

Russian Adjectives and Typology of Nominal Prediction
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The goal of the talk is to answer the following question: does the structure for adjectival predication differ from those for nouns (and so on) in languages with adjectives as a separate lexical category? To answer this question we consider Russian data. Overall we have the following options. (i) Predicative adjectives raise to NP/DP copular complements (with the remainder of NP/DP omitted), “Attributive hypothesis”. (ii) There can exist an AdjP copular complement on pair with NP/DP copular complements, “AdjP hypothesis” (iii) Predicative adjectives are instances of substantivization, i.e. noun phrases where the adjective heads NP/DP projection, “Substantivization” hypothesis. (iv) The structure for predicative adjectives is somewhat different from that of NP/DP. What does this structure look like?

Russian has the two main types of nominal predication, see (Filip 2001; Richardson 2001; 2007; Madariaga 2005, 2008; Markman 2008; Matushansky 2008) among others for differentiating among the two predicative structures.:

(1) ‘Agreeing pattern’ or ‘Sameness case’, (Bailyn 2012)

a. Петя был добрый
 Pet’-a byl dobr-yj
 Peter-Nom was kind-M.Sg.Nom

‘Peter was kind’

b. Петя был строитель
 Pet’-a byl stroitel’-Ø
 Peter-Nom was builder-Nom

‘Peter was a builder’

(2) Instrumental case

a. Петя был добрым
 Pet’-a byl dobr-ym
 Peter-Nom was kind-Ms.Sg.Ins

‘Peter was kind’

b. Петя был строителем
 Pet’-a byl stroitel’-em
 Peter-Nom was builder-Ins

‘Peter was a builder’

We focus on the ‘Agreeing’ pattern in both Long, (1-2), and Short (3) Form adjectives:

(3) Predicative, ‘Short Forms’ adjectives

Петя был добр
 Pet’-a byl dobr-Ø
 Peter-Nom was kind-Ms.Sg

‘Peter was kind’

A problem first posed for Russian in (Isačenko 1963): do LFs have independent predicative use or their predicative use raises to the attributive one? Isačenko (1963: 80–85) argues for the second option, deriving LF adjectives from the SH ones, see also (Babby 1981) and others. But only some Russian adjectives can derive SF variants, cf. (5) and (6):

(4) (Isačenko 1963: 80):

Китайский	язык	очень трудный	(язык	⇐	труден)
kitajskij	jazyk	očen’ trudnyj	(jazyk	⇐	truden)
Chinese.LF	language	very hard	language		difficult.SF

‘Chinese is (a) very hard (language)’

(5)

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Этот	язык	–	китайский.	(язык	←	*китайск)
Etot	jazyk		kitajskij	(jazyk	←	*kitajsk)
This	language		Chinese	language		*Chinese.SF

‘This language is (the) Chinese (language).’

There are arguments for the “AdjP hypothesis”. For instance, in many (if not all) languages two or more adjectives are perfect in the noun phrase, but not allowed in the predicative position:

(6) English (Baker 2003: 203)

- a. John is a big strong man.
- b. *John is big strong.

(7) Edo (Baker 2003: 203)

- a. ágá khéré pèrhè
chair small flat
‘a little flat chair’.
- b. *Né!néágá yé khéré pèrhè.
the chair PRED small flat
‘The chair is small flat.’

This can be easily explained if we admit predicative AdjP (not a noun phrase).

What differs the LF and SH in Russian is that the first crucially depends on the (nominative) case features on the subject:

(8)

Она	хотела	быть	красив-а	/	*красив-ая.
ona	xotela	byt’	krasiv-a	/	*krasiv-aja.
she	wanted	be.Inf	beautiful.SF-F.Sg	/	beautiful.LF-F.Sg.Nom

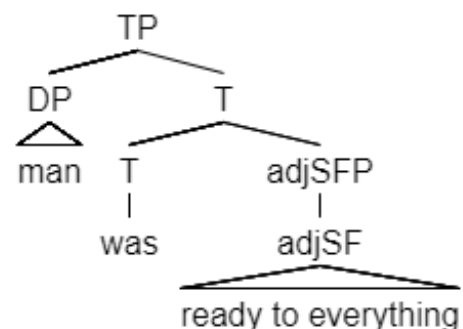
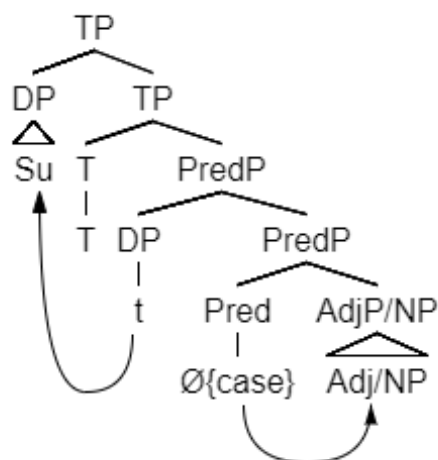
‘She wanted to be beautiful.’

Here we can rely on the idea of the Pred head, (Bowers 1993). PredP assigns theta-role to the subject and in languages like Russian or Finnish selects the case-marked complements. Thus, Russian predicative LFs are selected by Preds.

According to (Bolinger 1967:9), there is a group of the so-called “a-adjectives” in English: *afloat, afriad, able*, etc., restricted to predicative function only. We will argue that Russian has no lexical specification for the attributive vs. predicative use. Instead, in Russian we observe the two forms specified in the attributive (LF) and predicative (SH) functions. The SH projects the structure similar to those of VP. The LF displays the syntax for nominal predications but doing so it is does not included in the “matrix” noun phrase; PredP selects for the LF AP:

(10) SF Adj prediction:

(11) LF Adj prediction



To conclude: there are two structures accessible for adjectives in the predication. In languages with a distinct adjectival class, we have an AdjP option. In languages with adjectives as stative