

National Research University Higher School of Economics

as a manuscript

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**EXPERIMENTAL AND CORPUS STUDIES OF LINGUISTIC
PRAGMATICS: INFORMATIVITY, ILLOCUTIONARY
SENTENCE TYPES, AND METALINGUISTIC COMPARISON**

Dissertation Summary

for the purpose of obtaining

Doctor of Science in Philology and Linguistics

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This study has been completed at the School of Linguistics of the Faculties of Humanities of the HSE University (National Research University Higher School of Economics).

Publications

Eight articles were selected for the defense. All the publications are indexed in the Scopus or WoS databases or published in the HSE Journal Lists A, B, C or D. Three articles were published in the journals included in the first quartile of the Scopus database, two articles were published in the journal included in the second quartile of the Scopus database, and four articles were published in the journals included in the A category of the HSE Journal List (the sets of these articles are intersective). The articles are given below according to the year of publication; the first author is marked with an asterisk *.

1. Zevakhina N.*, Schipkova A. Asymmetry in Russian metalinguistic comparatives: corpus and experimental evidence // *Voprosy Jazykoznanija* (accepted for publication) (Scopus Q2, category B of the HSE List)
2. Zevakhina N.*, Sigdel E. Experimenting with single-pair vs. pair-list interpretations in Russian multiple wh-clauses // *Journal of Slavic Linguistics*. Vol. 30, FASL 29 extra issue. P. 1–11. (Scopus Q2, category A of the HSE List)
3. Zevakhina N. Veridicality and the cause-effect relation in Russian *esli-* and *raz-*conditionals: experimenting with Conditional Perfection and logical entailment // *Linguistics Vanguard*. Vol. 8, № s4. 2022. P. 401–412. (Scopus Q1, category B of the HSE List)
4. Zevakhina N.*, Prigorkina V. Processing Conditional Perfection in promises and threats: The role of negation, clause order and incentive // *Journal of Psycholinguistic Research*. Vol. 50. 2021. P. 1557–1573. (Scopus Q1, category A of the HSE List)
5. Zevakhina N.*, Pasalskaya E., Chinkova A. Over-specification of small cardinalities in referential communication // *Frontiers in Psychology*. Vol. 12. 2021. Article 745230. (Scopus Q1, category A of the HSE List)
6. Zevakhina, N. Složnopodčinennye predloženiya s vosklitsatel'noj interpretatsiej v russkom jazyke [Complex sentences with an exclamative interpretation in Russian] // *Russian Language and Linguistic Theory*. Vol. 36, № 2. 2018. P. 199–227. (Category D of the HSE List)
7. Zevakhina N.*, Dzhakupova S., Vishenkova A. The grammar of Russian metalinguistic comparatives // *Scando-Slavica*. Vol. 63, № 2. 2017. P. 179–197. (Scopus Q3, category A of the HSE List)

8. Zevakhina, N. K. klassifikatsii illokutivnyx tipov predloženij [Towards the classification of illocutionary sentence types] // *Russian Language and Linguistic Theory*. Vol. 29, № 1. 2015. P. 87–116. (Category D of the HSE List)

The results of the study are also presented in the following seven articles. Three articles are published in the journal included in the first quartile of the Scopus database, one article is published in the journal included in the second quartile of the Scopus database, four articles are published in the journals included in the category A of the HSE Journal List (the sets of these articles are intersective). The articles are given according to the year of publication; the first author is marked with an asterisk *.

9. Zevakhina N.*, Rodina M. Presupposition diversity: soft and hard presupposition triggers in (non-)embedded contexts // *Acta Linguistica Petropolitana* (accepted for publication) (Scopus Q4, category D of the HSE List)
10. Vilinbakhova E., Escandell-Vidal V., Zevakhina N. Tautologies, inferential processes and constraints on evoked knowledge // *Journal of Pragmatics*. Vol. 191. 2022. P. 55–66. (Scopus Q1, category A of the HSE List)
11. Zevakhina N.*, Gornshtejn D., Egorova, A. Faktory, vlijajuschie na proektsiju presuppozitsij v chuvashskom jazyke: Eksperimental'noe issledovanie [The factors influencing the projection of presuppositions in the Chuvash language: An experimental study] // *Ural-Altaiic Studies*. Vol. 40. 2021. P. 7–30. (Scopus Q2, category B of the HSE List)
12. Vishenkova A., Zevakhina N.* Exclamatives with and without predicates in Russian // *Russian linguistics*. Vol. 43, №2. 2019. P. 107–125. (Scopus Q3, category A of the HSE List)
13. Zevakhina N. The hypothesis of insubordination and three types of wh-exclamatives // *Studies in Language*. Vol. 40, №4. 2016. P. 765–814. (Scopus Q1, category A of the HSE List)
14. Van Tiel B., van Miltenburg E., Zevakhina N., Geurts B. Scalar diversity // *Journal of Semantics*. Vol. 33, №1. 2016. P. 137–175. (Scopus Q1, category A of the HSE List)
15. Zevakhina N. Syntactic strategies of exclamatives // *The Journal of Estonian and Finno-Ugric Linguistics (ESUKA – JEFUL)*. Vol. 4, №2. 2013. P. 157–178. (category C of the HSE List)

Moreover, the results of the study are presented in the following publications. The articles are given according to the year of publication.

Zevakhina N., Pasalskaya E. Overspecification of small cardinalities in reference production // Proceedings of the 1st Conference “Experiments in Linguistic Meaning”. Linguistic Society of America, 2021. P. 298–309.

Zevakhina N., Prigorkina V. Quantity inferences in conditionals: a pilot experimental study // Proceedings of the 11th International Conference of Experimental Linguistics. Athens, Greece: National and Kapodistrian University of Athens, 2020. P. 233–236.

Zevakhina, N. Konstruktsija “Našol čem udivit’!” [Construction “Našol čem udivit’!”] // EVRika! Festschrift in honor of Ekaterina V. Rakhilina / ed. by D. Ryzhova, N. Dobrushina, A. Bonch-Osmolovskaya, A. Vyrenkova, M. Kyuseva, T. Reznikova. Moscow: Labirint, 2018. P. 290–301.

Zevakhina N., Dainiak A. Russian predicates selecting remarkable clauses: corpus-based approach and Gricean perspective // Bridging Formal and Conceptual Semantics: Selected Papers of the BRIDGE Workshop 14, Studies in Language and Cognition 4. Dusseldorf University Press / ed. by K. Balogh, W. Petersen. 2017. P. 187–208.

Zevakhina N., Dzhakupova S. Russian metalinguistic comparatives: a functional perspective / NRU HSE. Series WP BRP “Linguistics”. 2015. No. 39.

Zevakhina N. Strength and similarity of scalar alternatives. Series MITWPL “MIT Working Papers in Linguistics. 2012. MIT (Cambridge, USA).

Zevakhina N. Esperimental’nye issledonaviya v oblasti pragmatičeskix implikatur (kak odno iz napravlenij lingvističeskoj pragmatiki) [Experimental studies in pragmatic implicatures (as one of the directions of the linguistic pragmatics)] // Problems of language: Proceedings of the first conference “Problems of language: a view by young researchers” / ed. by E. Devyatkina, D. Ganenkov, D. Makhovikov, A. Shluinsky. Moscow: Institute of Linguistics of the Russian Academy of Sciences, 2012. P. 76–91.

Some of the results are given in the following textbook:

Dolgorukov V., Zevakhina N., Popova D. Vvedenie v lingvističeskuju pragmatiku: Učebnik [Introduction into linguistic pragmatics] / ed. by N. Zevakhina. Moscow: LENAND, 2020.

Conference Talks

The main findings of the study were discussed in 2011–2022 at the following thirty-three research conferences and workshops:

The 10th International Symposium on Intercultural, Cognitive and Social Pragmatics (2022)

Leipzig Lectures on Language End-of-Year Symposium (2021)

Moscow HSE Pragmatics Workshop (2021)

The 4th Experimental Pragmatics in Italy Conference (2021)

The 17th International Pragmatics Conference (2021)

The 14th European Conference on Formal Description of Slavic Languages (2021)

Workshop “Scales, degrees and implicature: Novel synergies between Semantics and Pragmatics” (2021)

Workshop “The Semantics and Pragmatics of Conditional Connectives” (2021)

The 11th International Conference of Experimental Linguistics (2020)

Workshop on “The Processing of Negation and Polarity” (2020)

The 1st Conference “Experiments in Linguistic Meaning” (2020)

The 15th Annual Slavic Linguistics Society Meeting (2020)

The 29th Conference “Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics” (2020)

Workshop “Focus alternatives: Theoretical and empirical perspectives” (2020)

The 8th Experimental Pragmatics Conference (2019)

Grammatičeskie Protsessy v Sinxronii i Diaxronii [Grammatical Processes and Systems in Synchrony and Diachrony] (2019, 2022)

The 50th Annual Meeting of the Societas Linguistica Europaea (2017)

Russkaja Grammatika: Opisanie, Prepodavanje, Testirovanie [Russian Grammar: Description, Teaching, Testing] (2017)

The 14th Annual Conference of the Slavic Cognitive Linguistics Association “Crossing boundaries: taking a cognitive scientific perspective on Slavic languages and linguistics” (2015)

Logical and Linguistic Pragmatics workshop (2015)

Odinnadtsataja Konferentsija po Tipologii i Grammatike dlja Molodyx Issledovatelej [The 11th Conference on Typology and Grammar for Young Researchers] (2014)

Workshop Bridging Formal and Conceptual Semantics (2014)

The 5th Biennial Conference of Experimental Pragmatics (2013)

Logičeskaja i Linguističeskaja Pragmatika: k Stoletiju G.P. Grice [Logic and Linguistic Pragmatics: towards the Centenary of H. P. Grice] (2013)

Pervaja Konferents-škola “Problemy Jazyka: Vzgljad Molodyx Issledovatelej” [1st conference-school “Problems of Language: A View by Young Researchers”] (2012)

The 16th Sinn und Bedeutung Conference (2011)

Proper Use of Quantification in Ordinary Language (2011)

The 32nd TaBu Dag (2011)

Kognitivnaja Konferentsija v Moskve: Novye Issledonavija [Cognitive Conference in Moscow: New Studies] (2011)

Moscow Syntax and Semantics (2011)

Meaning, Context, and Cognition (2011)

Forty-three oral, poster and invited talks were given at research conferences and seminars.

Funding

The studies were supported by the following national and university grants:

Grant of the Ministry of Education and Science № 075–15–2020–793 “Next-generation computational linguistics platform for the Russian language digital recording: infrastructure, resources, research”.

Project “Experiments at the linguistics and logic interface” 2020–2022.

Grant by the Russian Foundation of Basic Research №20–312–70009 “Grammatical features of the Turkic languages of the Volga region” 2020–2021.

Grant by the Russian Science Foundation №18–78–10128 “When the verb is not a verb: non-finite constructions in the languages of Russia”, 2018–2021.

Grant by the Russian Science Foundation №16–18–02071 “Boundary Russian: evaluating difficulty of comprehending Russian texts from the theoretical, experimental and statistical viewpoints”, 2016–2018.

National Research University Higher School of Economics, individual grant №15-01-0026, “Exclamative and embedded exclamative constructions: syntax and semantics”, 2015–2016.

Netherlands organization for scientific research, “Quantity matters: Building a theory of Q-implicature”, 2010–2011.

1. Introduction

The study encompasses the following three aspects of linguistic pragmatics: informativity, illocutionary sentence types, and metalinguistic comparison.

Eight articles included in the study are divided into two main parts: interdisciplinary pragmatics and pragmatics-grammar interface. Interdisciplinary pragmatics means a research area that covers linguistics, philosophy of language, psychology of reasoning, fundamentals of logic. Within that area, I study the following two topics: interpretation of under-informative conditional utterances that derive implicatures (Conditional Perfection in terms of [Geis, Zwicky, 1971]) and production of over-informative utterances that include numerals denoting small cardinalities (from 2 to 4) and color, see Section 2. The grammar-pragmatics interface is divided into the following two topics: illocutionary sentence types and metalinguistic comparative sentences, see Section 3.

The current study is aimed at filling out the gaps in some of the research areas of linguistic pragmatics. It does so, firstly, by conducting quantitative studies with help of experimental, corpus and statistic methods of language data collection and analysis and, secondly, by proposing how the results are integrated into the existing approaches to studying the relevant topics.

The novelty of the study is as follows. Firstly, the study demonstrates that such factors as negation, commissive speech acts, clause order and incentive affect derivation of Conditional Perfection, see Section 2.1.1. Secondly, the study shows that such factors as veridicality and cause-effect relation affect derivation of Conditional Perfection in two types of conditional sentences, see Section 2.1.2. Thirdly, the study reveals that small cardinalities are over-specified more often than color, see Section 2.2. Fourthly, the study demonstrates a range of matrix predicates and grammatical features of embedded sentences with exclamative interpretations in Russian, as well as shows that such factors as order of *wh*-phrases, coordination or its lack, syntactic status of *wh*-phrases affect interpretations of interrogatives and exclamatives, see Section 3.1. Fifthly, the study reveals grammatical features of metalinguistic comparative sentences in Russian, see Section 3.2.

The following research statements are proposed for the defense:

- 1) Derivation of Conditional Perfection is determined by the fact which commissive speech act and which polarity are presented in conditionals, as well as by clause order in conditionals.
- 2) Veridicality and cause-effect relation play an important role in derivation of Conditional Perfection and logical entailment. Veridically homogeneous *esli*-sentences derive more implicatures and more logical entailments than veridically heterogeneous *raz*-sentences. Causal *raz*-sentences derive more implicatures and less logical entailments than diagnostic ones.

- 3) Numerals denoting small cardinalities 2–4 are redundantly used in referential communication more often than color adjectives. This is explained by a higher degree of salience of small cardinalities in comparison to color, and salience is determined by subitizing. Small cardinalities are less determined by contrastivity of visual context than color.
- 4) Due to some morphosyntactic, lexical and prosodic features, exclamatives (and optatives) represent minor illocutionary sentence types in Russian.
- 5) Russian matrix predicates that take embedded clauses with exclamative interpretations as their arguments show a range of lexical and grammatical restrictions and tendencies.
- 6) Pair-list interpretations are preferred over single-pair in coordinated and non-coordinated interrogatives as well as in non-coordinated exclamatives in Russian. The Superiority effect does not influence interpretations of interrogatives. The Superiority effect and syntactic status of a *wh*-phrase does not affect interpretation of an exclamative.
- 7) Metalinguistic comparative sentences include a range of pragmaticalized comparative forms and have a range of grammatical features different from the features of standard comparative sentences in Russian. Each pragmaticalized comparative form has its own syntactic distribution.
- 8) Asymmetric metalinguistic comparative sentences have a range of grammatical features different from analogous symmetric sentences, are divided into three types, and their grammaticality is varied in accordance with a pragmaticalized form.

2. Interdisciplinary pragmatics

2.1 Interpretation of under-informative conditionals

Papers selected for the defense: [Zevakhina, Prigorkina, 2021; Zevakhina, 2022].

2.1.1 Negation, speech acts, clause order and incentive in conditionals

[Zevakhina, Prigorkina, 2021] experimentally demonstrated that derivation of Conditional Perfection is not directly affected by a type of commissive speech act (promises vs. threats). This accords with the results by [Fillenbaum, 1975]. However, derivation of Conditional Perfection depends on an interaction of speech acts and polarity (*If p, q; If p, not q; If not p, q; If not p, not q*). On the one hand, promises exhibit a homogeneous class since the rates for derivation of Conditional Perfection are similar across the types. On the other hand, threats form a heterogeneous class. The inference *If not p, q* from the utterance *If p, not q* leads to significantly higher rates and are more costly than other

inference types. This confirms two effects: negative conclusion bias and double negation effect. By contrary, the inference *If p, q* from the utterance *If not p, not q* leads to higher rates of derivation of Conditional Perfection. This provides evidence for parallel double negation effect. Moreover, the inverse clause order *q, if p* is processed slower than the direct clause order *If p, q*, thus confirming the findings by [Evans, Newstead, 1977]. The role of incentive is moderate. The results of the study indirectly support the hypothesis by [Van Tiel, Schaeken, 2016], according to which Conditional Perfection is a structural alternative-based phenomenon and, therefore, are not cognitively costly.

2.1.2 Veridicality and cause-effect relation in *esli*-conditionals and *raz*-conditionals

[Zevakhina, 2022] experimentally demonstrated that, firstly, veridically homogeneous *esli*-sentences derive more implicatures and logical entailments than veridically heterogeneous *raz*-sentences. Secondly, causal and diagnostic *esli*-sentences derive implicatures and entailments at similar rates, thus confirming [Evans et al., 2007]. Thirdly, causal *raz*-sentences derive more implicatures and less entailments than diagnostic ones, thus supporting [Schulz, 2007]. The results corroborate the hypothesis by [Van Tiel, Schaeken, 2016], according to which Conditional Perfection is a structural and conventionalized phenomenon. Moreover, entailments were not always evaluated in 100%, thus confirming [Evans, Handley, 1999; Oaksford et al., 2000]. The results of our study provide evidence for a cross-linguistic homogeneity of derivation of Conditional Perfection and entailments in objectively non-veridical conditionals irrespective of which type of cause-effect relation is observed in antecedents and consequents. Unlike indicatives, in veridically heterogeneous subjunctive counterfactual sentences, the reasoning from cause to effect is more acceptable than the reasoning from effect to cause, thus confirming [Schulz, 2007]. Finally, two conditional connectors – Russian veridical operator *raz* and non-veridical operator *esli* – behave differently with respect to pragmatic and logical inferences in conditionals, thus contributing to the discussion of conditional connectors [Liu, 2019].

2.2 Production of over-informative utterances that include numerals denoting small cardinalities

Papers selected for the defense: [Zevakhina et al., 2021].

[Zevakhina et al., 2021] argues that, firstly, small cardinalities 2–4 and color are over-specified to a higher rate than large cardinalities. Secondly, small cardinalities are over-specified more often than color. Thirdly, in non-contrastive visual contexts, color and small cardinalities are rarely over-specified. However, they are over-specified more often than color. Fourthly, small cardinalities presented in a flash mode (200 ms) are over-specified to a lower rate than when presented in a non-

flash mode. All the results suggest that small cardinalities have a higher degree of salience than color, and this fact is explained by subitizing of small cardinalities.

3. Some aspects of grammar-pragmatics interface

3.1 Illocutionary sentence types

Papers selected for the defense: [Zevakhina, 2015; Zevakhina, 2018a; Zevakhina, Sigdel, 2022].

3.1.1 Classification of illocutionary sentence types

[Zevakhina, 2015] proposes a classification of illocutionary sentence types in Russian that is an alternative to the existing ones in Russian studies and that is based on cross-linguistic findings. An assertive sentence type is distinguished based on prosodic features. An interrogative sentence type is identified with help of, on the one hand, lexical and syntactic characteristics, and, on the other hand, prosodic features. An imperative sentence type is expressed with the imperative mood. An exclamative sentence type that is expressed with various structures (e.g., wh-phrases) is distinguished with help of syntactic and lexical characteristics (e.g., split wh-phrases). An optative sentence type is formed with help of the subjunctive mood and some additional particles or adverbs, but do not have any specific prosodic features.

According to [Sadock, Zwicky, 1985; Koenig, Siemund, 2007], minor sentence types such as exclamatives or optatives are derived as a result of independent uses of embedded clauses, see also [Evans, 2007]. Therefore, we argue that Russian optatives and exclamatives are minor illocutionary sentence types.

3.1.2 Embedded clauses with exclamative interpretations

Based on a typological study, [Zevakhina, 2016] argues for an asymmetry between embedded and matrix clauses with exclamative interpretations. Wh-words with the meanings ‘what’ (Adj.), ‘how’ (scalar) and ‘how much/many’ are possible in both types of clauses, wh-words with the meanings ‘what’ (noun) / ‘who’ / ‘where’ > ‘when’ > ‘why’ form an implicative hierarchy (regarding matrix clauses), whereas wh-words with the meanings ‘which’, ‘what sort of’, and ‘how’ (manner) are impossible in matrix exclamatives, cf. also [Vishenkova, Zevakhina, 2019]. The papers [Koenig, Siemund, 2013; Siemund, 2015] suggest the following diachronic scenario of matrix exclamatives that is captured by the insubordination hypothesis [Evans 2007]: matrix exclamatives appeared as a result of embedded interrogatives.

[Zevakhina, 2018a] conducted a corpus study based on the RNC and revealed lexico-semantic and grammatical characteristics of Russian matrix predicates that select embedded clauses with exclamative interpretations. The most frequent grammatical forms of perceptive predicates are imperatives (imperfective *smotri* ‘look’ and perfective *posmotri* ‘look’) as well as the question form *vidiš?* ‘do you see?’. The most frequent forms of mental predicates are *sam znaeš* ‘you know’, *znaeš?* ‘do you know?’, *predstavlyaeš?* ‘do you imagine?’, *esli by ty znal!* ‘if you knew!’, and *ty ne predstavlyaeš* ‘you don’t imagine’. Emotive predicates that are cross-linguistically frequent are quite rare in Russian (*udivitel’no* ‘it is surprising’). Speech predicates are very rare. There are also some obsolete forms. From a syntactic viewpoint, embedded clauses with exclamative interpretations allow sluicing. Grammatical forms of matrix predicates are used with wh-words in elided embedded clauses. Such clauses are amalgams in terms of [Testeleets, Bylinina, 2005]. From a prosodic viewpoint, matrix exclamatives have Elena A. Bryzgunova’s intonation constructions IC-5, IC-6 and IC-7 [Russkaya Grammatika 1980, vol. 1: § 168–170; Yanko 2001: 43, 97–98; 2008: 31]. Some predicate forms are semantically non-transparent: *smotri* ‘look’, *posmotri* ‘look’, *ponimaeš* ‘you understand’, *slušay* ‘listen’, *poslušay* ‘listen’, *podumaeš* ‘you think’, *podumay* ‘think’, *podumat’ tol’ko* ‘think only’, *znaeš* ‘you know’. Unlike predicates *sprosit’* (perfective) / *sprašivat’* (imperfective) ‘ask’, predicates *vosklitsat’* (imperfective) / *voskliknut’* (perfective) cannot take clauses with wh-words as their arguments. The results of the current study are in line with the insubordination hypothesis [Evans, 2007].

3.1.3 Interrogatives and exclamatives with multiple wh-phrases

[Zevakhina, Sigdel, 2022] provided experimental evidence that, firstly, single-pair interpretations are less grammatical than pair-list ones in non-coordinated interrogatives. Secondly, pair-list interpretations are more grammatical than single-pair ones in non-coordinated exclamatives. The results of the study showed that both types of interpretations are acceptable in Russian interrogatives and exclamatives. Pair-list interpretations are more acceptable than single-pair ones in coordinated and non-coordinated interrogatives. Pair-list interpretations are preferred in non-coordinated exclamatives. The Superiority effect does not affect interpretations of interrogatives. The Superiority effect and syntactic statuses of wh-phrases do not influence interpretations of exclamatives.

3.2 Metalinguistic comparative sentences

Papers selected for the defense: [Zevakhina et al., 2017; Zevakhina, Schipkova, in print].

Predominantly based on the RNC, [Zevakhina et al., 2017] investigated Russian metalinguistic comparative sentences with single comparative forms *skoree* ‘sooner’, *lučše* ‘better’, *bolše* ‘more’ and with double comparatives forms *skoree bolše*, *bolše skoree*, *skoree lučše*. All of them were derived as a result of pragmaticalization of standard comparatives for expressing metalinguistic meanings.

Single meta-comparatives resemble standard comparatives in that they have the same morphological comparative forms and are combined with *čem/neželi* ‘than’ phrases. They differ from standard comparatives in the following aspects: 1) they are undeclined synthetic forms; 2) they are non-grammatical with Genitive; 3) they are prosodically unmarked, and a linearly following word has an accent; 4) they tend to take a linear position in the beginning of a sentence; 5) they have symmetric syntactic structures. The features of the double meta-comparatives are identical to the ones of the single meta-comparatives *bolše* and *lučše* respectively. Based on the data of the RNC as well as the examples from the search system Yandex, the distribution of meta-comparatives *skoree*, *bolše* and their double correlates includes AdjPs, AdvPs, Nominative NPs, PPs, VPs. Meta-comparative *skoree* is combined with NumPs, PredPs. The distribution of meta-comparative *lučše* includes Nominative NPs and verbal grammatical forms: the 1st and 3rd person of the future tense of the indicative mood, the subjunctive mood, the 2nd person of imperatives, *pust’*-imperatives.

[Zevakhina et al., 2017] studies symmetric meta-comparatives, both parts of which are morphosyntactically are identical (e.g., they both have NPs in Nominative), whereas [Zevakhina, Schipkova, in press] investigates asymmetric meta-comparatives. To illustrate, the first part of a meta-comparative sentence has imperative, whereas the second part has an infinitive. Based on data from the RNC, asymmetric meta-comparatives form a marginal linguistic phenomenon and are ranged according to their degrees of regularity and frequency in combination with different syntactic phrases and their morphological forms: *lučše*, *skoree*, *bolše*. Infinitives are predominantly imperfective, whereas finite forms are predominantly perfective. Moreover, the study revealed three groups of asymmetric meta-comparatives: bi-clausal phrases with different verbal forms, bi-phrasal, and clausal-phrasal. The follow-up experimental study tested meta-comparatives *lučše* and *skoree* in combination with infinitives in the second part. Such sentences were evaluated as semi-grammatical. *Lučše* meta-comparatives were evaluated as more grammatical than *skoree* ones. The results of the study add to the discussion of asymmetric sentences that also exist among coordinated and standard comparative sentences [Sannikov, 2008].

4. Conclusion

The present study investigates some aspects of linguistic pragmatics: under-informative and over-informative utterances, illocutionary sentence types, metalinguistic comparative sentences.

Section 2.1 demonstrates that derivation Conditional Perfection is dependent on which commissive speech act (promises vs. threats) and which polarity (positive vs. negative) are presented in conditionals, as well as on a clause order. Moreover, Section 2.1 reveals that veridicality and cause-effect relation affect derivation of Conditional Perfection and logical entailments.

Section 2.2 shows that numerals denoting small cardinalities 2–4 are redundantly used in referential communication more often than color adjectives. The reason is that small cardinalities are more salient than color, and their salience is determined by subitizing of the cardinalities 2–4. Furthermore, Section 2.2 demonstrates that small cardinalities 2–4 less depend on whether a visual context is contrastive than color.

Section 3.1 shows that exclamatives (and optatives) represent minor illocutionary sentence types in Russian. Moreover, matrix predicates that take embedded clauses with exclamative interpretations as their arguments have a range of lexical and grammatical features. Furthermore, coordination or its lack, Superiority effect, syntactic status of a *wh*-phrase determine pair-list and single-pair interpretations of exclamatives and interrogatives.

Section 3.2 shows that Russian meta-comparatives that were formed via pragmaticalization have a range of grammatical features that differ from the features of standard comparatives. Meta-comparatives are distinguished from each other: each meta-comparative has its own syntactic distribution. Moreover, asymmetric meta-comparatives reveal a range of grammatical features that differ from analogous symmetric meta-comparatives and are divided into three types.

Literature

- Zevakhina, N. K. klassifikatsii illokutivnyx tipov predloženij [Towards the classification of illocutionary sentence types] // Russian Language and Linguistic Theory. Vol. 29, № 1. 2015. P. 87–116.
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Resources

- RNC – Russian National Corpus. URL: ruscorpora.ru
- SEP – Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy. URL: plato.stanford.edu
- WALS – World Atlas of Language Structures. URL: wals.info

Yandex – a search engine. URL: yandex.ru