

More facts about syntactic amalgams: Evidence from Russian exclamatives

Since Testelefs and Bylinina (2005a, 2005b), there have been acknowledged syntactic amalgams in Russian, cf. (1a). The amalgams are a lexicalized phenomenon formed on the basis of sluicing, cf. (1b), so they function as words. It means they take terminal nodes in the syntactic structure and can be arguments or adjuncts.

(1a) *Otdaj eti žurnaly vsjo_ravno komu.*
give these journals it.does.not.matter whom

lit. 'Give these journals no matter to whom.' (Testelefs and Bylinina 2005b)

(1b) *Otdaj komu-nibud' eti žurnaly, vsjo_ravno komu otdaj.*
give somebody these journals it.does.not.matter whom give

'Give somebody these journals, it does not matter to whom.' (Testelefs and Bylinina 2005b)

The paper further investigates syntactic amalgams in Russian and focuses on those of them which originate as embedded exclamatives, cf. (2).

(2) *Ja vstretil segodnja ne_predstavljajš kogo!*
I met today you.don't.imagine whom

'Today I've met a person, you won't imagine whom I've met.' (lit. 'Today I've met you don't imagine whom.')

In order to collect the data for the study, I started with investigating which predicates and in which grammatical forms function as matrix predicates of embedded exclamatives. This was done with help of the Russian National Corpus, in which the search query was as follows: any verb (V) at a distance of 1 word to the wh-word *kakoj* 'what' at a distance from 1 to 20 words to an exclamation mark (bexcl). As a result of that, 1213 contexts were detected. I manually browsed them all and found the following groups of verbs in various grammatical forms: 8 perceptual verbs, 13 mental verbs, 6 emotive verbs and 3 emotive predicatives, and the verb *najti* 'find' (lit.). Generally, the groups match the cross-linguistic expectations found in the literature: see Huddleson (1993) for English, Villalba (2003) and Castroviejo (2006) for Catalan, Beyssade (2009) for French, d'Avis (2002) and Sæbø (2010) for German, Ono (2006) and Yamato (2010) for Japanese, Lipták (2006) for Hungarian, Hualde and De Urbana (2003) for Basque a.o. The only group attested in the cross-linguistic studies but not witnessed in Russian was a group of speech verbs (e.g., 'tell' or 'say'). Furthermore, the verbs found in the search query were additionally tested in embedded exclamatives with other wh-words: *kto* 'who', *čto* 'what', *skol'ko* 'how many/much', *gde* 'where' (location), *kuda* 'where' (direction), *kogda* 'when', *počemu* 'why', *začem* 'what for'. The main criterion for distinction between embedded interrogatives and embedded exclamatives is that wh-words in embedded exclamatives have semantics of noteworthiness, cf. Nouwen and Chernilovskaya (2015). To illustrate, in the sentence *Smotri kto prišol!* 'Look who has come!', the wh-word *kto* refers to some noteworthy individual. Testing the semantics of wh-words in embedded exclamatives revealed that not each grammatical form of the found verbs is possible in wh-exclamatives. Such forms should be factive in terms of Kiparsky and Kiparsky (1970). The most frequent grammatical verbal forms are imperatives, subjunctives, conditionals, the 2nd person indicatives in assertions and in questions, cf. *predstavljajš* 'do you imagine?', *ne predstavljajš* 'you don't imagine', *sam znaeš* '(you) know by yourself', *znaeš* 'do you know?', *esli by ty znal* 'if you knew', *podumaeš* 'it does not matter' (lit. 'you think'), *smotri* 'look' (imperfective), *posmotri* 'look' (perfective), *vidiš* 'do you see?'. All these forms in combination with wh-words can function as amalgams, cf. (3) and (4).

(3) *Ja postroil smotri kakoj dom.*

I built look what house

'Look what a house I have built.' (lit. 'I built look what a house.')

(4) *Ja sobral vidiš skol'ko jagod.*
I picked see how.many berries

‘I have picked so many berries.’ (lit. ‘Do you see how many berries I picked?’)

Amalgams-exclamatives have lexical, morphological and syntactic limitations. This suggests that, although amalgamation has been established as a separate lexicalized phenomenon, it represents an active, ongoing process and, moreover, exposes idiosyncratic features.

Firstly, not all found verbs and predicatives can function as amalgams. To illustrate, the predicatives (e.g., *udivitel'no* ‘it is remarkable’), despite their frequencies, cannot function in amalgams, cf. (5).

(5) **On poznakomilsja udivitel'no s kem.*
he got.acquainted it.is.remarkable with whom

‘It is remarkable with whom he got acquainted.’ (lit. ‘He got acquainted it is remarkable with whom.’)

Secondly, amalgams-exclamatives are not formed if a verb has the past tense form, cf. (6).

(6) **On postroil {našol/vspomnil} kakoj dom.*
he built found/remembered what house

‘{It is funny/I remembered} what a house he has built.’ (lit. ‘He built {it is funny/I remembered what a house}.’)

Thirdly, they are not used with negation, cf. (7).

(7) **On ne stroil {ty ne poveriš/ne ponimaeš} kakoj dom.*
he not built {you not believe/not understand} what house

lit. ‘{You won’t believe/you cannot understand} what a house he did not build.’

Fourthly, amalgams cannot be split, cf. (8), in which the wh-phrase is inserted within the subjunctive clause.

(8) **On postroil esli by ty kakoj dom znal.*
he built if SUBJ you what house knew

‘If you knew what a house he built.’ (lit. ‘He build if you what a house knew.’)

Moreover, the forms that are originally used in questions impose question prosody. To illustrate, the sentence (4) can only be pronounced as a question.

Bibliography

- Beysade, C. (2009). In Paul Égré and Giorgio Magri (eds.), *MIT Working Papers in Linguistics* 60, 19–34. Castroviejo, E. (2006). *Wh-exclamatives in Catalan*. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona dissertation. d’Avis F.-J. (2002). *Theoretical Linguistics* 28(1), 5–32. Hualde, J. and O. de Urbana. 2003. *A grammar of Basque*. Berlin & New York: Mouton de Gruyter. Huddleston, R. (1993). *Lingua* 91, 175–184. Kiparsky, P. and C. Kiparsky. (1970). In M. Bierwisch & K. Heidolph (eds.), *22 Progress in linguistics*, 143–173. The Hague: Mouton. Lipták, A. (2006). *Acta Linguistica Hungarica* 53 (4), 343–391. Nouwen, R. and A. Chernilovskaya. (2015). *Linguistic Variation* 15(2), 201–224. Ono, H. (2006). *An investigation of exclamatives in English and Japanese: syntax and sentence processing*. University of Maryland dissertation. Sæbø, K. (2010). *Studia Linguistica* 64(1), 116–140. Testelefs Y., E. Bylinina. (2005a). In Franks S., Gladney F.Y., Tasseva-Kurkchieva (eds.), *Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics 13: The South Carolina Meeting*. Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan Slavic Publications, 355–364. Testelefs, Y. and L. Bylinina (2005b). The paper presented at the seminar “Theoretical semantics”. Institute for Information Transmission Problems. Villalba, X. (2003). *Lingua* 113, 713–745. Yamato, N. (2010). *Studia Linguistica* 64(1), 55–80.