

## FIRST-PERSON- AND THIRD-PERSON-ORIENTED GENERICITY IN RUSSIAN

The paper deals with Russian GENERIC-PERSONAL SENTENCES (GPS) – this term being applied, in the first place, to subjectless sentences with the predicate of the second person singular, present or future tense, with the implied subject referring to the generalized first person, something like ‘me and those like me’. For example:

- (1) Est’ mnogo slov, kotorye *proiznosish*’ po privyчке ‘there are many words that <you> *pronounce* as a habit’.
- (2) S nachal’stvom *ne posporish*’ ‘with the authorities <you> *won’t argue*’.

There are other varieties of GPS – sentences with the generic *ty* ‘you’, ex. (3), (generic *vy* is also possible – when interpreted as a form of politeness, not plural), generic *vy* ‘we’, ex. (4), and generic *chelovek* ‘man’, ex. (5); with generic use of the implied subject of the imperative, ex. (6):

- (3) Chto *ty budesh*’ delat’ s bessovestnymi ljud’mi! ‘what will *you* do with dishonest people!’
- (4) Oxotno *my* darim, chto nam ne nadobno samim ‘gladly *we* give <to others> what we need not ourselves’.
- (5) S vozrastom *chelovek* stanovitsja bolee snisxoditeln k ljudskim slabostjam ‘with age, *a person* becomes more forgiving of human weaknesses’.
- (6) Podi *dokazhi*, chto ty ne verbljud ‘go and *prove* that you are not a camel’.

These constructions differ as to their semantics and contexts of use. I deal with generic use of subjectless second person predicates, as in (1), (2), and of the second person pronouns, as in (3).

The use of the second person pronoun and the corresponding zero form with reference to the generalized first person is sufficiently widespread – the same meaning shift is available for the second person pronoun and corresponding PRO in English, French and other languages.

The predicate of a GPS usually denotes a repeatable situation – with the speaker or others as participants. This is why GPSs are often used in the context of conditional, causal, temporal or some other connection between different situations, cf. Russian proverb *Tishe edesh*’ – *dal’she budesh*’ ‘the slower you go the further you’ll get’. In (Moltmann 2010) the allowed contexts for generic *one* are described in the same way, the substitute for *one* in the American variety of English being *you*. It is claimed that these pronouns express FIRST-PERSON-ORIENTED GENERICITY. In other words, *one* and *you*, in this context, are to be interpreted as 1<sup>st</sup> person pronouns in generic use.

Undoubtedly 1<sup>st</sup> person generic is the status of the implied subject in (7):

- (7) Odnazhdy *obnaruzhivaesh*’, chto tebja net. Ty razbit na tysjachu kuskov, i u kazhdogo kuska svoj glaz, nos, uxo. (L.Ulickaja. People of our king) ‘one day <you> *find out* that you do not exist. You are broken into thousand of pieces, and each piece has its own eye, nose, ear’ (NB. The fragment is the very beginning of the book.)

A special variety of GPS is constituted by sentences with modal meanings (some examples below are taken from the Russian National Corpus, <http://www.ruscorpora.ru>):

- (8) a. *Ozvereesh*’ ot takoj zhizni ‘*you’ll become a beast* because of life like this’;  
b. V tramvae krasivuju zhenshchinu *ne vstretishj* ‘in a tram <you> *won’t meet* a beautiful woman’.

Although the semantics of GPS refers to the speaker, GPSs are used not only in the dialogical register: narrative projection is possible, as in (9) from (Knjazev 2008) (terms “narrative projection” and “hypotactical projection” are from (Paducheva 2012)):

- (9) No kak postupit’, kogda chuzhdoe segodnjashnemu dnju zhilo v *nem samom* <...>. S soboj ved’ *ne porvesh*’, *ne perestanesh*’ vstrechat’sja . [V.Grossman. Life and fate] ‘But what to do when something alien to today’s life was alive in *himself*<...>. <You> *cannot break* with yourself, *stop meeting* yourself’.

Hypotactical projection is questionable for GPS in Russian, while for English generic *one* it’s OK (cf. Moltmann 2010): “The first-person-orientation of generic *one* and arbitrary PRO concerns not only the speaker, but also, in embedded contexts, whoever may be the described agent of the reported attitude or speech act.”

Sometimes GPS describes events that take place with exactly one person, namely, the speaker, see (Zalizniak 2012). Then pronouns (and verbs) of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person alternate – their reference being identical; see example from (Knjazev 2008):

- (10) Znaeshj, na rabote *ja* tak *vymatihvajus*’. *Ezdish*’ po Moskve so vsyakimi inostrancami, gid-perevodchik. <...> *Menya* mutit ot zvukov anglijskoj rechi. <...>. Tak chto do domu dobereshjsya – i nikuda. (A. Gladilin). ‘You know *I’m* so *exhausted* at work. <You> *go* back and forth through Moscow with foreigners, as a guide-translator <...> *I* feel sick from the sounds of English speech. So <you> *get* home and cannot move anywhere.’

Thus, the implied subject of a GPS is the 1<sup>ST</sup> PERSON PRO IN GENERIC USE. Its semantic and

referential properties become clearer when compared with those of the implied subject of the INDEFINITE PERSONAL SENTENCE (IPS) in its generic variety.

The subject of the IPS is the 3<sup>rd</sup> PERSON PRO. For such an entity the generic use, side by side with referential use, is perfectly normal – as it is normal for any noun in Russian (see Paducheva 1985: 97). In fact, we have:

(11) a. V dome naprotiv *igrali* na fortep’jano ‘in the neighboring house <they> played the piano’ [referential use of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO].

b. Cypljat po oseni *schitajut* ‘<they> count chickens in the autumn’ [generic use of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO].

Thus, in Russian the first-person-oriented genericity, as in GPS, is opposed to the THIRD-PERSON-ORIENTED GENERICITY, represented by generic use of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO in the IPS. The generic 1<sup>st</sup> person PRO differs from the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO in several respects.

1. Generic 1<sup>st</sup> person PRO refers, in the first place, to the speaker; while the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO rather excludes the speaker. In (12) the speaker opposes himself to those who revile the autumn:

(12) Dni pozdnej oseni branjat obyknovenno. No mne ona mila (Pushkin) ‘Days of late winter – <they> scold them usually. But *for me* it is nice’.

2. Generic 1<sup>st</sup> person PRO is eager to enter co-reference relationships, cf.:

(13) Podal’she *polozhish*, poblizhe voz’*mesh* ‘the farther <you> put <something> the safer <you> take it back’; Ne *obmanesh* – ne *prodash* ‘if <you> don’t deceive <you> won’t sell’.

While the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO is not characteristic of co-reference marking (the context of subordination is an exception, see ex. (15)). And this difference is easy to explain. The 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO in its primary referential function conveys indefiniteness, see (11a), – which is compatible with generic use in the context of the first mention, but contradicts its use in the anaphoric function. While generic 1<sup>st</sup> person PRO is definite – as all generic NPs are (see Bulygina, Shmelev 1997). And when a definite NP is repeated then the two NPs are readily interpreted as denoting the same object, i.e. as co-referent (see Paducheva 1985: 98). In example (14) from (Zalizniak 2012) *ty* ‘you’ is unambiguously interpreted as the 1<sup>st</sup> person generic – because it is co-referent with the implied 1<sup>st</sup> person generic subject of *neprijatno* ‘unpleasant’:

(14) Kak *neprijatno* videt’, chto *ty* chto-to terjaesh’ v glazax ljudej ottogo, chto goloden i beden. ‘How *unpleasant* <for you> it is to realize that you lose something in the eyes of the people because <you> are hungry and poor’.

3. The difference in the grammatical number of the predicate is also relevant. In a single use the plural form of the GPS predicate doesn’t express plurality of the subject: a singular person counts her chickens or reviles the late autumn. But in the context of the anaphoric reference the plural of the 3<sup>rd</sup> person PRO reveals itself; e.g., in example (15) (from Bulygina, Shmelev 1997) the first clause introduces a set of running men referred to in the second clause:

(15) Skoro begut – dal’nix ne zhdut ‘when <they> run fast <they> do not wait for those behind’.

Thus, person, definiteness and number – all these three grammatical parameters are semantically meaningful. In example (16) from (Knjazev 2008) the third-person-oriented generic is used to formulate a general rule. But only the 1<sup>st</sup> person generic is capable of expressing the identity of the subjects of the two different actions; in fact, one and the same person is said not to be able to switch the motor off and then restart it again.

(16) I voobshche zdes’, na Severe, motory nikogda ne vykluchajut – potom ne zavedesh’. (A. Gladilin) ‘in general, here, in the North, <they> never switch motors off – <you> won’t restart it again’.

## References

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