The Explicit and the Implicit in Language and Speech

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Edited by

Liudmila Liashchova

The chapters in this book are selected presentations from the International Conference, held at Minsk State Linguistic University, Belarus, 10 to 11 May, 2017.

Cambridge
Scholars
Publishing

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This book first published 2018

Cambridge Scholars Publishing

Lady Stephenson Library, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE6 2PA, UK

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data
A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

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PREFACE AND ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The goal of the book is to introduce the reader to some issues related to seemingly explicit but actually implicit principles of language organization and functioning that were the object of discussion at the International Conference "The Explicit and the Implicit in Language and Speech" that took place in Minsk, Belarus on 10-11 of May, 2017. About two hundred scholars from Belarus, Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Kazakhstan, Poland, China, Iran, Germany and the USA sent their abstracts to the conference to report on the data of their linguistic research carried out at their Universities and Academies of Sciences.

The project of compiling a volume of essays as an updated collection of selected research papers presented at the conference was undertaken on the invitation of the publishing house "Cambridge Scholars Publishing" who showed their interest in the conference. We accepted the invitation with gratitude, and seventeen scholars, mainly those who gave their talks on the plenary session, sent their papers to participate in the project.

We acknowledge the contribution of Minsk State Linguistic University, the organizer of the conference.

Our deep gratitude goes to all individual authors who made their contribution to this volume of essays developing the ideas presented at the conference. It was a pleasure to work with all of them.

We are very thankful to the whole team of the publishing house "Cambridge Scholars Publishing" who accepted the project and carefully guided it to the publication stage thus giving us a chance to acquire unique experience of publishing the book abroad and to give to our scholars an opportunity to be read by a far wider audience of colleagues. Special thanks go to Victoria Carruthers, Adam Rummens, Helen Edwards, Theo Moxham, Sophie Edminson and Amanda Millar: without their motivating support and invaluable professional advice this exciting and enriching project would have never come true.

—Liudmila Liashchova

INTRODUCTION

As explanatory dictionaries state, the word *explicit* means "precisely, in detail and clearly expressed, leaving no room for doubt or confusion", while *implicit* means the opposite: "implied, not expressed directly". In daily use these words mainly refer to the communication when the speaker either openly says what he/she means and makes everything in the utterance understandable, explicit, or vice versa, communicates his/her idea without openly mentioning it. The utterances explicitly expressed usually have better chances to be comprehended correctly.

It is especially true to any programming language, like, for example, Python. Its mini style guide known as the "Zen of Python" consists of twenty paradoxical rules designed to instruct the programmer, and the second one runs: "Explicit is better than implicit" which means: "Let your code be readable by a stranger who knows nothing about you or your program", or more specifically "Every time you invoke a function you should name its module explicitly" [https://www.quora.com/What-do-different-aphorisms-in-The-Zen-of-Python-mean].

However, in real communication nothing is explicit to the full degree due to many factors, and there is always something that is not expressed in the speaker's utterances and has to be supplemented by the hearer's mind on the basis of all the amount of his/her knowledge about the language, both verbal and non-verbal, about the world, and the culture of the community. That is why the same text is interpreted differently by each individual, and comprehension and learning can never be perfect neither in humans nor in machines. The borderline between the explicit and the implicit in communication is very blurred and context dependent, and there is a lot of implicit in the explicit, and one has to have an inquisitive mind and good language and life experience to restore it.

The words *explicit* and *implicit* are not any more confined to the opposition of directly expressed verbal statements and the implied senses in them. They may refer not only to communication but to all aspects of language phenomena.

It may be applied, for example, to language structure, and what may seem there to be quite obvious, self-evident, self-explanatory and explicit to the layman, turns into an abyss of complicated and perplexing questions for a linguist, who tries to go all the way to the depths, to the implicit.

The opposition *explicit/ implicit* is also widely used in modern cognitive sciences investigating different types of knowledge, including language knowledge. It may be used in representation of various mental states, conceptual structures and components of language viewed as a cognitive ability, in discriminating between explicit and implicit types of learning and understanding relating them to consciousness and unconsciousness, to verbalization, cognitive development, the ability to reflect on the acquired knowledge, different techniques of transforming the implicit into the explicit, etc.

In philosophy and linguistics explorations of the explicit and the implicit have a long and fruitful tradition. Nevertheless, there are still more questions than answers in this area. Revealing and describing deep and surface language structures, lexical-semantic and mental structures, making distinction between explicit and implicit senses, identifying implicit information, discovering the sources of its generation and mechanisms of interpretation, various discursive practices – all these issues pose a new exciting research area for modern linguists.

This volume presents essays of the scholars who belong to different language schools and employ in their research different linguistic approaches. They work in the realms of structural, cognitive, social, communicative linguistics, literary and discourse analysis, etc. to get a better idea of language and speech organization and functioning.

The volume is divided into three parts considering different types of implicit language information.

The chapters in Part I deal with some cognitive issues of language.

Alexander V. Kravchenko in his work "On the Implicit Observer in Grammar: Aspect" (Chapter One) develops the idea that language is an evolutionary extension of the human sensorium, and on this basis he offers a conceptually different approach to natural language grammar not suggested elsewhere. The author views grammar not as a set of rules that govern the use of linguistic structures but as a cognitive-semiotic mechanism grounded in perception. Thus, the term *grammar* here refers to the semiotic mechanism of languaging as orientational adaptive behaviour in the cognitive domain of interactions.

The author argues that such an approach to grammar is much more insightful; it is free from ungrounded speculations and helps linguists see the well-established grammatical "facts" in a new light.

He proves that the categorization principle based on the cognitive-semiotic distinction "observed vs. known", is fruitful, for example, in the studies of such a controversial category in different languages as verbal

aspect. It may also provide an empirically solid foundation for developing effective didactic techniques in teaching second and foreign languages.

Holger Kusse in his paper "Hidden Arguments" (Chapter Two) deals with arguments in every day communication and their hidden argumentative structures. He underlines that informal arguments do not need explicit expression of all positions of the argumentation scheme, i.e. the Quaestio (the question in dispute), the thesis, the reason, the inference-licensing rule and the conclusion. If the Quaestio and the thesis are known the expression of the reason already provides an argument. The expression of the inference-licensing role can fulfil the function of a reason.

The focus of his study lies upon argumentation markers like conjunctions and particles. It is shown how these elements generate implicit arguments and counter arguments. The functioning is shown of the adversative conjunction and counter argument marker *но* ('but') and of the disjunctive conjunction *или* ('or') that is directed to the argument as a whole and an instrument for the construction of complex reasons. Furthermore the paper analyses adverbs and discourse particles like, for instance, *уже* ('already'), *почти* ('nearly'), *немного* ('a little bit'), *только* ('only'). They mark, dependent on the context of the utterance and the Quaestio, reasons and counter-reasons and are able to alter or strengthen the illocution of utterances.

Larysa Tarasevich in "Implizites Wissen bei Raumbeschreibungen" (Chapter Three) presents the results of an experimental study of the strategies used by a speaker while choosing a preposition to describe spatial relations. The experiment is carried out on the material of prepositions with double government in German and Russian. She argues that the choice is determined by implicit knowledge of the ontological status of the objects, the names of which are correlated by means of a preposition.

Lyudmila A. Zapevalova in her paper "On the Implicit Meanings of Category of Singularity" (Chapter Four) investigates the category of singularity which is a basic component of the category of quantity and is on the borderline between discrete and indiscrete quantity. The research is carried out on the material of two typologically different languages (English and Russian).

On the basis of the determined conceptual structure of the category of singularity, a hierarchical system of its semantic varieties as quantitative implicit meanings of this category is elicited.

As for the semantic structure of the category of singularity, the author argues that it is a complex interrelation of three basic components: objectness, definiteness/indefiniteness and quantity itself. The interrelation

of these components is viewed as a result of language interpretation of a correspondent conceptual category.

She argues that the categorical-semantic modeling that she employs as a research method for analysis of conceptual and language categories has a high potential for explanation and interpretation of meaning creation and its verbalization.

Liudmila Liashchova in "Lexicon, Lexical System, and the Mental Lexicon" (Chapter Five) focuses on the lexical component of language. She writes about the evolution of classifying principles aiming to organize the totality of words in a language, first in lexicography, then in structural, psycho- and cognitive linguistics. The Greek word *lexicon* witnesses this evolution, and its semantics develops in accordance with trends in linguistics from its original meaning "dictionary", through "lexical system" in structural linguistics as an organized body of lexical signs according to their paradigmatic and syntagmatic relations, to "the mental lexicon" first within psycholinguistics viewed as lexical memory of an individual, and later in cognitive linguistics understood as an important component of language cognitive ability containing an amount of linguistic and extralinguistic information.

The author focuses on the mental lexicon which is the object of numerous modern interdisciplinary studies, and describes its complex research methodology and the range of new research issues where linguistic methods play a very important role.

Highly estimating the heuristic character of the metaphor in the multiword term "mental lexicon", the author, however, writes about its limitations that are also built into this term: the inner form of the term is misleading as the mental lexicon is organized radically differently than a printed book or even a lexical system.

The metal lexicon models presented in modern linguistics and their proximity to those proposed by Lev Vygotsky and other Soviet scholars are also analyzed there.

Nina I. Kurganova's paper "Association Field as a Tool of Accessing the Living Word" (Chapter Six) deals with the problem of the methodology of analysis of the implicit and explicit knowledge that is represented by the living word, the main characteristics of which has dual correlation – with social and individual systems of knowledge.

She argues that the Extended Word Association Test (EWAT) is a reliable means of analysing the living word meaning and that under certain conditions it provides an opportunity for studying the processes and the results of meaning generating activity of individuals and society.

Taking into account the cognitive-discursive nature of the association field in conditions of an Extended Word Association Test, the author offers a two level method of analysis of association field through the prism of structural and operational parameters of a word meaning, functioning on different levels of consciousness.

Part II includes the essays dealing with specific issues related to sociolinguistics.

Ralf Vogel in his paper "Sociocultural Determinants of Grammatical Taboos in German" (Chapter Seven) presents some results of his empirical studies on *grammatical taboos* in German – the grammatical constructions that are, to varying degrees, subject to stigmatisation. Morphosyntactic experiments are very often carried out with groups of university students as subjects. Although this is in principle a very homogeneous group, previous elicitation experiments on four grammatical taboos of German has shown an unusually high amount of between-subject variance. The experiments presented in this paper investigate whether this variance can be correlated with sociocultural and socioeconomic variables, which are well-known from sociolinguistics, to influence speakers' attitude towards standard language, especially gender and social class. The results suggest that each of the four inspected phenomena has its own characteristic sociolinguistic profile, with gender and family background as crucial factors which play out quite differently in each of the four cases.

Aliaksandr A. Lukashanets (*Аляксандр А. Лукашанец*) in "Этна- і сацыямаркіраваная лексіка беларускай мовы ў сітуацыі блізкароднаснага білінгвізму" (Chapter Eight) views some peculiarities of modern Belarusian functioning in conditions of two- and multilingualism within closely related Slavic language groups, and does it from a new and interesting perspective. The author reveals the historical and sociolinguistic aspects of the Belarusian "ethnopurism" which took place at the initial stage of the formation of the new Belarusian literary-written language in the early XX-eth century, and now, in the early XXI century, he notices a tendency to "nationalization" of its vocabulary.

The author considers the main layers of the "ethnomarked" vocabulary of the modern Belarusian language and describes their pragmatic role in modern journalistic and political discourse. He also reveals the nature of cultural, linguistic and political stereotypes that influence the formation of language priorities in the modern Belarusian bilingual society.

Alena G. Lukashanets in "The Explicit and the Implicit in Sociolectal Nomination" (Chapter Nine) describes some naming processes in sociolects and, in particular, the interrelation of the covert, latent, implicit and the overt, apparent, explicit in sociolectal word formation.

The author's original idea is that this interrelation depends on the type of sociolect and its main function. The secrecy (or cryptolalic) function characteristic of older sociolects – secret languages, argots – led to the formation of nominative units with transparent motivation, explicit "inner form". On the contrary, in modern sociolects which are not secret but expressive by nature there appear lexical units motivated not by one, but by two or even more source words, and that complicates the derivational relations and makes the semantic link between the derived name and its derivational base quite implicit. This idea is convincingly proved by numerous authentic and varied data from East Slavic secret languages of travelling artisans and vendors and from modern Russian youth slang.

Olga Goritskaya in "Discussions about Belarusian Russian: Linguistic Units and Cultural Models" (Chapter Ten) explores some specific features of bilingualism in Belarus on the basis of the Internet metalinguistic discussions. She investigates the roles and functions of the two languages (Russian and Belarusian) co-existing in the Belarusian society and the public attitudes towards them. The author states that a positive attitude towards Belarusian Russian as a non-standard variety (quite new for Belarus) is in line with the tendency towards the processes of localisation as opposed to globalization and democratisation.

She also reveals some distinctive features of Belarusian Russian as they are viewed by the speakers of this variety. She points out that in metalinguistic discussions the most explicit examples of Belarusian-Russian mixed speech often give way to more implicit contact-induced phenomena on all levels of the language structure. Monocentric and pluricentric views on the Russian language in Belarus are presented in the paper on the basis of Geeraerts' cultural models of language standardization. The author also describes and summarizes the criteria that both the groups of the Internet discussion offer to single out the Belarusian variety of the Russian language.

Ala Lichačiova in "The Communicative-Culturological Aspect of the Implicit Information in Russian Urban Linguistic Design" (Chapter Eleven) analyses Russian lexical means used in communication between the city and city dwellers, corresponding to the settings of the national communicative culture and suggestive of a certain degree of implicitness, which is characteristic of live communication. She argues that unlike the somewhat more unified, mainly informative language design of the urban space in European cities, Russian cities are increasingly demonstrating strategies for an ethno-cultural specification of the city's linguistic fabric.

She stresses that such nominations not only help to establish a link with the environment of the national linguistic culture but also constitute

the illusion of mutual participation in collective and at the same time personal communication, this being in line with the most important values of the Russian communicative culture.

Part III is devoted to linguistic studies of implication in different types of discourse.

Natalia Fateeva in "Some Notes about Subtext and Other Manifestations of Implicitness in a Literary Text" (Chapter Twelve) states that deeper meaning, or subtext of poetry or a piece of prose, may be created on different language levels and by different language means: it may appear on the rhythmic and phonemic level; it may be created by morphemic, lexical or even superphrasal units; sometimes the subtext is generated by orthographic means.

The author uses an interdisciplinary approach and shows how philosophy, logic, psychology, semiotics, and art history may serve as a "pretext" basis for a linguistic research and how the complex of different modeling strategies of coherent text understating may enrich the traditional text analysis.

The author underlines that in the twentieth century with the introduction of the subconscious into the sphere of literary works, searching for the implicit information there sometimes may become the decisive technique in order to understand them. In the postmodernist texts, for example, deliberate fragmentation of the narrative and semantic anomaly of the poetic text become a norm. The task of establishing links between segments of the text with such an organization is completely transferred to the reader who should activate his/her mechanism of associative thinking.

Elena G. Zadvornaya (*Елена Г. Задворная*) in "О вариативности интерпретации имплицитных смыслов и их роли в развитии диалога" (Chapter Thirteen) describes the main types of implicit senses which are distinguished according to the variability of their interpretation (and assuming, respectively, singular, variable and zero interpretation). It is shown there that there are no strict correlations between the type of the implicit meaning and its activator.

This paper describes the main models of a dialogue interaction development in the contexts where different types of implicit senses are represented.

Tatiana P. Karpilovitch in "Intentionality Indicators in Media Discourse" (Chapter Fourteen) proves how intentionality – the main communicative purpose of a discourse genre – determines its overall structure and the author's communicative strategies. Analyzing language indicators of intentionality revealed in American newspapers problem feature articles,

the author shows that the main intention of this discourse genre is to find ways to solve the problem. This intention is verbalised by explicit and implicit language means used in the process of discourse development and realization of the communicative strategy of attracting the reader's attention. They are also used to persuade the reader that the expressed opinion is correct and to induce the addressee to perform certain actions and solve the discussed problem.

Andrei E. Levitsky in "Implication in Prophetic Discourse" (Chapter Fifteen) describes the implied strategies used in dream books and horoscopes which are directed at attracting the readers' attention and persuading them to buy those books or to behave as it is prescribed in "prophetic" texts. The prophets there use special terminology, intimate the relations with the readers, appeal to their special needs and activate the most vitally important concepts for human beings. Besides, they raise the level of their credibility by stressing their merits and referring to celebrities. The basic motifs implied touch upon moral aspects of human behaviour. Also, they aim at rising confidence and self-esteem of the readers.

Anna M. Plotnikova in "Implicit Information in the Speech of Criminals" (Chapter Sixteen) analyses the concept 'criminal dialogue' and its characteristics. The author focuses on the case of communicative situations involving bribery and identifies nominations of the semantic field 'money' as well as semantic anomalies found in the structure of such criminal dialogues. She argues that in criminal dialogues speakers often use various provocation strategies in which the speaker's explicit and implicit goals differ.

Alla A. Kozhinowa in her "Language Implicitness as a Translation Problem" (Chapter Seventeen) defines implicitness as hidden information which is supposed to be discovered and understood by the addressee and applies this definition to translation. She states that it is just the implicitness that makes the translator face various kinds of challenges, both objective and subjective by nature.

The objective challenges refer to the untranslatable. It is generally a cultural component within the implicit information that does not lend itself to translation. The issue may be approached differently: from ignoring the untranslatable part by preserving the original unit in the target text, to lengthy explanations of it in the context or in a branched system of footnotes and concluding comments. The subjective challenges lie in the fact that the translator may just neglect the hidden traps of the implicit information that can be manifested at the level of a language system as well as at the level of discourse.

No matter what type of a text (discourse) the translator works with, his/her major task is to take into account both the types of challenges and make a good translation that conforms to the purposes of communication.

Though the scholars look at language from different points of view, all of them have a common goal – to make the implicit in language and speech more explicit.

—Liudmila Liashchova

PART I:

COGNITIVE ASPECTS OF LANGUAGE

CHAPTER ONE

ON THE IMPLICIT OBSERVER IN GRAMMAR: ASPECT

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Grammar misconceived

Grammar studies have a long tradition, and the grammars of European languages, such as English or Russian, for example, seem to have been most thoroughly described and analyzed by both applied and theoretical linguists. There are scores of authoritative books on grammar written by renowned authors who tackle grammatical issues from different perspectives ranging from generativism to cognitivism. However, regardless of the particular theoretical stance taken by a particular scholar, it is generally agreed that the role of grammar is to govern the composition of clauses, phrases, and words in any given natural language by providing a set of structural rules. Structural rules are about structure; thus, the implication is that language has structure and consists of structural units, such as words, phrases, and clauses, whose organization is determined by grammar rules. At the same time, there is not a generally and uniformly accepted definition of word as the basic linguistic unit; this fact implies, therefore, that the structure of word is something elusive that escapes definition. But if this is the case, the question arises about how grammar rules work; it would appear a bit too farfetched to claim that grammar is the set of structural rules that govern the composition of something whose structure defies a clear and concise definition. So, what's the catch?

Typical definitions of grammar are two-fold. On the one hand, it is the system by which the words of a language are organized into larger units, perceived as existing independently of any attempt at describing it; on the other hand, it is a particular description of such a system, as embodied in a set of rules. Correspondingly, the branch of linguistics dealing with the

construction of such descriptions and with the investigation of their properties is also called "grammar". Since language is traditionally defined as a "system of signs", and grammar as a branch of linguistics is, thus, concerned with signs, the term *grammar* is often used as a synonym to *linguistics*. This explains why in educational institutions the discipline of English (or whatever happens to be the students' mother tongue) is largely constituted by the study of grammar as a set of rules. However, various theoretical frameworks for explaining grammar have not achieved much in terms of facilitating "grammar acquisition" and solving other applied tasks which traditional linguistic theory sets out to resolve. And there is an explanation to that.

The view of language taken by orthodox linguistics is incoherent. Language as a natural phenomenon, i.e., a kind of dynamically complex patterned behaviour (languaging), is confused with language as a system of written signs allegedly designed to represent short-lived acoustic phenomena that accompany communicative behaviour. While written language, in the case of alphabetic writing, is a system based on the use of a limited set of characters which resembles a code because it possesses structure, it does not *represent* language as a specific kind of behaviour, or *orientational activity*, in real space/time (cf. Hagège 1996; Linell 2005).

Numerous attempts to write a grammar of discourse (live spoken language) have invariably turned futile because linguists do not seem to understand the nature of grammar as a semiotic system constituted by graphic signs, or inscriptions. While interpretation of written signs depends, basically, on their literal context (other written signs that constitute the body of a text, including punctuation marks and other conventions) and the interpreter's background knowledge, which includes previous experience of interactions with various written signs, signs of natural spoken language (vocalizations) are grounded in the physical context of the "here-and-now" of dialogical interactions, and their interpretation crucially depends on various aspects of the interactional situation/event, first and foremost, the perceived "non-linguistic" features of the interlocutors' interactional behaviour (their dynamics) that accompanies a dialogical exchange. As emphasized by Cowley (2007: 576), "language activity is tightly constrained by both our sensitivity to circumstances and our skills in using many second-order cultural constructs". In other words, while languaging is embodied, writing is not.

While natural linguistic signs are perceptually and experientially grounded relational phenomena that facilitate our orientational (adaptive) interactions with the (social) world around us (cf. Maturana 1970; 1978), writing is a cultural artifact; its primary cognitive function is analogous to

internal, or biological, memory. Writing may be viewed as "a storage and retrieval system that allows humans to accumulate experience and knowledge" (Donald 1991: 309), and the physical environment of written/printed words and symbols "allows us to search, store, sequence, and reorganize data in ways alien to the onboard repertoire of the biological brain" (Clark 1997: 207). In other words, writing is a way of thinking (Menary 2007). Once we are skilled in writing, we can "dump" the cognitive load onto material artifacts and, later, use them to interact with our cognizing selves. This is what accounts for the fundamental difference between the dynamics of dialogical, embodied speech in real space-time and monological, disembodied, atemporal writing. Spoken and written languages possess different ontologies; they are not two different manifestations of the same phenomenon (cf. Love 2004; Kravchenko 2009). The ontological difference between spoken and written language is the difference between first order activity, that is, doing what you talk about when you talk about action and perception (having both a neural and behavioural aspect), and second order activity involving operations on (second order) cultural constructs (words, phrases, sentences, etc.) that make up the "ultimate" artifact, written language.

The original meaning of *grammar* (from Gr. *grámma* "letter" + *-ar* "pertaining to") is "the art of writing". Grammar was understood by Greeks as a set of skills, a technique necessary to produce a text – a body of inscriptions (graphic markings as encodings of the sounds of speech) organized in a certain way that allowed for reading such inscriptions, that is, vocalizing the encoded sounds and their specific sequences that could be recognized as words. Thus, as a system of rules that govern the organization of graphic markings (letters) into readable texts, grammar may not be viewed as the system by which the words of a language (Saussurean "acoustic images") are organized into larger units.

From the point of view of its evolution, language, as a functional behavioural feature of humans, has an *emergent architecture* which cannot be understood outside the domain of biological organization:

> Language has an emergent architecture to the extent that its structure is a product of spontaneous bottom-up self-organizing interactions, not top-down imposition of structure or constraint by any pre-existing template. This requires conceiving of basic linguistic units as differentiated end-products of a cognitive process rather than as fundamental atoms of analysis (Deacon 2005: 274).

Once these end-products have been differentiated and abstracted from a history of cognitive processes that has led to their present form and

function, they become a perceptual given as part of the consensual domain of interactions. With the invention of writing, spoken words as components of the consensual domain of interactions transform into a system of signs with a certain structure (grammar) which, though seen as pre-given and thus constraining the ways in which inscriptions (graphic words, the domain of morphology) may be organized into larger units, such as sentences and texts (the domain of syntax), in reality is an outcome of a history of live linguistic interactions as orientational (semiotic) activity in which certain regularities emerge and self-organize. The written structure continues to evolve with the evolution of literate culture, but because disembodied inscriptions may not and do not represent embodied vocalizations as semiotic (orientational, adaptive) phenomena of dialogical linguistic interactions, the structure of texts as graphic artifacts does not represent the structure of dialogical interactions, or does it in a very limited, stilted way for a simple reason: the cognitive mechanisms for organizing texts and dialogical interactions are different.

Linguists should well understand that the expressions such as *grammar of discourse, natural language grammar,* etc. are just metaphors. Moreover, equating grammar and natural language without any disclaimers that would point to the understood ontological and functional difference between the two, has far reaching consequences which affect the entire system of education in contemporary literate societies, especially linguistic education. However, for want of a better term, I will continue to use the term *grammar,* although in a different frame of reference suggested elsewhere (Kravchenko 2012a). Namely, *grammar* will refer to the semiotic mechanism of languaging as orientational adaptive behaviour in the cognitive domain of interactions.

Grammar as a semiotic mechanism

In a non-literate culture, the concept of grammar understood as the set of rules that govern the use of words in writing, is inapplicable. Surely, the use of linguistic signs in a non-literate community, as well as co-variance of juxtaposed word-forms interpreted as higher-order signs (metasigns, traditionally referred to as "morphological categories"), display regularities that allow us to speak of a system of signs with an inherent structure. However, such regularities should be viewed, not as a pre-existing template for building the "molecules" of linguistic structures from the "atoms" of words as basic linguistic units, but as a result of mutually coordinated semiotic behaviour of languaging humans in their concerted efforts to adapt to the (social) world by orienting others and self in the

environmental niche in which communicating humans operate as living
(cognitive) systems. In the course of such interactional adaptive behaviour,
linguistic signs evolve and self-organize, acquiring value – something that
humans orient to in their cognitive domain.

In semiosis, perceptually experienced phenomena are interpreted as
referring to other, perceptually absent phenomena, thereby becoming
meaningful entities, or signs (Lat. *signum* "mark"). In a broad sense,
interpretation is an organism's adaptive response – meaningful interaction
with the environment (or, values realizing – cf. Cowley 2012). Although
the degree of adequacy of such a response may vary (errors in
interpretation do occur), what matters is that something is *re*-cognized as a
sign – something experientially present related to something experientially
absent. In other words, signs are experientially grounded *relational
phenomena*. An experientially present entity becomes a sign when an
interpreter relates it to his past experiences of this entity and its co-
occurrence with another entity which was perceptually present in that
experience. Past experiences retained in memory lie at the basis of the
"historically created semiotic interaction mechanism" (Hoffmeyer 2007:
152) essential for life. Interpretation is a holistic process as it always
occurs in a specific context and depends on a plethora of factors
characterizing the here-and-now of the situation; its outcome can never be
predicted with absolute accuracy:

> ...[T]he only criteria that we actually have for the 'content' of any signs, or
> sign-analogs, are our intuitive criteria of successful interpretation; and to
> *formalize* these would involve formalizing our entire conception of what it
> is to be human, of what it is to be intelligible in human terms (Putnam
> 1983: 150).

To a child developing in a normal socio-cultural context, linguistic and
non-linguistic phenomena are not two worlds independent of each other;
they are facets of a network of causal relationships between words and
things which function as indices with respect to one another. What is
known under the label "natural language acquisition" is spontaneous
semiosis grounded in the physical context of interlocked conducts (a
consensual domain of interactions), and as such it predetermines intrinsic
indexicality of each and every (linguistic) component of the consensual
domain – that is, their orientational function.

Linguistic behaviour is not an autonomous activity independent of
other kinds of human activity; it is integrated with the complex
cognitive/behavioural dynamics of the human agent and is interpreted by
the observer as such, that is, as behaviour in the observed physical context

(relational domain of interactions between the communicating parties) in real time, when every little thing counts. Because the function of language is not to convey meanings but to *exert orientational effects* on others in real-time interactions in a consensual domain, the structure of our normal speech in everyday discourse is far from conforming to the standards set by the so-called grammar rules, or syntax. Because of an intricate scaffolding provided by the physical context of a particular dialogical exchange occurring in real time at a concrete place, a behavioural response which we interpret as understanding may be obtained sometimes even *before* the speaker has completed a particular linguistic interaction aimed at orienting the other in his consensual domain. This is one of the reasons why utterances as units of discourse (natural phenomena) often differ in structure from sentences as units of texts (cultural-cognitive artifacts).

Evolutionarily, language extends the human sensorium (Morris 1938; Sebeok 2001), and the biological function of the senses is to help the subject in its sensorimotor (orientational) engagement with the environment which provides opportunities for action, or affordances (Gibson 1979). Basically, human cognition is the "collective appropriation of affordances" (Reed 1991: 140) taking place in an environment in which one can act to explore its action-perception possibilities. Extending Reed's theory of social affordances to utterances, Hodges (2007) emphasized that in talking with each other and ourselves we create affordances, opportunities that invite the other into seeing and moving in certain directions that look promising. When communicating with others, we create affordances in which linguistic aspects of our behaviour are deeply integrated with the many cognitive processes characteristic of a living system, both second-order (an individual human) and third-order (a human community). Humans are social animals that can talk (Jennings and Thompson 2012), and their consensual domain provides social affordances that affect how individual humans develop and function in society as a third-order cognitive system whose unity is sustained by the unity of linguistic interactions. In other words, affordances *mean*.

If there are rules (grammar) that govern natural linguistic behaviour, they cannot be understood and formulated in separation from the cognitive dynamics of communicative behaviour. These dynamics are the result of an organism's unique history of fine structural coupling with the environment. The cognitive domain of linguistic interactions, which cannot be identical from one individual to another, inasmuch as one living system cannot be identical to another living system, is constitutive of this dynamic environment; therefore, actual linguistic behaviour of individuals cannot be identical, either. Meaningful linguistic interaction between

individuals is possible if they operate in a consensual domain in which what we call linguistic signs are perceptually and experientially grounded.

Counter to the established view, natural linguistic signs are not symbols; they are indices that cue human understanding in oral communication with regard to all the multifarious aspects of the physical context in which communication occurs, particularly, with regard to the speaking observer as the ultimate point-of-reference. Such indexing is, basically, the cognitive function of many, if not all, grammatical categories in natural human language. These cuing aspects of natural linguistic signs underlie what linguists call *grammatical meaning*, and, thanks to grammatical meaning "expressed" in grammatical categories as metasigns, a second-order consensual domain is established in which the components of a consensual domain of interactions are recursively applied without the consensual domain. The unity of a community of human individuals as a third-order living system is sustained by an uninterrupted continuity of the second-order consensual domain over space and time. In regard to spoken language, the purpose of grammar, understood in a broad sense, is to construe and organize the relational domain of interactions – a second-order consensual domain in which we exist as humans and the components of which we use to describe what we call the "world" – by partitioning it with the help of linguistic signs grounded in first-order activity.

Unlike in the case of the five senses which allow for orientation in space-time only to the perceptually accessible components of the environment, language allows humans to orient to those components of the environment that are not perceptually accessible. Because our interactions with the world via languaging rely on something perceived and something that is not perceived by the senses, our interpretation of the orientational cues depends, in a very important way, on whether we speak about what may be directly perceived by the senses or about something that is beyond out perceptual field. This crucial distinction finds manifestation in various linguistic signs (words) and metasigns (grammatical categories) which may be divided into those that imply an observer and those that do not; thus, an observer becomes a systemic factor in language (Kravchenko 1993).

This has important implications. In dialogical interactions (discourse), the speakers are always observers. While operating in a consensual domain, they cue each other's linguistic interactions with regard to the shared perceptual field; this calls for a systemic differentiation between what is present in their perceptual field and what is not. As has been shown elsewhere (Kravchenko 2001; 2002; 2008; Kravchenko and

Zelberg 2005), the observer, as opposed to the speaker, is the primary point of reference for indexical phenomena in language and must be taken into account in the analyses of not only lexical, but grammatical meaning as well. However, the mechanism for differentiation between the indexical and non-indexical meaning remains a neglected dimension of grammatical categories as metasigns. In what follows, this neglected dimension will be brought to the fore in the case of verbal aspect in such seemingly different languages as Russian and English.

Grammar and the observer: verbal aspect

The differentiation between what is and what is not directly observed is typically manifested in the phenomenon of evidentiality – the ability of verbs and other linguistic items to indicate the source of knowledge, for example, direct observation, circumstantial evidence, hearsay, etc. (Chafe and Nicholson 1986; Willett 1988; Arrese, Haßler and Carretero 2017, *inter alia*). As a morphological feature of the verb, evidentiality is usually associated with exotic languages, such as the Amerind, Lhasa-Tibetan, and some others. However, as has been shown elsewhere (Kravchenko 2004; 2012b), indication to an observer as the source of knowledge about the event underlies the grammatical category of verbal aspect and related phenomena in such different languages as Russian and English.

The observer and the Russian aspect

In Russian, there are morphologically non-derived paired verbs (verbs with the same root) whose grammatical properties are of special interest. These are mainly verbs of locomotion and transportation, perception, and what might be called historically and culturally prototypical actions and activities. Such paired verbs belong to the oldest layer of the lexicon; therefore, an analysis of their grammatical properties may help understand something about linguistic categorization that orthodox Russian studies have notoriously failed to do.

Paired verbs fall into two main types, illustrated in (1) and (2). In pairs of the first type, one verb is perfective (PF) and the other imperfective (IMP), while in pairs of the second type both verbs are imperfective:

(1) PF   IMP   (2) IMP   IMP
     past′ − padat′ "fall"   *nesti − nosit′* "carry"
     leč′ − ležat′ "lie"   *vesti − vodit′* "lead/take to"
     brosit′ − brosat′ "throw"   *letet′ − letat′* "fly"

kusit' − kusat' "bite"	*idti − xodit'* "go, walk"
dat' − davat' "give"	*videt' − vidat'* "see"
xvatit' − xvatat' "seize"	*slyšat' - slyxat'* "hear"
strelit' − streljat' "shoot"	*sadit' − sažat'* "plant"
rodit' − rožat' "give birth"	*lomit' − lomat'* "break"
etc.	etc.

Strikingly, while pairs of the first type are viewed as unquestionable morphological oppositions expressing the category of aspect (PF vs. IMP), similar oppositions constituted by pairs of the second type are treated as if they were not morphological (i. e. grammatical), but purely semantic. However, the lexical meaning of such paired verbs is the same; therefore, in standard morphological theory these pairs *must* be viewed as classical morphological oppositions expressing a specific grammatical meaning. Quite puzzlingly, orthodox Russian grammar shuns the question of what grammatical meaning is expressed in such oppositions which function as metasigns, and both verbs in each pair are described as expressing the imperfective aspect as opposed to the perfective aspect. According to the established view, this binary opposition is based on the so-called aspectual meaning of PF and IMP verbs interpreted via the notion of boundedness as "the idea of completeness (exhaustion) of the temporal manifestation of the action expressed by the verb" (Bondarko and Bulanin 1967: 47). Thus, the meaning of the Russian PF is defined as the totality of an action expressed by the verb, whereby the action is viewed as a spot-like, non-continuous event that reaches its bounds and whereupon a certain result of the action is obtained. The meaning of the IMP aspect is usually associated with continuity and linearity of an action in its occurrence, without any reference to the action's bounds *per se*, and with its processual and generic-factual function (Shvedova and Lopatin 1989). The totality/non-totality contrast is viewed as the semantic invariant of the meaning of aspect as a grammatical category, thus creating a paradox pointed out by Miloslavsky (1989: 39):

> The paradox of the current situation in linguistics is that aspect as a specific set of features of a verb lexeme is singled out strictly and consistently on exclusively grammatical grounds [combinability and paradigmatic relationships. − A.K.]. However, all the efforts of scholars have been directed at presenting aspect in such a way as if it were a category defined on strictly semantic grounds [the semantic invariant. – A. K.].

Because of this "semantic invariant", paired verbs of the type shown in (2) are characterized as imperfective; thus, the very principle of identifying grammatical categories as metasigns constituted by regular meaningful oppositions of forms expressing systemic (grammatical) meanings, is ignored.

Elsewhere (Kravchenko 1995), a new approach to the analysis of aspectual oppositions in Russian was suggested. It was demonstrated that such oppositions are based on the categorization of events, activities, processes etc. into two main types: those directly observed by the speaker, and those of which the speaker just knows (the source of knowledge being unspecified). Viewing aspectual oppositions as cognitive structures borne of the speaker's interactions with the observed world allows for a radical departure from the above mentioned paradoxical situation.

Once the nature of grammar is understood − not as the set of rules for the use of linguistic signs − but as some general principles and mechanisms that underlie linguistic semiosis as human interactional experience of the world (Kravchenko 1995; 2012a; Kull 2006), its definition must take into account human cognition and, more specifically, perception. However, an understanding that the meanings of grammatical categories (in particular, the category of aspect) are perceptually grounded, has not yet become a trivial epistemological assumption in language studies, and scholars who had such an understanding have not been many. For example, Lucenko (1989) pointed out that in the perfective verb the observer, rather than the doer of the action, comes to the fore: "This accounts for the differentiation of the temporal planes of the action (left behind, past), and the perception, observation of the action results (present)" (p. 48). Similar indication to the observability of what is spoken about is an important part of the meaning of one of the verbs in the pairs of the *vodit′ − vesti* ("lead, take to") type shown in (2).

Consider an example:

(3) a.   *Kuda ona ego vedët?*
             Where she him take to-PR 3 Sg
             "Where is she taking him?"

     b.   *Kuda ona ego vodit?*
             Where she him take to-PR 3 Sg
             "Where does she take him (to)?"

From the point of view of grammar as the set of rules for combining words into sentences (or the mechanism for generating grammatically "correct" sentences *a la* Chomsky), examples (3a) and (3b) are both correct.

Admitting this, however, does not help to understand the difference
between them which is determined by the difference in the grammatical
(cognitive-semiotic) meanings of the forms *vedët*-PR 3 Sg and *vodit*-PR
3 Sg. It should be stressed that this difference is strictly grammatical and
not lexical; both forms refer to one and the same mode of
locomotion/transportation. As soon as decontextualized sentences in (3a)
and (3b) are replaced by corresponding utterances perceptually grounded
in an interactional situation, as in (4a) and (4b), a crucial change takes
place, and the form *vodit* cannot be used anymore:

> (4)   a. ***Smotri**,   kuda **èto** ona ego vedët?*
>   Look-Imper, where this she him take to-PR 3 Sg
>   "Look, where is she taking him?"
>
>   b. * ***Smotri**,   kuda **èto** ona ego vodit?*
>   Look-Imper, where this she him take to-PR 3 Sg
>   "Look, where is she taking him?"

Obviously, the systemic (grammatical) meaning of the form *vodit*
contradicts the context of immediate perception set by the use of the
imperative *smotri* "look" and the indexical *èto* "this" (cf. Kravchenko
2003). By return, in (5), it is already the other member of the pair whose
use is constrained; the constraint is imposed by an explicit indication (the
verb *znaeš'* "know-PR 2 Sg") that what is spoken about is not immediately
perceived:

> (5)   Teacher: — *Čto ty **znaeš'** o životnom mire?*
>   "What do you know about animal life?"
>
>   Student: — *Pticy *letjat/letajut, zveri *begut/begajut, ryby*
>   Birds fly-PR 3 Pl   beasts run-PR 3 Pl, fish
>   **plyvut/plavajut* PR 3 Pl, zmei *polzut/polzajut.*
>   swim PR 3 Pl,   snakes crawl PR 3 Pl
>
>   "Birds *are flying /fly, beasts *are running /run, fish *are swimming
>   /swim, snakes *are crawling /crawl."

Such observations clearly demonstrate that Russian paired verbs are a
morphological means of expressing evidentiality: while one member of the
pair in (5) expresses immediate perception of a locomotive event ("I'm
speaking about what I observe at the moment"), the other does not ("I'm
speaking about what I just know"). Historically, this distinction may be