INTRODUCTION

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[1] THE GRAMNORUS PROJECT

The GRAMNORUS — *Grammar from a Norwegian-Russian Perspective* — project was a joint Norwegian-Russian collaboration project based at the Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages at the Faculty of Humanities at the University of Oslo in the period between autumn 2015 and spring 2017. It was financed by a grant of NOK 150.000,- from the *Norwegian Centre for International Cooperation in Education* (SIU) through the *Norwegian Cooperation Programme in Higher Education with Russia* (grant number CPRU-2015/10039). The project involved Norwegian and Russian researchers, including typologists, semanticists, syntacticians, and language historians working on languages such as the Scandinavian languages, Slavic languages such as Russian, Bosnian, Croatian, Serbian, and Polish, Iranian and Nakh-Daghestanian languages, Hittite, Greek, and Latin. One of the goals of the project was to bring together Russian and Norwegian researchers working on Slavic and other languages who could discuss grammar and theoretical linguistic issues from a contrastive perspective, from different angles, and in light of various theoretical frameworks. Thus, the *Comparative Slavic Syntax and Semantics* workshop was organized in Oslo in April 2016.

[2] THE COMPARATIVE SLAVIC SYNTAX AND SEMANTICS WORKSHOP

The *Comparative Slavic Syntax and Semantics* workshop was organized at the Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages at the University of Oslo on April 13–15 2016. Five Norwegian researchers from the University of Oslo and the University of Tromsø participated as well as three students and four researchers from Russia representing Moscow State Pedagogical University, Russian State University for the Humanities, the Institute of Linguistics at the Russian Academy of Sciences, and St. Petersburg State University. The workshop was a success and paved the way for further and more extensive cooperation in the future. The *Oslo Studies in Language* issue at hand contains some of the contributions from this workshop.

[3] THIS SPECIAL ISSUE OF OSLA

This special issue in the *OSLa* series contains four of the contributions from the *Comparative Slavic Syntax and Semantics* workshop.

In the first article, SILJE SUSANNE ALVESTAD presents some initial findings from a larger project in which she investigates the use of aspect in Slavic infinitives and corresponding *da*-constructions. Against the background of existing literature one plausible hypothesis is that the East-West divide in aspect use can be observed in infinitives too, but Alvestad's findings so far suggest that this may not be borne out. Specifically, in the imperfective-oriented East Slavic languages, in Alvestad's article represented by Russian, the perfective aspect appears to be far more widespread in the infinitive than in other verb forms. In fact, in Alvestad's initial survey the use of aspect in the infinitive in Russian is almost identical to that in the infinitive (and corresponding *da*-constructions) in the West Slavic language Croatian. A larger database is needed to arrive at firm conclusions but these initial findings are intriguing all the same.

The second article, by ANDREI V. SIDELTSEV, is devoted to indefinite pronouns in Hittite. Specifically, Sidelstev is concerned with the syntax of negative polarity items (NPIs) in Hittite as compared with Russian. He argues that Hittite NPIs licensed by negation markers and conditionals are phonologically and morphologically identical, but behave differently syntactically depending on the licenser. First, phrases that are headed by an NPI licensed by a negation marker are compulsorily split whereas the split of phrases headed by an NPI licensed by the conditional is optional. Second, in the lion's share of cases NPIs licensed by conditionals are placed in front of the preverb while the most frequent position of NPIs licensed by negation is between the preverb and the verb. Cross-linguistically this Hittite system is rare. Sidelstev goes on to compare the Hittite system with the Russian system and shows and concludes that Hittite and Russian exemplify different possibilities of complex NPI systems.

In the third article, DANIEL TISKIN writes about movement out of adjunct clauses in Russian. Sentential adjuncts are generally considered to be islands, but as Tiskin points out it has been known for some time that Russian exhibits syntactic evidence for overt movement out of adjunct clauses. In his paper, Tiskin argues for covert (LF) movement out of conditionals in Russian. He makes use of the same data as that used in a 2011 article by Natalia Ivlieva and presents an analysis in which he makes use of the possibility of movement out of conditionals, particularly that of ATB (Across-the-Board) extraction out of both the protasis and the apodosis.

The fourth and final article, by TATIANA YANKO, is devoted to word order and accent placement in topics, foci, and markers of discourse continuity. Yanko analyzes the interaction between topic, focus, and discourse continuity markers based on data from Russian, German, and English. The means of expressing discourse continuity are generally identical to the means used to mark the topic, in the sense that the corresponding pitch accents and the principles guiding the choice of words to carry them do not differ formally. All this notwithstanding,

argues Yanko, strategies for marking the topic, focus, and discourse continuity within a single clause can be found in several languages. She then discusses the parameters of such strategies and illustrates them by means of examples.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First of all I wish to thank the *Centre for International Cooperation in Education* (SIU), represented by our contact person Herdis Kolle, for awarding us with the grant which allowed us to establish the GRAMNORUS project in the first place. We are very grateful to have taken part in this project which has enabled us to foster strong relationships with our partner institutions and gain rich theoretical insights which will be invaluable in future practice. Next, I wish to thank the administration at the Department of Literature, Area Studies and European Languages at the University of Oslo, in particular Heidi Ekstrand, Kirsti Sellevold and Ragnhild Norheim Førland, for their help and support particularly in connection with the April 2016 workshop.

On behalf of the authors in this issue I furthermore wish to thank the following reviewers for their insightful comments and suggestions which helped to improve the quality of the articles: Atle Grønn (University of Oslo), Dag Haug (University of Oslo), Natalia Ivlieva (Higher School of Economics, Moscow), Silvia Luraghi (University of Pavia), Ekaterina Lyutikova (Moscow State University for the Humanities), Vera Podlesskaya (Russian State University for the Humanities), Ruprecht von Waldenfels (University of Zurich), and Björn Wiemer (University of Mainz). Many thanks are also due to Irena Marijanović for thoroughly proofreading all the articles and to Marius Larsen Jøhndal for formatting them. All the authors acknowledge, of course, that any remaining errors are their own responsibility.

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