



Review: [Untitled]

Reviewed Work(s):

Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics: The Ann Arbor Meeting. Functional Categories in Slavic Syntax by Jindřich Toman

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Jindřich Toman, ed. *Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics: The Ann Arbor Meeting. Functional Categories in Slavic Syntax*. Michigan Slavic Materials, no. 35. Ann Arbor, 1994. 181 pp., \$16.00 (paper).

This volume contains six papers based on presentations at the Workshop on Functional Categories in Slavic Syntax held at the University of Michigan in March 1992. Three articles are on Russian, one compares Serbo-Croatian and Russian, and two concern Slavic languages in general. All papers share a strong theoretical orientation and address general issues that are directly relevant mainly to recent developments in generative syntax: nominal structures, including such topics as modification, numerical specification, quantification and case, the theory of parametrization, agreement and tense, negative polarity items and dative subjects.

John F. Bailyn (in "The Syntax and Semantics of Russian Long and Short Adjectives: An X'-Theoretic Account," 1–30) argues that a functional category Modification Phrase, proposed by Rubin (1991, 1993), allows us to provide a uniform semantic interpretation for such categories as APs, which pose the following well-known problem for a direct mapping between syntax and semantics: Either we differentiate adjectives in their predicative and attributive use as members of two different categories, or we do not differentiate these two uses and fail to provide for a consistent mapping between syntactic categories and semantic types. Bailyn argues that the Modification Phrase not only solves this problem, but it is also crucial to an adequate treatment of Russian "long" form adjectives (used predicatively and attributively) and "short" form adjectives (used only predicatively). In particular, Bailyn proposes that long forms are always attributive and short ones are bare AP predicates. In support of this claim Bailyn adduces work by Babby and Siegel as well as rich diachronic evidence.

Steven Franks ("The Functional Structure of Russian Numeral Phrases," 31–76) discusses the morphosyntax of numerically quantified expressions in Russian, such as *pjat' rublej* 'five rubles,' which he calls "numeral phrases." Franks makes two main claims: first, the genitive case assigned by numerals in Russian is structural rather than inherent (as in Serbo-Croatian, for example), and second, numeral phrases may be either QPs or NPs/DPs (while in Serbo-Croatian, for example, they are only DPs). Furthermore, Qs take NP complements, with the QP optionally embedded in a higher DP. The main evidence in support of this analysis comes from distributive *po*-phrases in Russian. Franks assumes that *po* assigns a structural dative case. This unique structural case requirement, which is not uncontroversial (see the relevant works of Crockett, Mel'čuk, Babby, and Neidle), forces him to analyze the numeral as occupying the specifier rather than head position of the QP.

Steven Franks and Gerald Greenberg's programmatic paper, "The Functional Structure of Slavic Clauses" (77–108), is a detailed exploration of three distinct analyses of Russian and Polish clause structure. Building on some proposals in Ouhalla (1991), they argue that finite Russian and Polish sentences have AGR projecting to AGRP and taking TNSP as a complement, and that heads never move to hierarchically lower positions in the syntax. Under this analysis clausal AGR only represents person/number agreement and TNS can be either [+tns, ±past] or infinitival. In formulating this proposal, the authors raise a number of questions and point to problematic aspects of various functional analyses of Slavic clause structure.

In her thought provoking paper "Binding Domains and Functional Categories: Negative Polarity in Serbo-Croatian and Russian" (109–128), Ljiljana Progovac convincingly argues that the distribution and interpretation of negative and positive polarity items are subject to the same conditions as those governing reflexives and pronouns, namely the locality conditions embodied in the Binding Theory: negative polarity items are bound in their governing

category (Principle A), while positive polarity items must be free in their governing category (Principle B). This approach, Progovac believes, is superior to purely semantic ones in that the scope properties of polarity items need not be stipulated.

Maaïke Schoorlemmer's paper "Dative Subjects in Russian" (129–172) concerns the long-standing debate on "quirky" subjects in natural languages. She argues that dative NPs in Russian that behave like subjects are external arguments and they are assigned dative case in specVP, their d-structure position. In support of her claims Schoorlemmer pulls together an impressively broad range of phenomena (psychological verbs, modals, impersonal reflexives, among others). However, her arguments are in many cases weakened by a questionable or theory-biased interpretation of the data. One of the positive aspects of this paper is the attempt to motivate the assignment of the dative case in semantic terms: dative is viewed as a combination of a morphological feature and lexical semantics and it is freely available for NPs that have not been assigned a theta-role that would be in conflict with dative directional semantics (Recipient, Goal or Experiencer), regardless whether such NPs are arguments or adjuncts. It is a pity that the semantic side of the analysis is only sketchy and rather primitive. In particular, this gives rise to problems in the analysis of psychological predicates, which in Slavic languages, and in a number of other languages as well, fall into three classes. The main stumbling block is the motivation of the dative case assignment to the Experiencer argument of such verbs as *nravit'sja* 'to please', and the assignment of the nominative case to the Experiencer of such verbs as *ljubit* 'to love'. The same problem also arises also in Germanic languages, such as Dutch, and in Romance languages, such as Italian and French as well as in Icelandic, to name just a few. Since it is clearly undesirable to stipulate the assignment of the dative case in the lexicon, an adequate treatment of the case assignment to the Experiencer argument of psychological verbs requires a rich and finely-tuned semantic apparatus.

Jindřich Toman's contribution, "Case as a Functional Projection: A Note on an Issue in Parametrization" (173–181), concerns the possibility of analyzing case as the functional head of the nominal group and the questions it raises for the current debate on parametrization. Rather than viewing Case ("K") as a *feature* in a case-marked DP, Toman analyzes it as a *constituent* in the sense of X-bar theory, as a surface syntactic, language-specific instantiation of the Nominal Group (NG) Parameter: "Functional Overlaynominal equals K or D (depending on the part of speech)" (176). For English, for example, this amounts to the claim that constituents projected from nouns are DPs, while constituents projected from personal pronouns are KPs. This K-licensing approach with a Case Phrase (KP), [K[DP]]_{KP}, has the advantage that it departs from a rule-oriented grammar, and hence directly reflects the idea of Universal Grammar as a set of abstract principles. On the negative side, Toman shows that the NG Parameter cannot be a valid principle of parametrization, since K(case) and D(determiner) do not form a natural class. Nevertheless, case viewed as a word-syntactic category has important consequences for the theory of functional categories and the connection to LF.

To conclude, the papers in this volume are distinguished by the lucid and insightful presentation of both data (which is often highly intricate and intriguing) and of the general theoretical issues involved. Hence they will be of interest not only to specialists in Slavic linguistics, but also to non-Slavicists.

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