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The corpus-based study of the Russian pseudosynonymous verb-preposition constructions: the CxG approach

This research focuses on three groups of Russian verb-preposition constructions: 1) constructions with "verbs of speech and thought": *govorit' o YLoc/govorit' pro YAcc* meaning 'to speak about Y'; 2) "verbs of sorrow" constructions: *skuchat' o YLoc/skuchat' po YDat* meaning 'to miss Y'; 3) constructions with "verbs of directed contact": *bit' v YAcc/bit' po YDat* meaning 'to bang against Y'. The constructions in every group used to be considered synonymous. Indeed, the interchangeability of the two constructions in every group is possible in overwhelming majority of examples, but according to Ruscorpora data, there are contexts that make this interchangeability impossible. The analysis of Ruscorpora data from the cognitive point of view shows that the semantic differences between the constructions in each group are caused by the restrictions which the construction as a whole imposes on the semantics of its components. In our case such restrictions are brought about by the semantic roles of the prepositions. As for "verbs of speech and thought" constructions, the prepositions *o* and *pro* are linked to different semantic roles. The preposition *pro* is linked to a complex role of theme and content and requires the agent argument in the position of the subject, while the preposition *o* is connected with the role of theme and doesn't impose such strict restrictions on the type of the subject: it may be agent, instrument or stimulus. As for constructions with "verbs of sorrow", the preposition *o* is connected with the role of theme and requires the agent argument in the position of the subject, while the preposition *po* is linked to the role of stimulus and requires the experiencer in the subject position. Thus, the *o*-construction implies a more controlled action than the *po*-construction. As regards the third group of the constructions, the preposition *po* here is connected with the role of patient and *YDat* refers to a kind of surface, while the preposition *v* is linked to the role of goal and *YAcc* refers to a kind of plane covering the cavity that is the place of destination. Thus, the constructions in the first group restrict the type of subject, those in the second group impose some restrictions on the type of the main verb, while the constructions in the third group differ in the type of object. The study of the acquisition of the two constructions in each group emphasises the importance of the semantic differences between them.

REFERENCES

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