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Russian Restricted Collocations: an Attempt of Frame Approach

Abstract

This paper is one of the series of theoretical dictionary studies conducted at the Seminar on Theoretical Phraseology and Computer-Based Phraseography for the proposed "Dictionary of Russian Restricted Collocations: Cultural Constructions of the Russian Language", see also Telia (1994). A frame approach to a dictionary lemma is described, and two examples of frame structures are given to illustrate the basic ideas.

1. Introduction

In spite of the growing interest in the phrasal aspect of language, restricted collocations still remain a challenge for linguistics and lexicography. Restricted collocations are generally (and justifiably) believed to be the most difficult part of the lexicon both for lexicographic presentation and for second language teaching/acquisition.

Recently, there have appeared new possibilities in phraseography opened up by latest developments in frame semantics and cognitive linguistics. Traditional distributive surface analysis of the phrase can be now complemented with a more profound understanding of collocability due to a system of depth cases inherent in the meaning of the base. Cognitive linguistics was helpful since it was the first to pay attention at the generative role of metaphor and what traditional Russian linguistics referred to as the "inner form of the word" (term by A. Potebnja).

Parallel to Western scholars, the Meaning<=>Text model was elaborated by Mel'chuk and Zholkovski and applied in dictionary making process (Mel'chuk I., Zholkovski A. 1984). Lexical functions are comparable to systems of depth-semantics and seem to be responsible both for word-building and phrase generation. Further, in academic work by V. Telia, Mel'chuk's lexical functions were first applied to the description of phraseological units. However, the application of lexical functions, in

273

an unmodified form, to the description of restricted collocation turned out to be hardly feasible because of the special nature of material.

The working hypothesis in the present approach is that the meaning of a restricted collocation is not the result of interaction between depths semantics and surface syntax. Rather, it takes its origin at a level where depths semantics interacts with conceptual structure. Therefore, the frame of meaning for a restricted collocation would have to be designed on a special basis. Charles Fillmore's version of frame semantics (see, e.g., Fillmore 1994:46) shows that an approach inspired by the Mel'chuk & Zholkovski's system and oriented at conceptual analysis can yield interesting results both for language theory and lexicography.

For the purposes of this study, another question posed in Fillmore (1994) is highly relevant, namely, that of the nature of frames. Cultural background does influence the construction of the concept, which fact should be reflected in dictionary making. This is especially significant for a dictionary of restricted collocations with abstract bases like Russ. *doverie* (trust, confidence) or *len'* (laziness, idleness, apathy, inaction). Such abstract nouns are names of cultural constructions of the Russian language.

Semantically, such abstract nouns are significations, not denotations, their meanings being formed by specific conceptual and culturally-relevant interpretations. In this respect, frame-internal and frame-external information is sometimes difficult to differentiate between, but both are equally important for lexicographic representation.

In the present approach, each lemma is taken to correspond to a separate frame representing one cultural construct. It is proposed to describe each concept "from within" and through language representation of the construct, i.e., through fragments of meanings of collocates that are bound to the meaning of the head and that sum together into the meaning of the head.

For practical lexicographic purposes, this approach can help establish the difference between semantically related forms of one and the same language (an explanatory dictionary) or different languages (bilingual dictionaries). This would provide us with an outlet into cross-cultural studies of language.

The general ideographic approach that is adopted in this study allows to identify more general frame structures with their further division into component frame clusters and further into smaller groups until individual frames (lemmas) finally evolve. For instance, Emotions are further divided into "Positive Emotions" and "Negative Emotions", and each subgroup is further classified until there evolves an individual notion that corresponds to one or another Russian abstract noun but does not

necessarily correspond to one and only one word in some other language: *Pechal'* (grief, sorrow, despondence, melancholy), *Radost'* (joy, happiness, elation), *Toska* (melancholy, depression, grief, sorrow, yearning), *Vostorg* (delight, enthusiasm, rapture, ecstasy).

This technique of ideographic treatment allows to look at every lemma as a frame internal component as related to more complex conceptual structures. Ideographic fields thus composed can be compared by the frame structure of individual lemmas, since each ideographic field would have different content in each language. As we move downwards along this hierarchy, we are sure to find still more and more differences between the languages. This seems to provide an interesting basis for comparative frame lexicography.

The type of frame proposed in this study makes part of the everyday language world picture. But its composition turned out to be more complex than was theoretically expected. Through the interpretation of frame components (slots and zones) one gains an access to categories of cultures like mythologemes, ideologemes, stereotypes, rites, habits, sacred symbols and practices, symbols and figures of everyday life, etc. The task of representation of this type of cultural information contained in linguistic connotation cannot be achieved merely by listing the necessary parameters and by pinning the necessary collocate to the necessary base noun. The working procedures for the lexicographic representation of cultural connotation will be described elsewhere (see, for instance, the paper by Natalia Bragina in the present volume).

Our aim is to represent the technique of purely semantic elaboration of material, which must necessarily precede any cultural analysis of linguistic meaning. Further, a version of frame design for a dictionary lemma is proposed and described, and two examples are given in Appendices of a dictionary lemma that has been adopted as the basic unit for the proposed "Dictionary of Russian Restricted Collocations: Cultural Constructions of Contemporary Russian Language".

2. The General Design of the Conceptual Frame for the Description of Restricted Collocations

The scheme of frame structure elaborated for our purposes is given in Fig.1. For lack of space, examples are omitted from the explanations below and the reader is requested to kindly refer to the Appendices for the illustration of each statement.

1	Identifying Parameters	(NP = AdjN)
1.1	Value Modifiers (**V**)	

$$V_1, V_2, ..., V_n$$

| 1.2 | Quantitative Intensifiers (**Q**) | |

$$Q_1, Q_2, ..., Q_n$$

2.	Predicative Parameters	(VP)
2.1	Subject/Object Actualizers	
2.1.1	$P = X V_{act} N$	

$$P_2, ..., P_n$$

| 2.1.2 | $P = X V_{pass} N$ | |

$$P_1, P_2, ..., P_n$$

| 2.1.3 | $P = N V$ | |

$$P_1, P_2, ..., P_n$$

| 2.2 | Causality (**C**) | |

$$C_1, C_2, ..., C_n$$

3.	Categorial Parameters	(NP = NN_{Gen})
3.1	Essence / Phenomenon Actualizers (**M**)	

$$M_1, M_2, ..., M_n$$

| 3.2 | Continuity / Discontinuity Actualizers (**D**) | |

$$D_1, D_2, ...D_n$$

| 3.3 | Locative (**L**) | |

$$L_1, L_2, ..., L_n$$

| 3.4 | Instrumentative | |

$$I_1, I_2, ..., I_n$$

Fig. 1. Frame Structure for the Lexicographic Presentation of Russian Restricted Collocations with Abstract Nouns denoting Cultural Constructions

According to the meaning of each restricted collocation, the following three Zones were identified within the frame structure: (1) Identifying Parameters, (2) Predicative Parameters and (3) Categorial Parameters. In terms of surface syntax (and confirming the traditional lexicographic practice adopted in Western dictionary-making), these three frame Zones roughly correspond to the division into adjectival phrases (AdjN), verbal phrases (VP) and noun phrases with the genitive (NN_{Gen}) However, the surface syntax factor was initially taken as the least significant in this technique.

Zone 1 (Identifying Parameters) can be further divided into Slot Clusters classified as: (1.1) Value Modifiers and (1.2) Quantity Intensifiers.

By Value Modifiers we understand noun modifiers with the most general meaning of 'good/bad'.

By Quantity Intensifiers we mean those that single out and intensify some quantitative parameter(s) of meaning. Each Slot Cluster contains an indefinite number of Slots (i.e., parameters of meaning) to which the meaning of the intensification is attached. At the present stage of research, the number and actual content of separate Slots are determined in each case individually.

In Zone 2 (Predicative Parameters), the following Slot Clusters are identified:

(2.1) Subject - Object Actualizers, including:

(2.1.1) the subject (X) is the SOURCE of an action (P) with respect to N (what is denoted by the base noun);

(2.1.2) the subject (X) is the TARGET of an action (P) with respect to N (what is denoted by the base noun);

(2.1.3) the action (P) is the ACTOR, i.e. is directed at the subject (X) and its source is N (what is denoted by the base noun).

In terms of Mel'chuk's functions, these Slot Clusters roughly correspond to $OPER_1$, $OPER_2$ and FUNC. In terms of surface syntax, these systems correspond, respectively and more precisely, to the following structures: (2.1.1) $P = X V_{act} N$, (2.1.2) $P = X V_{pass} N$, and (2.1.3) $P = NV$.

Again, each Slot Cluster contains an indefinite number of individual slots that add new parameters to the explication of verbal meanings.

Slot Cluster (2.2) represents Causality (both in its positive and negative aspects, i.e., both what could be even tentatively classified as CAUS and LIQU, according to Mel'chuk, but, again, if lexical functions could be applied to our material). Grouped here are causative verbal phrases, with separate Slots representing various semantic "points of application" of Causality.

A note should be made concerning Aspectuality. Logically, it should be treated as a verbal function. Indeed, it can be found throughout the whole of Zone 2. However, some of the items with aspectual "traces" of meaning can be found in other Zones (hidden predicates) but can be given no appropriate verbal correlate. E.g., *iskra talanta* (lit. 'a spark of talent') 'a natural ability at its initial stage of development and/or underdeveloped natural ability' has no Russian correlate like *talant iskrit* (lit. 'talent gives out sparkles') with the meaning of 'a natural ability manifesting itself at an early stage of development and/or in an underdeveloped form'. Therefore, aspectuality is often as relevant for non-verbal phrases as it is for verbal ones. In a dictionary this problem

might be solved through a special system of labels, but this will not be discussed here.

It must be admitted that Zone 3 (Categorial Parameters) is the most empirical one. At the present stage of research, the actual content and configuration of Slot Clusters and Slots appears to be necessary and sufficient for our purposes of description. However, the nature of this Zone is somewhat dissimilar from the semantics of Zones 1 and 2. Probably, in the course of dictionary making the necessity might arise for new Slot Clusters to be introduced in the frame design. However, it is expected that Slot Clusters in the dictionary, independent of their nature, should finally represent a closed set, while individual slots would be an open list of parameters, depending upon the meaning of individual base noun.

Slot Cluster (3.1) contains the greatest majority of hidden predicates and thus seems to be a liminal case between verbal (Zone 2) and subjunctive (Zone 3) phrases. Unfortunately, no better name could be found for this Cluster than Essence / Phenomenon Actualizers. These ascribe the meaning of 'manifestation', 'visibility', or 'comprehensibility' to invisible, incomprehensible, unintelligible abstract notions (compare Karl Popper's notion of intelligibles). The meaning of this cluster is much broader than the lexical function MANIF, as can be seen from examples in the Appendices.

Slot Cluster (3.2) subsumes Continuity / Discontinuity Actualizers, mostly those that emphasize the relation between Part and Fragment, System and Component, Whole and Individual, Totality and Discreteness.

As shown by experience, Slot Clusters (3.6) Locative and (3.7) Instrumentative are optional for many entries, but are still highly occurrent enough to be included in the bulk of the lemma. Unfortunately, we will have to omit the discussion of this interesting subject.

3. Conclusion

As has been said above, the construction of a frame structure for the representation of restricted collocation is the initial stage of analysis. However, the frame approach as described above seems to be a reliable means for primary classification and semanticization. Such a frame structure does not only help to organize the vast material in a fairly understandable way, but also indicates the boundaries of restricted collocations as a class of language units, boundaries that do not coincide

with any phraseological classification that has evolved in the process of theoretical research.

The frame approach to restricted collocations is a convenient tool of comparative research and a useful direction for bilingual lexicography. It opens up new possibilities of comparison and comparative explication that go deep enough to reach the cognitive roots of idiomaticity and culturally-specific meanings.

References

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Appendix 1

The Frame Structure of a Dictionary Lemma: Russian Restricted Collocations with the Base Noun *DOVERIE* (Confidence, trust)

V_1 'openness' *druzheskoe doverie* lit. 'friendly confidence'
V_2 'possible harm involved' *slepoe doverie* lit. 'blind trust'
Q_1 'degree of trust' *polnoe doverie* lit. 'complete confidence'
Q_2 'degree of domination/submission' *bezogovorochnoe doverie* lit. 'unconditional confidence'
$P = X\ V_{act}\ N$
P_1 *(kto) ispytyvaet/ pitaet doverie (k komu)*
(kto) otnositsja s doveriem (k komu)
(kto) okazyvaet doverie (komu)
(all phrases synonymous to X trusts Y)
$P = X\ V_{pass}\ N$
P_1 *(kto) vnushaet doverie (komu)*
(kto) vyzyvaet doverie (u kogo)
(kto) pol'zuetsja doveriem (u kogo)
(all phrases synonymous to Y is trusted by X)
P_2 'good intentions' *zavoevat' doverie (kogo)* lit. 'to conquer smb's confidence'

279

P$_3$ 'bad intentions' *(kto) vlez / vtersja / vkralsja v doverie (k komu)* lit. 'to creep / rub into smb's confidence' 'to win smb's confidence by deceit'

P$_4$ 'good outcome' *opravdat' doverie (kogo)* lit. 'to justify smb's confidence'

P$_5$ 'bad outcome' *obmanut' doverie (kogo)* lit. 'to deceive smb's confidence'

P = N V

P$_1$ 'beginning' *doverie zarodilos' (mezhdu kem)* lit. 'confidence originated (between whom)'

P$_2$ 'continuation, development' *doverie (mezhdu kem) rastet / krepnet* lit. 'confidence (between smb) grows / strengthens'

P$_3$ 'diminishing' *doverie (k komu) (u kogo) padaet / taet* lit. 'smb's confidence in smb falls down / thaws away'

P$_4$ 'irreversible loss' *doverie (kogo) k (komu) utracheno* lit. 'smb's confidence in smb is lost'

C$_1$ 'to cause trust' *(chto) vyzyvaet (u kogo) doverie* lit. 'smth invites smb's confidence'

C$_2$ 'to cause distrust' *(chto) podryvaet doverie (u kogo) (k chemu)* lit. 'smth undermines smb's confidence in smth'

M$_1$ 'emotions' *[(zhdu kem i kem) promel'knula] iskra doverija* lit. 'a spark of confidence [darted between smb]'

M$_2$ 'speech' *[v golose (kogo) prozvuchala] notka doverija* lit. 'a note of confidence [sounded in smb's voice]'

M$_3$ 'representation' *akt doverija* lit. 'an act of confidence'

M$_4$ 'behavior' *zhest doverija* lit. 'a gesture of confidence'

D$_1$ 'emotions' *atmosfera doverija* lit.'an atmosphere of confidence'

D$_2$ 'general conditions of interaction' *klimat doverija* lit. a climate of confidence

D$_3$ 'in future' *[ischerpat'] kredit doverija* lit. '[to exhaust] the credit of confidence' ('X is not going to be trusted any more in future')

D$_4$ 'distrust' *[net ni] kapli doverija, [net ni] gramma doverija* lit. 'not a drop of trust [left], not a gram of trust [left]'

L$_1$ 'strategy of partnership' *[ledovat'] putem/kursom doverija* lit. '[to follow] the road / the course of confidence'

Appendix 2

The Frame Structure of a Dictionary Lemma: Russian Restricted Collocations with the Base Noun *LEN'* (laziness, idleness, apathy, inaction)

V_1 'haughty manner' *barskaja len'* lit. 'lordly idleness'

V_2 ,'source' *vrozhdennaja len'* lit. 'inborn laziness';

len'-matushka [zaela kogo/ran'she (kogo) rodilas'] lit. 'good mother laziness [has eaten (smb) up / was born earlier than smb]'

V_3 'negative emotional state' *zlaja len'* lit. 'malicious laziness';

tjazhelaja len' lit.' heavy laziness/idleness'

tupaja len' lit. 'obtuse laziness'

toskujushchaja len' lit. 'grieving laziness/idleness'

V_4 'pleasure' *sladkaja len'* lit. 'sweet laziness/idleness'

V_5 'pleasure + accompanying behavior' *tomnaja len'* lit. 'langorous laziness/ idleness'

rassejannaja len' lit. 'dissipated laziness/idleness'

zadumchivaja len' lit. 'pensive laziness/idleness'

V_6 'pleasure + young age' *bespechnaja len'* lit. 'thoughtless laziness/ idleness'

zolotaja len' lit. 'golden laziness'

V_7 'unnatural' *neponjatnaja/nepostizhimaja len'* lit. 'incomprehensible laziness'

neob'jasnimaja len' lit. 'inexplicable laziness'

nevoobrazimaja len' lit. 'unimaginable laziness'

Q_1 'degree' *gromadnaja len'* lit. 'immense laziness'

bespredel'naja len' lit. 'boundless laziness'

chudovishchnaja len' let. 'monstrous laziness'

Q_2 'degree of harmful effects' *gubitel'naja len'* lit. 'baneful laziness'

Q_3 'degree of uncontrollability' *dikaja len'* lit. 'wild laziness'

neobuzdannaja len' lit. 'unbridled laziness'

neodolimaja len' lit. 'undefeatable laziness'

neiskorenimaja len' lit. 'ineradicable laziness'

Q_4 'degree of its control over a person' *besprobudnaja len'* lit. 'unwaking laziness'

vsepogloshchajushchaja len' lit. 'all-absorbing laziness'

P = X V$_{act}$ N

P_1 'smb yields oneself to laziness' *(kto) vpadaet v len'* lit. 'smb falls into laziness'

(kto) pogruzhaetsja v len' lit. 'smb plunges into laziness'

(kto) predaetsja leni lit. 'smb gives oneself up to laziness'

P_2 'smb resists laziness' *(kto) probuzhdaetsja ot leni* lit. 'smb wakes up from laziness'

(kto) izbavljaetsja ot leni lit. 'smb gets rid of [one's own] laziness'

P = N V

P_1 'it takes/holds possession of smb' *len' obujala (kogo)* lit. 'laziness seized smb'

281

len' odolevaet (kogo) lit. 'laziness overpowers smb'

len' ohvatyvaet (kogo) lit. 'laziness embraces smb'

len' ovladevaet (kem) let. 'laziness takes possession of smb'

P_2 'it does smb harm' *len'/ len'-matushka zaedaet (kogo)* lit. 'laziness / good mother laziness eats smb up'

len' skovyvaet (kogo) lit. 'laziness chains smb up'

C_1 'to cause' *(chto/kto) navevaet (na kogo) [sladkuju / legkuju] len'* 'lit smb/smth blows [sweet/light] laziness over smb'

C_2 'to liquidate' *iskorenit' len'* lit. 'to eradicate laziness'

M_1 'sensory' *chuvstvo leni* lit. 'the feeling of laziness'

M_2 'species' *dushevnaja len'* lit. 'the laziness of the soul'

umstvennaja len' lit. 'the laziness of the intellect'

M_3 'behavior' *[projavljat'] sklonnost' k leni* lit '[to display] disposition to laziness'

M_4 'results' *[pozhinat'] plody (chjej) leni* lit. to reap the fruits of M_5 'person one's own laziness

possessed by laziness' *rab [svoej sobstvennoj] leni* lit. 'a slave to [one's own] laziness'

D_1 'general situation' *tsarstvo leni* lit. 'the kingdom of leisure' ('where everyone is lazy')

I_1 by what laziness affects a person' *volna [sladkoj] leni [podxvatyvaet (kogo)]* lit. 'a wave of [sweet] laziness [catches smb up]'

I_2 'means of correction' *lekarstvo ot leni* lit. 'remedy against laziness'