categories, is not characterized by a ‘shift in deictic centre’, i.e. it is interpreted relative to the reported speech act rather than to the reporting speech act. The difference between Russian, in which there is in general a preservation of tenses when one passes from direct to indirect speech, and English, where verbs in the present tense are shifted to the past tense, would then be precisely the syntactic rule of sequence-of-tenses. We might retain the hypothesis that there is in general no shift of deictic centre for tense but give another interpretation to the English facts: the use of the past tense to render what is in direct speech the present tense might be taken as an agreement phenomenon signalling the dependent character of the indirect speech clause. The advantage of this analysis is that it allows for a natural explanation of the apparent counter-examples to the sequence-of-tense principle, e.g. John said that he is ill, which might be uttered if ‘the content of the reported speech has continuing validity’. C explains such examples by a ‘relaxation’ of the sequence-of-tense principle. Under the alternative analysis, however, we would rather explain those cases by assuming that here there is indeed a shift of deictic centre, that is, that they are interpreted relative to the reporting speech act. A prediction we could make from this is that the less dependent of the original speaker’s perspective the proposition reported in the indirect speech is, the more probable is the use of a present tense in a past context. This, I think, is borne out: one context where present tenses are particularly natural are factive clauses, e.g. in a sentence like When did people realize that the world is round? A somewhat unexpected corroboration comes from Rus-
sian: it turns out that it is indeed possible to ‘shift’ the present tense to past tense in some oblique contexts, e.g. in a sentence like the following:

(13) Petr ponjal, čto on bolen / byl bolen.
‘Peter understood that he is/was ill’

It is hard to see how such an example could be explained if we do not assume that there may be a shift of deictic centre for tense in some Russian oblique contexts. It is striking that although the examples look rather different at the surface — in English, we have unexpected uses of the present, in Russian, we have unexpected uses of the past — they can be seen as manifestations of the same principle — that some oblique tenses may be given an ‘independent’ interpretation.

C notes that in English, an original past tense embedded under a past verb of saying may be reported equally well with the past or the pluperfect: John said, ‘I arrived on Friday’ goes to John said that he arrived / had arrived on Friday. He suggests that this could be accounted for by assuming ‘two slightly different versions of the sequence of tenses rule, either of which may be applied’, admitting in a footnote that ‘in fairness, it should be noted that the alternation of pluperfect and simple past here could be treated as an argument in favour of the deictic centre analysis of tense in indirect speech’. The alternative analysis developed here would treat this alternation, again, as due to a choice between using the reported or the reporting speech act as ‘deictic centre’.

Chapter 6 is called ‘Conclusion: Towards a formal theory of tense’. I suspect that not everyone would agree with C what a formal theory of tense should be like — for instance, the words ‘truth’ or ‘truth-condition’ do not occur at all in this Chapter. The framework C uses is in the Reichenbachian tradition although, as noted in a footnote, ‘with crucial modifications introduced by Comrie (1981)’. The reader would have benefitted more from a direct enumeration of the modifications than by this reference to a paper which may not be easily accessible to everybody.

In a book of this kind, a great number of technical concepts and terms are necessarily introduced. It is important for the reader to be able to find the definitions or explanations of such terms quickly. Regrettably, no typographical device (such as boldface) is used in the book to mark new terms when they are introduced. In addition
the index is not very complete. Thus, on the first two pages, at least three key concepts, 'grammaticalisation', 'deictic centre' and 'remoteness', are introduced without being referred to in the index.

In the preface, C says that 'experience suggests that in a book citing examples from a wide range of languages typographical errors invariably slip past the author'. Certainly, no typologist can but agree with this! In compliance with C's wish to have errors communicated to him, I would like to point out a mistake in the first Norwegian example on p. 20: detta (which is Swedish!) should be dette 'this'. In passing, I would also like to draw attention to the typographical maltreatment of my own first name in the bibliography (p. 131).

There are few linguists who can compete with C in his combination of a lucid and readable style with an ability to synthesize a rich empirical material from an astonishing range of languages. The fact that I have taken issue with him at several points in this review should not be taken as anything else than a sign of the controversy of the area. C's book on tense can be recommended to anyone who wants an overview of the field.

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NOTES
1 Blachere 1958. I am indebted to Ahmed Elgendi for the reformulation of the example.
2 See e.g. Huddleston 1969 for a formulation of a similar point of view.

REFERENCES
Huddleston, R. 1969. 'Some observations on tense and deixis in English'. Language 45. 777—806.