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## ‘TENSED’ AND ‘NON-TENSED’ PREDICATIVES IN RUSSIAN<sup>1</sup>

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In the article, I focus on tense marking in Russian constructions with predicatives, such as *xolodno* ‘(it is) cold’ and *ploxo* ‘(it is) bad’. Statistical data from the Russian National Corpus show that the frequency of past tense forms (e.g., combinations with the form *bylo*) is much greater for some predicatives than for others. This difference results both from semantic and formal factors. On the one hand, some predicatives denote evaluation (e.g. *ploxo* ‘bad’). Evaluation can be applied to events that have finished or have never been realized. What is relevant is that the evaluation is made at the moment of speech, and this is why the present tense (= the zero copula verb) is used. On the other hand, it is important that the present tense is unmarked with predicatives, while with verbs, it is marked with special verbal affixes. The unmarked present tense form of a predicative can get the temporal meaning from the embedded verb. Interestingly, this phenomenon is in a sense opposite to the well-known phenomenon of relative tense marking. While the latter presupposes that the tense assignment in the embedded event is anchored to the tense meaning of the main event, the tense value of the construction with evaluation predicatives is assigned by ‘agreement’ with the embedded verb.

**Keywords:** predicatives, tense, evaluation, emotion, copula verb, the Russian language

## ПРЕДИКАТИВЫ, МАРКИРОВАННЫЕ И НЕ МАРКИРОВАННЫЕ ПО ВРЕМЕНИ, В РУССКОМ ЯЗЫКЕ

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**Ключевые слова:** предикативы, время, оценка, эмоции, глагол-связка, русский язык

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## 1. Introduction

In Russian, a special type of units called ‘predicatives’ exists. These units are mostly homonymous to short adjectives and / or adverbials and tend to be found in the predicate position. Here belong, for instance, *xolodno* ‘(it is) cold’, *ploxo* ‘(it is) bad’, *stranno* ‘(it is) strange’, though some go back to nouns (*vremja* ‘time’). The group of predicatives includes the following semantic classes:

- Modal predicatives: *nado* ‘(it is) necessary’, *nužno* ‘(it is) necessary’, *možno* ‘(it is) possible’, *vozmožno* ‘(it is) possible’
- Physical state: *tesno* ‘(it is) crowded’.
- Mental state: *interesno* ‘(it is) interesting’, *legko* ‘(it is) easy (e.g., to do something)’.
- Emotions: *radostno* ‘(it is) joyful’, *neprijatno* ‘(it is) unpleasant’.
- Characteristics of a situation in terms of its properties: *stranno* ‘(it is) strange’, *glupo* ‘(it is) silly’.
- Characteristics of time: *pozдно* ‘(it is) late (e.g., to do something)’, *rano* ‘(it is) (too) early (e.g., to do something)’, *vremja* ‘(it is) time (e.g., to do something)’.
- Ethical evaluation: *neetično* ‘(it is) immoral’, *žestoko* ‘(it is) cruel’, *blagorodno* ‘(it is) generous’.
- General evaluation: *ploxo* ‘(it is) bad’, *xorošo* ‘(it is) good’.

In the article, I consider tense marking of predicatives. I will show that the present tense in constructions with predicatives sometimes has a non-standard interpretation. The analysis is based on data taken from the Russian National Corpus ([www.ruscopora.ru](http://www.ruscopora.ru)), as well as some elicited examples.

Tense is not expressed morphologically in predicatives. It is marked in the form of the auxiliary verb ‘be’, which is used with the predicative as a finite element. When a predicative has to be marked for present tense, no overt predicate is used (Testelets 2009 and Letuchiy 2015 show that the question whether these cases are instances of zero copula or do not contain any verb at all is not trivial, and the answer is different for different types of constructions).

(1) *Мне холодно.*

It turns out, however, that in some contexts, the present tense (the zero copula) is used, though the meaning seems to require past or future.

(2) *Хотел сказать—но что-то остановило. И хорошо, что не сказал.*  
[Анатолий Азольский. Лопушок // «Новый Мир», 1998]

(3) *Да вот этот визит занял весь вечер и напрочь разрушил столь любимое им чувство одиночества. В конце концов, может, и хорошо, что разрушил ...* [Василь Быков. Бедные люди (1998)]

(4) *Оставшийся кирпич лежал под навесом и странно, что вовсе не продавался.* [В. А. Солоухин. Смех за левым плечом (1989)]

(5) *Вообще возбуждение возрастало, и неизвестно, во что бы всё это вылилось ...* [М. А. Булгаков. Мастер и Маргарита, часть 1 (1929–1940)]

Now I will consider these contexts in detail.

## 2. Present tense for present vs. past meanings

Examples (2) through (5) are heterogenous in that present tense can refer either to a moment in present or in past. Below I term the interpretation where the zero copula refers to a moment in present 'standard interpretation'.

For instance, in (5), the interpretation can be standard. While the whole context describes a situation in past, the predicative *neizvestno* remains unmarked for tense (or combined with a zero copula). This can result from the fact that the answer to the indirect question is unknown to the author at the moment of speech (in this case, the moment when the text is written or read).

This interpretation seems to be incompatible with example (3). A broader context apparently describes the hero's (and not the author's) attitude to the events:

- (3') *Жена Скварыша с внуками тоже вчера уехала на дачу, а он остался в городской квартире, сказал, есть дело. Хотя дела у него не было никакого, просто хотелось побыть одному, наедине со своею бедой. Да вот этот визит занял весь вечер и напроць разрушил столь любимое им чувство одиночества. В конце концов, может, и **хорошо**, что разрушил: одиночество тоже с каких-то пор перестало быть для него спасением, как не было им и многолюдье. Настало время, когда людей вокруг него становилось всё меньше, а порою они и вовсе исчезали, особенно из числа друзей, сослуживцев; одиночество разрасталось, заключая его в плотный глухой пузырь. Это было непривычно, пугало, и он не знал, где ему лучше: дома без людей или на людях вне дома. То, что чужих автомобилей внизу не было, несколько его успокоило, хотя, подумал он, машина могла уже и отъехать, пока он прощался с Краснянским. [Василь Быков. Бедные люди (1998)]*

The hero perceives the situation in past, so its attitude is also situated in past (we do not know anything about the hero's state in present).

Interestingly, all constructions with verbal predicates in (3) (*uexala, ostalsja, zanjal*) are marked for past, while the predicative is not accompanied with a past tense form of the copula verb *byt* 'be'. The insertion of *bylo* makes the example stylistically poor:

- (6) *?В конце концов, может, и **хорошо было**, что разрушил.*

The same interpretation seems to be valid for examples (2) and (4). In (4), for instance, the evaluation *stranno* 'strange' is made by the heroes at the reference time, rather than at the moment of speech. Below I refer to examples like (3), (4) and (5) using the term 'non-standard construction' and 'non-standard interpretation (of the present tense)'.

## 3. Statistical distribution: percentage of past tense

Statistics, based on the Russian National Corpus, shows that predicatives differ from each other in respect of tense expression. Table 1 below contains percentages of examples with past tense marking with several predicatives in the whole sample of examples for the same predicatives. Of course, the verb *byt* 'can be separated from

the predicative. However, here I counted only those contexts in which the form *bylo* is situated immediately before or after the predicative.<sup>2</sup> To count the percentage in the last column, the number of contexts with *bylo* was divided to the whole number of examples with the predicative and the complementizer *čto* or an interrogative pronoun (*kto* ‘who’, *kogda* ‘when’ and so on).<sup>3</sup>

Predicative	Total	<i>bylo</i> + PRAEDIC + complementizer / pronoun	PRAEDIC + <i>bylo</i> + complementizer / pronoun	Percentage of past
<i>непонятно</i> + <i>кто</i>   <i>как</i>   <i>что</i>   <i>где</i>   <i>когда</i>   <i>почему</i>   <i>сколько</i>	1,991	154	133	14.4
<i>странно</i> + <i>что</i>	1,777	118	79	11.1
<i>плохо</i> + <i>что</i>	559	7	3	1.8
<i>приятно</i> + <i>что</i>	980	237	49	29.2
<i>важно</i> + <i>что</i>	1,425	29	20	3.4
<i>обидно</i> + <i>что</i>	796	104	44	18.6
<i>хорошо</i> + <i>что</i>	6,745	38	18	0.8
<i>интересно</i> + <i>кто</i>   <i>как</i>   <i>что</i>   <i>где</i>   <i>когда</i>   <i>почему</i>   <i>сколько</i>	4,566	121	32	3.4

The percentage of contexts where the predicative is marked for past apparently differs from one predicative to another. Predicatives associated with emotions, such as *prijatno* and *obidno*, show the highest percentage of past. For those marking cognitive activity, *stranno* and *neponjatno*, the proportion is a little lower. Finally, generalized properties and evaluation predicatives, namely, *važno*, *ploxo* and *xorošo*, are rarely marked for past.

Of course, this difference can result from different factors:

- (1) rarity of past contexts. It may be the case that generalized properties and evaluation are mainly described as belonging to the present time.
- (2) difference in interpretation. Perhaps, the statistical difference results from the fact that the three predicatives of the evaluation group are formally distinct from other groups: they are used without past marking, even if they denote a situation in past.

<sup>2</sup> This condition is imposed on the search results to avoid contexts like *Bylo interesno i prijatno* ‘(It) was interesting and pleasant’, where *bylo* is syntactically connected with two predicatives: *interesno* and *prijatno*. Another type of contexts I would like to sort out in this way is *Bylo li prijatno* ‘whether it was pleasant’ with an interrogative / indirect question particle *li*: interrogative contexts can differ from affirmative ones in many respects.

<sup>3</sup> The site [www.ruscorpora.ru](http://www.ruscorpora.ru) was accessed on 08.02.1017.

In fact, both factors appear to be relevant. On the one hand, the evaluative component can be applied to a situation as a whole (without a temporal localization). A situation as such can be regarded as 'good' or 'bad' theoretically, even if this situation has never taken place or if we speak about a class of situations.

On the other hand, we have seen that even for evaluative predicatives, the specific interpretation is also possible: very often the same evaluative predicatives denote single definite events, as in (2)–(5) above. This is where the second factor (formal properties of predicatives) is relevant. In the next section I will describe the group of predicatives that tend to remain unmarked for tense.

#### 4. The relevant group of predicatives

As mentioned above, the relevant group of 'non-tensed' predicatives includes mainly predicatives of evaluation ('good', 'bad') and other predicatives that denote continuous properties of events ('important'). At first glance, the fact that they can be used without tense marking does not seem very surprising. To be characterized as 'good' or 'important', an event should not obligatorily be directly related to the present state of affairs—moreover, it can be the case that an event has not been realized.

On the other hand, two more things are to be explained:

- 1) why for other predicatives, the non-standard interpretation of present tense is impossible or strange;
- 2) why the standard marking of tense with the form *bylo* sometimes sounds awkward for this group of predicates, as in (7), contrary to non-standard construction (8), which sounds normally:

(7) \**Было хорошо, что Петя вовремя прибежал и помог нам.*

(8) *Хорошо, что Петя вовремя прибежал и нам помог.*

##### 4.1. Impossibility / awkwardness of the non-standard construction with other predicates

Why is the non-standard interpretation of the present tense unacceptable with predicatives of emotions and many other classes? I shall explain it on the example of emotional predicatives. The reason seems to be that emotions are linked to the time of event much tighter than evaluation meanings.

For instance, example (9) is non-canonical semantically, while (10) is standard:

(9) *Маме приятно, что гости вели себя вежливо.*

(10) *Маме было приятно, что гости ведут / вели себя вежливо.*

Of course, both (9) and (10) are perfectly grammatical. What is unusual about (9), is that the emotion is described in present, while the event took place in past. Contexts like this occur in the RNC, but in a special situation when the past situation is relevant for the moment of speech. For instance, this is the case with 'resultative events':

(11) *Очень приятно, что вы остались с нами.* [О подписке на второе полугодие 2007 года // «Наука и жизнь», 2007]

In (11), the stimulus situation is relevant for the moment of speech: the addressee is currently with the speaker. This is not the case in (9), where (in the absence of a broader context) the embedded situation does not seem to be relevant.

In (10), the emotion is described as occurring simultaneously to the stimulus. This variant seems to be more canonical.

#### 4.2. Awkwardness of the standard construction with evaluation predicates

Contrary to emotions, evaluation meanings are not linked to the time when the situation occurs. The description of a situation as ‘good’, ‘bad’, or ‘strange’ is not related to the individual instance of the situation. If we say something like ‘It was raining, and it is good that Peter took his umbrella’, this evaluation results from the general logic (‘If it rains, an umbrella is necessary’). Also contrary to emotions, evaluation meanings are not sensitive to the relevance of the situation: we can evaluate even a situation that is completely irrelevant to the moment of speech: in (12), for instance, the evaluation constitutes a part of the description of the author’s childhood. The events, which are described, are not necessarily relevant for the current time:

(12) *Да, я родился в Советском Союзе и горжусь этим. Все детство отдыхал в пионерлагерях и на базах с родителями. И самое интересное, мы все были счастливы—без пятизвездочных апартаментов, мнимой экзотики и обжираловки по системе «все включено». Хорошо, что тогда мерилом жизни не был ни гламурный вид, ни иномарка, ни офисная работа, ни обязательный отдых за рубежом ...* [Евгений РУМЯНЦЕВ. Турецкие врачи не разглядели у 9-летнего россиянина перелом руки // Комсомольская правда, 2013.07.11]

The fact that life used to be different when the speaker was child does not have much to do with the moment of speech. However, this fact is really important for the way of speaker’s life in that period.

Yet, the present tense is used because the evaluation meaning ‘good’ is applicable even to events which are no longer relevant. If it is changed to *prijatno*, it is necessary that the event should be relevant for the speech act time.

If a predicative like *xorošo* was used with *bylo*, it would imply that the evaluation predicative refers to past in the sense that the situation is evaluated in past. However, the evaluation like ‘good’ by default refers to the general state of affairs. The hypothetical meaning ‘it was good that ...’ presupposes that the evaluation changed from the reference time, which is highly non-canonical (‘in my childhood it was good, but it is no longer good’). To make the standard construction with *bylo* possible in (12), a subjective component should be included in the sentence. For instance, (12’) sounds good with *bylo*, because the PP *dlja menja* ‘for me’ is added: the situation might be good for the speaker in past, and then the speaker might have changed his opinion.

(12’) *Для меня было хорошо, что мерилом жизни тогда не был гламурный вид.*

In other words, evaluation predicatives tend to choose a non-standard interpretation, because evaluation tends to be regarded as objective and constant in time (though in fact, this is not necessarily the case).

### 4.3. Pragmatic motivation for not marking past: speech act markers

There is another group that typically does not take the past tense marker *bylo*: it includes the predicative *interesno*. We have not mentioned it, but note that the proportion of past for this predicative is as low as for evaluation predicatives. It seems, however, that it is semantically different from the evaluation group: the fact that something is interesting for someone is not a constant property, it rather changes from one period to the other.

If we have a look at the data, it turns out that *interesno* can be combined with *bylo*, but only if the dative-marked experiencer is expressed in the sentence (16). Constructions with *bylo* but without an experiencer sound a bit strange (14):

(13) *Интересно, кто этот человек—ходит, спрашивает всех о чём-то.*

(14) *?Какой-то человек ходил и спрашивал всех о чём-то. Было интересно, кто этот человек.*

(15) *Мне интересно, кто этот человек.*

(16) *Мне было интересно, кто этот человек.*

I think that for *interesno*, the rarity of past results from the discourse function of the predicative. When used without an explicit experiencer, *interesno* either marks the question or the relevance of the information. Since the predicative is used here as a discourse marker<sup>4</sup>, it is natural that usually it does not refer to the past: discourse meanings tend to be used deictically, with reference to the speech act time and location. In contrast, when the experiencer is mentioned, as in (15)–(16), the predicative *interesno* expresses the usual meaning of the cognitive state of the experiencer ('something is interesting for the experiencer'). Not surprisingly, this meaning allows transposition to past contexts, as well as emotional meanings like 'surprise'.

Contrary to evaluation predicates, *interesno* does not allow the non-standard interpretation of present tense. In general, the use of this predicative without an experiencer is rare if it refers to past.

Notably, for *interesno*, the possibility of the non-standard interpretation depends on the strategy of complementation. The standard interpretation is possible if an indirect question is used (13)–(16), but almost impossible if the verb hosts a *čto*-clause:

(17) *Интересно, что никто не заметил подмены документов.*

(18) *\*Было интересно, что никто не заметил подмены документов.*

<sup>4</sup> Note that, contrary to verbs like *kažetsja*, that are often used as parentheticals, the predicative *interesno* does not lose the properties of the head predicate in constructions like this: its function of a discourse marker does not lead to a change in the syntactic position.

## 5. Factors of the choice of the strategy

Although the standard and the non-standard strategy appear to be free variants, some factors are statistically relevant for their distribution. The probability of the standard marking increases if the sentence contains a nominal subject-like pronoun (*это, одно*), a dative-marked experiencer or the complement clause is an infinitive construction.

### 5.1. The pronoun *это*

Zimmerling (2009) shows that in constructions with predicatives, the pronoun *это* can be used pleonastically. It is coreferent with the clausal complement (note that the precise syntactic position of *это* and the clausal complement, their identity or non-identity are irrelevant for the present work).

What is relevant, is that the use of *это* makes the standard use of tense more probable.

(19) *И это было хорошо, что уроки кончались раньше работы.* [Андрей Битов. Сад (1960–1963)]

Example (19) with the past tense is acceptable, though in general, past sounds strange with the predicative *хорошо* 'good'. The reason seems to be that the clause includes *И это было хорошо*, while the complement clause *что уроки кончались раньше работы* is added afterwards, and the syntactic position of the complement clause is unclear. If the initial form does not include an embedded clause, marked for tense, the clause *И это было хорошо* cannot be assigned the tense value if the past tense is not expressed.

### 5.2. Infinitive vs. finite clause

Another relevant feature is the strategy of complementation, chosen in the particular construction with a predicative. The variant without tense-marking and the past interpretation in the main clause is only possible if the embedded clause is finite. If infinitive is chosen, the tense value must be marked on the predicative. For instance, in (20), with the predicative *приятно*, and (21), with the lexeme *хорошо*, omission of the tense form of *быть* will change the interpretation: the speaker's perception will refer to the moment of speech.

(20) *Мне было приятно слышать эти слова.*

(21) *Так хорошо было сидеть здесь, пить кофе, слушать море, смотреть в ласковые глаза Георгия Васильевича...* [Дмитрий Быков. Орфография (2002)]

Some rare examples with a non-standard construction with infinitive are not fully acceptable and semantically unclear.

(22) *На некоторых крышах видны были люди, но неизвестно, как к ним добраться.* [Анатолий Кузнецов. Бабий яр (1965–1970)]



This opposition reveals an important thing about the nature of the non-standard interpretation. The non-standard (past-like) interpretation of the present tense appears to result from the fact that tense is marked in the finite complement clause. In this case, the past interpretation of the predicative is clear from the interpretation of the embedded clause. If the embedded clause contains infinitive, which does not distinguish tense values, the non-standard interpretation is impossible.

This mechanism is rather close to the relative tense-marking, which was described by Barentsen (1996), Schlenker (2003) Khomitsevich (2007), Say (2016), Letuchiy (2016). The notion of relative tense-marking covers cases when the tense form of the embedded verb denotes the temporal localization of the event with respect to the main situation. For instance, in (23), the present tense form *rabotaet* 'works' does not mean that the subject works in a bank at the moment of speech. The point is that he worked there at the time when the main situation (*dumal* 'thought') takes place:

(23) *Я думал, что он работает в банке.*

In contrast, under the absolute interpretation, the tense form in the embedded clause describes the localization of the event with respect to the speech act: before, after or simultaneously with *it*.

(24) *Я вошёл, когда все обедали.*

The relative interpretation is characteristic of Russian complement clauses, while the absolute one tends to occur in adjunct clauses, though both tendencies know some exceptions (see, for instance, Paducheva 2014 on the non-standard behaviour of the adverbial subordinator *poka*).

The situation with predicatives is almost opposite to the relative tense marking. The tense value is marked in the embedded clause, while the time of the main event is understood from the embedded clause. The difference is that relative tense marking does not presuppose that the tense value of the embedded verb *coincides* with that of the main verb (the latter is just counted from the former). By contrast, in the case under analysis, the tense value of the clause with a predicative coincides with the value of the embedded clause.

In other words, we can treat the non-standard (past-like) interpretation of present tense with predicatives as a case of 'accommodation' of the tense value in the main clause to the one in the embedded clause. Under this analysis, it becomes clear why this non-standard interpretation is mainly observed in cases, where the main clause is headed by a predicative, rather than a verb. Past tense remains unmarked with predicatives, this is why accommodation of the present tense value in the main clause to the past tense value of the embedded clause does not create any grammatical conflict between present tense and past tense markers. In contrast, if the main predicate is verbal, it is explicitly marked for the present tense, which makes accommodation to the past tense value very difficult.

### 5.3. The expression of experiencer

The expression of the experiencer is also relevant for the choice of the standard / non-standard marking. If the experiencer is expressed, the standard variant becomes better. Not surprisingly, a significant part of examples of tense-marking with the predicative *xorošo* (11 out of 56) contain a dative-marked experiencer.

(25) *И мне было хорошо, что я видел счастливую женщину.* [Фазиль Искандер. Сюжет существования (1965)]

(26) *И еще ему было хорошо, что, обидев Егоровну, он узнал ее по-настоящему.* [Владимир Железников. Последний парад (1985)]

The relevance of the experiencer expression can result from the degree of syntactic complexity of the main clause (this factor has been mentioned before, where we discussed the presence of a pronominal element). However, the same link can be addressed in semantic terms. If the experiencer is expressed, the interpretation of the situation changes: while the predicative *stranno* or *xorošo* without an experiencer is interpreted as denoting a general property of the situation, if the experiencer is included, the main clause denotes experiencer's perception, and, thus, its meaning becomes more subjective. The experiencer's state is linked to the precise temporal localization, whereas the generalized property, as mentioned above, characterizes the situation as such, with no link to the particular time or space. If something is strange or good, this is true even the situation has never occurred, or, on the contrary, has occurred and ended much time ago.

## 6. Coordination with past tense descriptions

The fact that the construction under analysis is interpreted in a special way is evident from its behaviour in coordinate constructions. In examples (2) and (4), formally present tense predicative constructions are coordinated with past tense verbal constructions. The same is shown in the example below:

(27) *Семен смотрел то на меня, то на Илью, и неизвестно, кто вызывал у него большее удивление.* [Сергей Лукьяненко. Ночной дозор (1998)]

Recall that the non-standard interpretation is awkward or impossible if the experiencer is expressed. Not surprisingly, coordinate constructions of the same type also become strange in presence of the explicit experiencer, as in (28) and (30):

(28) *?Я его не любил, и мне приятно, что приходил он редко.* (example (28) becomes fully acceptable if *мне приятно* is changed to *xorošo*):

(29) *Я его не любил, и хорошо, что приходил он редко.*

(30) *?Семён смотрел то на меня, то на Илью, и мне неизвестно / непонятно, кто вызывал у него большее опасение.*

An interesting question is whether the acceptability of coordinate constructions like (27) shows that predicatives like *neizvestno* are grammaticalized in contexts with a non-standard interpretation and are syntactically modal markers, and not matrix predicates. Currently I do not have any reliable data to answer this question. In any case, it is important that in examples like (27), predicatives retain their syntactic pattern: they host an embedded clause with *čto* and not, for instance, occur as parentheticals.

## Conclusions

In the paper, I claimed that Russian predicatives fall into two groups. This division is based on their tendency to be marked or unmarked for tense in past contexts. The first group includes predicatives of various semantic classes, for instance, predicatives of emotion, physical perception, and so on ('unpleasant', 'cold', 'hot', and so on). The other group includes the evaluation class and similar meanings ('good', 'bad', 'strange'). Importantly, not only does the second group allow the past tense value to be unmarked, but sometimes the hypothetical past tense marking even looks awkward.

The facts under analysis can be accounted for both by semantic and by formal factors. On the one hand, evaluation is semantically possible even for those situations that are finished, have not been realized or simply are not highly relevant for the moment of speech. Thus, even in past contexts, the evaluation predicative can be used in present (= with a zero copula), because evaluation is made by the speaker at the moment of speech. On the other hand, this phenomenon is mainly characteristic of constructions with predicatives, and not with verbs. I supposed that this results from the fact that present tense remains unmarked with predicatives, but is morphologically marked with verbs. This is why the tense value of the unmarked form of predicatives can be accommodated to the tense value of the embedded verb. The same is impossible for synthetic and explicitly marked present tense forms of verbs. I showed that this case of accommodation is in a sense parallel to relative tense marking in Russian subordinate clauses.

The problem which has been discussed has theoretical implications lying beyond the domain of predicatives. The situation under analysis shows that classes of matrix predicates (evaluation predicates, emotion predicates and so on) differ in their preference to combine with a specific instance of an event (emotion predicates) vs. with a generalized event (evaluation predicates).

The future research perspective can include testing Russian verbs of emotion for their combinability (in the present tense) with different tense forms of the embedded predicate. This can constitute an important empirical test for the type of event (e.g., concrete / abstract, realized / non-realized) that the main predicate is compatible with. For instance, as shown before, evaluation predicatives can characterize an event irrespectively of whether it was realized and whether it is regarded as an abstract event or as a concrete instance of the situation.

Another theoretical conclusion is that the range of strategies of tense marking depends on the part of speech (and, perhaps, other properties) of the main predicate. This makes us doubt the parallelism of constructions with lexical verbs vs. zero copulas. Other syntactic features, which are said to characterize the Russian complex sentence, are to be tested against constructions with predicatives.

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