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Book Reviews

Iu. D. Apresian, I. M. Boguslavskii, L. L. Iomdin, V. Z. Sannikov, *Teoreticheskie problemy russkogo sintaksisa. Vzaimodeistvie grammatiki i slovaria.* Moscow: Iazyki slavianskikh kul'tur, 2010, 408 pp.

With today's intensive research in syntax, one tends to forget that as late as half a century ago grammar studies were primarily concerned with morphology, while syntax played a secondary role, often as a kind of an appendix to morphological descriptions. A grammar would be organized in chapters presenting the parts of speech of the given language, usually starting with the nouns for the Indo-European languages, and for each morphological form, there would be remarks on its "uses." The "uses" of the morphological forms were actually a cover term for their syntactic behavior which, consequently, was tacitly treated as subordinate to—and presupposing—morphology. It was not until Chomsky's works from the 1950s and onwards that the sentence, and thus syntax, was made the principle domain of grammar with morphology only being involved at the level where individual "rules," determining the formation of "grammatical" (as opposed to "ungrammatical") sentences, were formulated. The movement known as transformational grammar, inaugurated by Chomsky's early works, tended to treat syntax as self-contained, as the superior level of structure defining the slots that should be filled with lexical units in specific morphological forms. In other words, syntax was seen as not depending on any other level of linguistic structure.

This view of language was challenged, explicitly or implicitly, by a number of later, more functionally oriented approaches to syntax. One such approach is that developed by Apresian and other linguists of the so-called Moscow Semantic School. A governing idea of the "integral" approach of this linguistic school is the view that syntax and lexis are interacting dimensions of linguistic organization, cooperating in expressing meaning. Thus, the choice of lexemes influences the syntactic context (lexical units display syntactic behavior), and, conversely, the syntactic context contributes to the interpretation of the lexemes. Language structure consists of interacting, rather than hierarchically ordered, levels of organization.

Authored by leading linguists of the Moscow Semantic School, the book under review is a synthesis of research conducted during the last two to three decades on Russian syntax and in particular on the interaction between syntax and lexis, a point clearly emphasized in the subtitle of the book. The purpose is twofold: first, to present and discuss the theoretical principles of syntactic description and, second, to provide a comprehensive analysis of Russian syntax in a format that allows it to be implemented in electronic parsers and machine translation resources. These two purposes are pursued in parallel throughout the presentation.

As a synthesis of research conducted during a fairly long period of time, the book consists of a few newly written sections in addition to revised or unrevised versions of a number of earlier published articles and other contributions. This makes the structure somewhat incoherent. Occasionally—especially in the first half of the book—the presentation appears rather segmented, and the reader may have difficulties seeing the connecting link in the transition from one chapter to another. However, little by little, the information combines to form a comprehensive response to the two purposes of the book. All through the book, the presentation is extraordinarily informative, providing

the reader with a wealth of analyses of syntactic and semantic subtleties which are here (or in the earlier published versions of the chapters) described for the first time. There is no doubt that this extreme refinement of the description of Russian syntax has been provoked by the need to reach the high degree of comprehensiveness and perfection needed for designing electronic language resources, including the parser used for generating the syntactically annotated sub-corpus of the Russian National Corpus (http://www.ruscorpora.ru/), currently (May 2012) constituting a tree-bank of almost 50,000 sentences (as compared to a little more than 40,000 sentences at the time the book under review was published). The analyses function both as tests of the appropriateness of existing syntactic descriptions and as a way of filling the gaps in existing descriptions of Russian syntax. The gap-filling function is especially prominent in the inspiring and intriguing chapter 2 that is concerned with so-called micro-syntactic constructions in Russian.

The opening chapter (by Apresian) is a short introduction with a presentation of the objectives of the book and a few revealing illustrations of the strategy of analysis. Already on the first page is it emphasized that the point of departure for both the analyses offered in the book and the electronic resources is Mel'chuk's "Meaning" ⇔ "Text" (*Smysl* ⇔ *Tekst*) model.[1] A governing principle of this model is that syntactic constructions are formed from binary and hierarchical relations, i.e., relations between a "head" (*khoziain*) and a "dependent" (*sluga*). Despite its apparent simplicity and evidential force, this principle is not always easy to apply. Chapter 1 consists of two parts. The first part (section 1.1 and 1.2—by Iomdin) presents an inventory of sixty five "syntactic relations" (*sintaksicheskie otnosheniia*, abbreviated as *SintO*). This list, which is here presented in its latest version, has been modified and extended by the authors during the years with a view to covering all types of relations in Russian syntax—a goal that appears to have been achieved. The second part of chapter 1 (section 1.3—by Sannikov) discusses and presents a model of "syntactic alternations" (*sintaksicheskie cheredovaniia*). Chapter 2, to which all four authors have contributed, develops the above-mentioned concept of micro-syntax with a large number of interesting examples. In chapter 3 (by Apresian), a three-level theory of verbal government is presented and developed. Finally, chapter 4 (by Iomdin) gives examples of the lessons that linguists can learn from a machine translation system, thus storing a type of evidence from the linguist's workshop that is often ignored and only marginally presented in standard publications.

The list of syntactic relations (ch. 1, first part) systematically observes the principle of hierarchy mentioned above: They all consist of a head and a dependent. This principle will hardly raise objections when applied to the relation between a verb (head) and its complement (dependent) or a noun (head) and its attribute (dependent). Other relations, for instance that between a predicate (head) and a subject (dependent) or that between a preposition (head) and the following noun phrase (dependent), would be treated as partly interdependent in certain other approaches. For linguists of other directions than the one advocated in this book, the most surprising aspect is probably the treatment of what is traditionally referred to as paratactic relations. These are also analyzed as hierarchically ordered, with the conjunction participating in the role of both head and dependent and apparently with the word order as the determining principle in the distribution of

1 See I. A. Mel'chuk, *Opyt teorii lingvisticheskikh modelei "Smysl ⇔ Tekst"* (Moscow: Nauka, 1974), *inter alia*.

head and dependent, cf. *griby* (head$_1$) *i* (dependent$_1$, head$_2$) *iagody* (dependent$_2$), meaning "mushrooms and berries" (p. 40). Evaluating this dissolution of the traditional syntactic distinction between hypotactic and paratactic relations, one must, first and foremost, recognize that the model appears to be operational and relatively simple to apply. That the inventory, including altogether sixty five syntactic relations, apparently offers an unambiguous model of syntactic subordination makes it suitable for implementation in electronic resources—a fact of major importance to the research behind the book.

The presentation of syntactic *relations* is followed by Sannikov's inspiring chapter on syntactic *alternations*. The idea, which was first presented in the early 1980s, is to apply the well-established procedure of setting up pairs of alternating elements in phonology and morphology to syntax as well. The author presents the problem by referring to the word pair *molod-oi* / *molozh-e* (молод-ой / молож-е) or "young / younger" and its traditional interpretation as reflecting a morphological alternation (*molod-* / *molozh-*) building on a phonological one (*d* / *zh*). He then suggests a parallel to alternations between syntactic constructions, for instance the direct object accusative alternating with the genitive after negation, cf. *Doklad imel uspekh*$_{ACC}$ / *Doklad ne imel uspekh-a*$_{GEN}$ or "the presentation was / was not successful." This idea is developed in a number of case studies, but the presentation also includes several points of more universal value, for example that syntax has a higher share of semantically loaded alternations than morphology (p. 49). Though the distinction between semantically loaded (*znachashchie*) and not semantically loaded (*neznachashchie*) alternations is not quite clear, this is a productive way of reasoning. While traditional approaches have focused on paradigmaticity in phonology and morphology and syntagmaticity in syntax, Sannikov emphasizes the similarity between all three levels of linguistic organization and the general complementarity between paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations. The author does not discuss the concept of markedness, but it is inherently present in his distinction between basic and non-basic alternants (p. 45).[2] It is briefly reported that a minimal list of syntactic alternations in Russian was set up and commented upon in earlier contributions.[3] Given that the book includes full lists of both syntactic relations (section 1.2) and semantic roles (section 3.5), it is regrettable that a list of syntactic alternations has not been included. This would have completed the picture of the authors' detailed mapping of Russian syntax.

Chapter 2, constituting a substantial part of the book, more than half of it in fact, deals with "micro-syntax." The term micro-syntax (*malyi sintaksis* or *mikrosintaksis*) was originally coined by Leonid Iomdin[4] to refer to peripheral, partly idiomatized syntactic

2 Sannikov's concept of syntactic alternations shares a number of features with the approach to syntactic constructions as being paradigmatically organized, proposed in Jens Nørgård-Sørensen, Lars Heltoft and Lene Schøsler, *Connecting Grammaticalisation* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 2011). Despite apparent differences between the two approaches, the reviewer can only regret that he was not aware of Sannikov's earlier contributions when working on the theory of "connecting grammaticalization." Vladimir Z. Sannikov, "O cheredovaniiakh v sintaksise," *Predvaritel'nye publikatsii Instituta russkogo iazyka AN SSSR*, Vyp. 137 (Moscow, 1980); Idem, "Est' li cheredovaniia v sintaksise? (K probleme sintmorfologii)," *Wiener slavistischer Almanach,* Bd. 8 (1981).

3 Sannikov, "O cheredovaniiakh v sintaksise"; Idem, "Est' li cheredovaniia v sintaksise?"

4 Leonid L. Iomdin "Bol'shie problemy malogo sintaksisa," *Trudy mezhdunarodnoi konferentsii po komp'iuternoi lingvistike i intellektual'nym tekhnologiiam Dialog' 2003* (Moscow: Nauka, 2003), pp. 216–222.

constructions with at least one fixed grammatical form or lexeme (p. 59). The implicit claim behind the introduction of this concept is that the syntax of a language, Russian in this case, consists of a number of basic, dominant constructions with broad domains of function and a (presumably numerically larger) number of further peripheral constructions, used for more specialized communicative purposes. This is basically a persuasive claim, and it finds strong support in the case studies of micro-syntax in chapter 2.

I shall comment on only one of these case studies: constructions with negative pronouns of the *nekogo* type, i.e., pronouns with a stressed initial *né-*. In the spirit of the Moscow Semantic School with its focus on the interrelation between different levels of linguistic organization, the comprehensive analysis of this type of construction includes sections on orthography, prosody, morphology, syntax, and lexical features. Of special interest is the interpretation of the pronouns in question not as single words, but as "agglomerates" of two words of which the first one, *né-*, is verbal, or more specifically, a negative existential verb. This means that sentences containing pronouns with an initial *né-* are complex, containing two verbal predicates, in addition to *né-* also being a copula. The authors gradually build up a detailed and persuasive argument in support of this analysis and conclude the section by systematically analyzing each syntactic slot in sentences with *né*-pronouns. The section is full of revealing observations which, based on the judgment of this reviewer, are here reported for the first time. Among other things, the authors observe that not all relative pronouns derive negative *né*-pronouns. Negative *né*-pronouns are only derived from seven relative pronouns (*kogo*, *chego*, *gde*, *kuda*, *otkuda*, *zachem*, and *kogda*). Characteristically, the authors not only point out this delimitation; they also provide an explanation of it.

With the richness of detail contained in the analyses of micro-syntactic constructions, it is not surprising that one occasionally comes across less persuasive statements. For example, considering the pronominal "nouns" *nekogo* and *nechego* (некого and нечего), the authors point out a number of features shared by all ordinary nouns, but not by these two words. These features include the ability to function as subject, direct object, or indirect object, the ability to attract attributes, etc. (pp. 67–68). This is yet another example of the precision and scrupulousness with which the authors approach the linguistic material. However, it is further stated that since these two words do not combine with subordinate agreeing forms, there is no way to assign a grammatical gender or a grammatical animacy value to them. In passing, the authors further remark that they are not aware of any other Russian nouns to which it is not possible to assign a gender and an animacy value. However, there is actually a group of nouns in Russian with no gender, namely the *pluralia tantum* nouns. On the other hand, there are no nouns without an animacy value (all *pluralia tantum* are inanimate).[5] This also counts for the pronominal nouns *nekogo* (animate) and *nechego* (inanimate). It is true that animacy cannot be reflected in the most straightforward way—in patterns of accusative agreement. However, these two pronominal nouns are regularly used as complements, and in this function, they are distributed in a way clearly reflecting their animacy value: *nekogo* will appear in contexts demanding an animate complement and *nechego*, in contexts demanding an inanimate complement; compare *nekomu pomoch'* / *nechego delat'*.

5 Jens Nørgård-Sørensen, *Russian* ***Nominal Semantics and Morphology*** (Bloomington, Indiana: Slavica Publishers, 2011), pp. 79–80.

Regrettably, the broad definition of micro-syntax proposed does not appear to work as an operational criterion for distinguishing micro-syntax from other (i.e., basic) syntax, and, remarkably, the authors do not draw any parallels between the case studies in micro-syntax and the syntactic relations presented in chapter 1. True, constructions and syntactic relations are different things, the former instantiating the latter, but some of the syntactic relations discussed seem to be especially closely related to "micro-syntactic" constructions. While a list of syntactic relations is presented for the first time by the authors of this book, a full inventory of syntactic constructions was already included in the Academy grammars of 1970 and 1980. Against this background, it would have been interesting to be presented with the authors' suggestion of a full list of syntactic constructions in Russian, broken down into basic and "micro-syntactic" constructions.

All in all, the extraordinarily interesting chapter on micro-syntax provides strong evidence in favor of a fundamental principle of the given approach: that syntactic analysis should be based on semantics, in other words, that syntax has meaning. This point of view also penetrates the treatment of "government" in chapter 3. As opposed to the traditional "atomic" approach where a set of complements is seen as an individual feature of a given verb (governing word), the authors propose a lexical-syntactic approach focusing on classes of verbs (governing words) with identical (or close to identical) sets of complements (*aktanty*) with a view to revealing their semantic similarities and thus the semantic background for the given inventory of complements. The result is a list of seventeen "fundamental semantic classes of predicates," for instance "actions" (*deistviia*), "activities" (*deiatel'nosti*), "interpretations" (*interpretatsii*), and "relations" (*otnosheniia*), all commented on in some detail. With the necessary subdivisions of these classes of predicates and a specification of the semantic roles (of which a full list is also provided), the authors establish a firm foundation for describing the syntactic relationships in Russian sentences. Again, this description undoubtedly comes close to answering the demand for the precision necessary for constructing electronic language resources.

At times, the objective of creating an electronically operational description may leave the reader with the question of where to find the language users in this model. Should the proposed syntactic description be understood as a realistic model of language production and perception? Or is it a model in its own right serving the purpose of providing parsers and other electronic resources with a description of relations and functions that allow them to analyze Russian texts? This question is not raised in the book, so it is not really reasonable to expect an answer to it. On the other hand, it would have been interesting to know to what extent the authors consider the electronically highly operational model presented to be a realistic model of speakers' behavior as well.

Another general question is the problem of distinguishing between syntax and pragmatics. Regrettably, this question is not raised, and certain phenomena of language usage, traditionally treated as pragmatic, are included under the heading of syntax in this book, for example "illocutional usage" (pp. 209–226). It appears that the authors tend to extend the traditional concept of syntax, but the consequences of this endeavor, including where to draw the borderline between syntax (grammar) and pragmatics, are not clear.

As it appears, most of the "shortcomings" pointed out above are not real shortcomings, but rather references to aspects of Russian syntax that have not yet been com-

pletely worked through. The book under review reports impressive research based on a clearly formulated approach. Summarizing the results of deep and systematic investigations through a couple of decades and presenting aspects of this research for the first time, it represents an important landmark in the endeavor to present a full picture of Russian syntax. It will be a main source of inspiration for everybody working on Russian syntax, whether or not he or she shares the authors' theoretical point of view and the approach applied.

Jens Nørgård-Sørensen

Adam Mickiewicz, *Pón Tadeùsz*, skaszëbił (translated into Kashubian by) Stanisław Janke, Wejherowo-Gdańsk: Muzeum Piśmiennictwa i Muzyki Kaszubsko-Pomorskiej w Wejherowie, 2010, 431 pp.

Long-lasting attempts to form a Kashubian literary language have significantly gained momentum after Kashubian acquired the status of a regional language in Poland in 2005. Currently, the literary Kashubian language is slowly replacing the greatly varied dialects, which are falling out of use among the young generation of Kashubians. Despite the visible efforts of the Kashubian intelligentsia to provide their language with all the characteristics of a literary language, it still remains at its inception. It is patterned upon the most archaic dialects of northern as well as northwestern Kashubia and has been adjusted over the years to serve its new functions in constant opposition to the Polish literary language (with the aim of clearly emphasizing all, factual or alleged, differences between the two). Several translations have helped promote the new form of Kashubian, especially those of the New Testament, psalms, and sermons, as well as publications on various topics: textbooks, spelling-books, and literary and scholarly texts. Moreover, Polish-Kashubian dictionaries contain propositions of numerous neologisms and neosemantisms, as the constant broadening of the topic range to which the literary language can be applied requires the formation of new words to denote several terms and realities. The two-volume *Słownik polsko-kaszubski* by Jan Trepczyk (1994) has had a distinct impact on Kashubian literary language. It contains 60,000 Polish entries along with, often artificially created, synonymous Kashubian terms, providing the users of the dictionary—translators and writers—with, so to speak, a choice.

The new form of Kashubian is also promoted by translations of well-known Polish literary pieces (few translations from other languages have been made so far, the existing ones being rather short works). Earlier, only smaller Polish literary pieces were translated (i.e., *Treny* by Jan Kochanowski, *Sonety krymskie* and *Oda do młodości* by Adam Mickiewicz, and from the more recent literature, *Ślub* by Witold Gombrowicz). However, in 2010, the Polish Ministry of Culture and National Heritage provided a means to publish the Kashubian version of the narrative poem by Adam Mickiewicz, *Pan Tadeusz, czyli ostatni zajazd na Litwie, historia szlachecka z roku 1811 i 1812 we dwunastu księgach wierszem*, which is a first translation of such size of a Polish literary piece into literary Kashubian. Translation of this great Polish narrative poem into Kashubian was an event of great importance for the Kashubians, compared only with translation of the Bible. A final note was written by Jerzy Treder, who was also the linguistic