

Non-standard use of participles in Russian: a corpus study

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Non-standard use of grammatical phenomena as a field of linguistic research

This field unifies several **methodologically and theoretically distinct** areas:

- first language acquisition (Ceitlin 2000; a.o.)
- second language acquisition and heritage language (Ellis 2003; Polinsky, Rakhilina and Vyrenkova 2014; Polinsky 2018; a.o.)
- adult native speakers' written and oral discourse (Kukushkina 1998; Rusakova 2013; a.o.)

Non-standard phenomena as evidence for microvariation

The paper takes into consideration only **regular non-standard** phenomena viewed as evidence for **microvariation** within the contemporary Russian language (Apresjan 1990; Kukushkina 1998; Rusakova 2013)

Our study: materials and goals

Materials: Russian non-standard participles in written (official and scientific) discourse of adult native speakers

Goals:

- to **determine** strategies that speakers are guided by when they use non-standard phenomena
- to **classify** the materials according to such strategies
- to **reveal** principles underlying the strategies

Why participles?

Participles represent a grammatical phenomenon **difficult to be produced** even for adult native speakers due to their:

- Old Church Slavonic origin (Borkovsky and Kuznetsov 1981)
- use in written (not oral) mode of discourse
- typical of bookish (not colloquial) style
- non-finite morphosyntax: non-finite clauses are viewed as “wrapped” and denote separate events (Say 2011, Letuchiy 2011)

Our study: methods

- The study was conducted on the basis of the Russian National Corpus (**RNC**), the Corpus of Russian Student Texts (**CoRST**), the search system **Yandex**, electronic **mass media** texts, email authors' **correspondence** (all in all, **71 discourses**).
- Additionally, the participles were **evaluated by 21 native speakers** who do **professional** applied work with written Russian language (philologists, translators, editors, journalists) on a **3-point scale** ranging from “1” (nobody can say so/I cannot say so) to “3” (one can say so/I can say so). The results of the survey showed that no sentences were judged as standard.

4 types of non-standard participles in Russian written texts

- Excessive anaphora
- Explicit presupposition
- Violation of information structure
- Excessive quantifier semantics

Participial clauses as relative clauses

- Additionally, according to Say (2011), attributive (= within noun phrases) participial clauses are classified as relative clauses and divided into two mutually exclusive types: restrictive and appositive.
- According to our data, there is one more type that is used non-standardly and that is neither restrictive nor appositive.

Excessive anaphora

V sovremennom mire SMI igrajut važnejšuju rol', javljajas' glavnym

in modern world mass.media play very.important role being main

istočnikom informatsii o proiskhodjaščem v mire i vokrug nas. Značimost' eta

source of.information about what.is.going.on in world and around us significance this

rastjot iz goda v god, kak_i čislo potrebitelej **predostavljaemoj** informatsii.

grows from year to year as.well.as quantity of.consumers **provided** of.information

'In modern world, mass media play a very important role, being a main source for information about what is going on in the world and around us. This significance has been growing as well as a number of consumers of the **provided** information.'

(CoRST)

Excessive anaphora

- Excessive anaphora exhibits participles which **anaphorically refer** to some clause in the previous discourse.
- The restrictiveness/appositiveness is **not applicable** to this variety.
- A plausible explanation for using this strategy is the speaker's tendency to **make a discourse coherent**.
- One way to make this redundant strategy a standard restrictive participial clause is to add arguments/adjuncts to the participle.

<...> **predostavljaemoj mediasferoj** informatsii <...>

'the information **provided by media** (adjunct).'

Explicit presupposition

Esli	čelovek	stavit	v	otpravljajemom	soobščeenii	točku,
if	person	puts	in	being.sent	message	dot
skoree_vsego		on	rasseržen	na	svoego	sobesednika.
it.is.likely		he	angry	at	his	interlocutor

‘If a person puts a dot in a message **that is being sent**, it is likely that he is angry at his interlocutor.’ (CoRST)

Explicit presupposition

- Explicit presupposition introduces an **appositive** participle which makes some presupposition redundant in the utterance.
- Not only the presupposition of existence of the message, but also the presupposition of sending it are **accommodated in the local context**, i.e. in the embedded clause of the conditional (for accommodation see Heim 1983).
- One way to make the sentence standard is to convert it into a finite clause:

Esli čelovek **otpravljaet** soobščenie...

‘If a person **sends** (finite form) a message’.

Violation of information structure

Poslednie neskol'ko let my nabljudаем **rastuščij** interes k voprosu

last several years we observe **growing** interest to question

ispol'zovanija opasnyh khimičeskikh veščestv v produktakh elektroniki.

of.using dangerous chemical substances in products of.electronics

'Within a few last years, we observe a **growing** interest to the question of whether to use dangerous chemical substances in electronic products.'

(CoRST)

Violation of information structure

- Violation of information structure suggests that participles are **appositive** and convey **new or accessible information** (cf. Chafe 1976).
- This type of information is typically expressed by finite verbal forms in a **focused** position of a clause.

Violation of information structure

- One way to make the sentence standard is to delete the redundant participle:

Poslednie	neskol'ko	let my nabljudаем	rastuščij	interes k voprosu
last	several	years we observe	growing	interest to question
ispol'zovanija opasnyh	khimičeskikh veščestv	v produktakh elektroniki.		
of.using	dangerous	chemical	substances	in products of.electronics

'Within a few last years, we observe a **growing** interest to the question of whether to use dangerous chemical substances in electronic products.'

(CoRST)

Excessive quantifier semantics

V učreždenijakh kul'tury postojanno vedjotsja razvitie
in institutes of.culture permanently is.realised development

suščestvujuščikh sistem bezopasnosti ob"ektov <...>.

of.existing systems of.safety of.objects

'In the culture institutions, there is a permanent development of **existing** systems of safety.' (RNC)

Excessive quantifier semantics

- Excessive quantifier semantics includes both **restrictive and appositive** participles which function similarly to quantifiers.
- E.g., participles derived from **verbs of existential semantics** such as *suščestvovat'* or *imet'sja* 'exist'.

Excessive quantifier semantics

- One way to make the sentence standard is to delete the redundant participle:

V učreždenijakh	kul'tury	postojanno	vedjotsja	razvitie
in institutes	of.culture	permanently	is.realised	development
suščestvujuščikh	sistem	bezopasnosti ob"ektov <...>.		
of.existing	systems	of.safety	of.objects	

'In the culture institutions, there is a permanent development of ~~existing~~ systems of safety.' (RNC)

Reason underlying all the strategies of redundant use of participles

- **Interference** of **written** bookish and **oral** colloquial Russian speech.
- This interference has **pragmatic roots**: the authors of the presented discourses seem to follow both types of principles, resulting in redundant use of participles.

Relevant principles for using written bookish Russian speech

- **packaging** information into “wrapped” structures
- use of nominalizations and **non-finite** verbal forms (participles, converbs)
- **coherence** of written mode of discourse
- **consistency** of written mode of discourse

Relevant strategies for using oral colloquial Russian speech

- oral discourse is given in **portions** and tends to be packaged in **finite** verbal forms
- reference to the extra-linguistic **current** state of affairs
- **conciseness** of oral colloquial speech
- **brevity** of oral colloquial speech

Relevant strategies for using oral colloquial Russian speech

- excessive **explicitness** of discourse relations and discourse references
- **reiterations** in oral colloquial speech (especially naming/description)
- use of **collocations** and **clichés** (cf. Zemskaya et al. 1981; Kibrik and Podlesskaya 2006; a.o.)

Collocations and clichés

- We argue that collocations and clichés are a key source of non-standard use of participles.
- Noun phrases with participial clauses include a modified collocation of a verbal phrase.
- ...***predostavljaemoj*** *informatsii*... ‘provided information’
(VP collocation = *predostavit’ vozmožnost’* ‘provide information’)
- ...***rastuščij*** *interes*... ‘growing interest’
(VP collocation = *interes rastjot* ‘the interest grows’)

Conclusion

- Non-standard use of grammatical phenomena reflect microvariations within a language.
- We argue for four types of non-standard use of participles in Russian.
- The main source of non-standard use of participles is interference of written bookish and oral colloquial speech, which combines various strategies of producing these types of discourse.

Thank you!

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