

Affective uses of the ‘Tot eshjo N’ construction in Russian

This talk focusses on the affective uses of the *tot eshjo N* ‘that also/more N’ construction in Russian and links it with the existing work on expressive uses of demonstratives in other languages (Acton and Potts, to appear; Lakoff, 1974; Potts and Schwarz, 2010), as well as with the work on depreciative noun modifiers in Russian (Bronnikov, 2006, Bylinina, 2010).

Much like the demonstratives in other languages, *tot esjo* ‘that also/more’ has a purely deictic and an affective uses.

- (1) *Ta eshjo Olimpiada...*
that.F.SG also/more Olympics

A PURELY DEICTIC USE: [In the context of Olympics held in Russia] The speaker is referring to the Olympics’80 as opposed to Olympics’14

AN AFFECTIVE USE: The speaker believes that the Olympic Games he refers to are not up to standard

Interestingly, the affective impact of the construction *tot eshjo N* ‘that also/more N’ is determined not solely by the modifier *tot eshjo* ‘that also/more’, but by the expressive potential of the noun as well. If the noun has negative connotations, the construction as a whole is ambiguous:

- (2) *Petja byl tem eshjo banditom*
Peter was that.M.SG.INSTR also/more mobster

INTERPRETATION I: The speaker intends to convey that Peter wasn’t much of a mobster (e.g., was a very kind and helping person)

INTERPRETATION II: The speaker intends to convey that Peter was the mobster of mobsters

If the noun has positive connotations, only one interpretation is available:

- (3) *Petja byl tem eshjo blagotvoritelem*
Peter was that.M.SG.INSTR also/more benefactor

The speaker intends to convey that Peter wasn’t much of a benefactor

The talk will present an analysis of the interaction between the semantics of the modifier *tot eshjo* ‘that also/more’ and the semantics of the noun based on a corpus study.

References

Acton, E. K. and C. Potts. To appear. That straight talk: Sarah Palin and the sociolinguistics of demonstratives. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*. **Bronnikov, G.** 2006. The Russian vsjakij. In *Proceedings of Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics*, 66-82. **Bylinina, L.** 2010. Depreciative Indefinites: Evidence from Russian. *Formal Studies in Slavic Linguistics (Linguistik International)*, 191-207. **Lakoff, R.** 1974. Remarks on ‘this’ and ‘that’. In *Proceedings of the Chicago Linguistics Society 10*, 345-356. **Potts, C. and F. Schwarz.** 2010. Affective ‘this’. *Linguistic Issues in Language Technology* 3(5). 1-30.