

Conjunctions, Contextualizers, and Syntax Theory*

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ABSTRACT:

According to traditional grammar conjunctions are words joining clauses (or words / word combinations). Still, many conjunctions can join also sentences or longer fragments of texts, being in fact contextualizers (these are “soft” conjunctions), while some conjunctions are able to join only clauses (these are “hard” conjunctions). Many Russian conjunctions, both coordinate and subordinate, are soft, but there are also hard coordinate and subordinate conjunctions. Hard conjunctions and contextualizers have (at least) two semantic actants. The difference in the surface expression of semantic actants of conjunctions vs. contextualizers is discussed.

KEY WORDS:

clause, conjunction, contextualizer, semantic actant, sentence, syntactic actant, text, the Russian language

1. INTRODUCTION

By definition, a conjunction is a word that connects other words (cf. *It became dark AND cold*) or clauses (cf. *It became light AND I got up; I'll get up WHEN it is light*). A contextualizer is a word or an expression that joins text fragments. Cf.

- (1) *We had lost our way in the forest. Everybody was hungry (P). | MEANTIME it was getting dark. The wind was strengthening (Q).*

Here, the contextualizer *meantime* joins two text fragments *P* and *Q*, each of them consisting of two sentences.

A contextualizer can join also two paragraphs. Cf. the transformation of text (1):

- (2) *We had lost our way in the forest. Everybody was hungry (P). | MEANTIME it was getting dark. The wind was strengthening (Q).*

Such a position is likely to be a peculiarity of contextualizers.

It is needless to say that a contextualizer can join two sentences. Cf.

- (3) *It became dark (P). | NEVERTHELESS, we moved forward (Q).*

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A contextualizer can also occupy the position between two clauses. Cf.

- (4) *We had lost our way in the forest (P), | MEANTIME it was snowing (Q).*

The class of contextualizers comprises adverbs (cf. *meantime; hence* ‘for this reason’), specific expressions (cf. *in a word; in other words*), etc. Some of the conjunctions are also a part of this class. Cf.

- (5) *It became light. Birds began singing (P). | AND I got up (Q).*

The conjunction *AND* joins here two text fragments *P* and *Q*, thus it is a contextualizer.

The subject of this paper is Russian conjunctions. I will show that some of them can behave as contextualizers, while others cannot connect text fragments (s. 2). I will also discuss some theoretical questions relating to syntax of contextualizers (s. 3).

2. HARD AND SOFT CONJUNCTIONS

Some of the Russian conjunctions cannot join sentences or longer text fragments — they join only words or clauses. I will call such conjunctions hard. Hard conjunctions cannot behave as contextualizers. Other Russian conjunctions can join sentences and some of them join even longer text fragments. I will call such conjunctions soft. Soft conjunctions are contextualizers.

It should be noted that only written texts with their markers of a sentence end, but not oral speech with its prosody, are discussed in this paper. Probably, some prosodic contours may mark both a clause end and a sentence end. However, this is beyond the scope of the present work.

My main suggestions are following.

Neither soft nor hard conjunctions are quite uniform. In fact, conjunctions line up on a scale, so some of them are softer, while others are harder; absolutely soft and absolutely hard conjunctions occupy the opposite ends of the scale.

As is often the case, it is necessary to describe each meaning of a polysemic word in its own right. In the case of a conjunction, it can be soft in one of its meanings but hard in another one. (Thus we should regard a conjunction in a given meaning as a separate entry; a polysemic conjunction is represented as a set of entries.)

It seems likely that the ability of a conjunction to behave as a contextualizer is closely related to its stylistic features. A neutral, widely used conjunction is most likely to be soft. As a result, conjunctions with close meaning but contrasting stylistic properties can differ in their syntactic functions.

Generally, subordinate conjunctions are harder than coordinate ones. Indeed, it is quite easy to find a hard subordinate conjunction. For example, the subordinate conjunction *ČEM ... TEM* ‘the ... the’ is absolutely hard; cf. *ČEM noč temnej, TEM jarče zvězdy* ‘THE darker the night, THE brighter the stars’. The subordinate conjunction *ČTO* ‘that’ is also hard: it can join only the main and the subordinate clauses; cf. *On skazal ej, ČTO snimaetsja v kino* ‘He told her, THAT he is a film actor’. The coordinate conjunction *I* ‘and’,

much like English *AND*, is soft; cf. (5) and (18)–(19) below. Still, it appears that some coordinate conjunctions are hard, while some subordinate conjunctions are soft.

Now let us regard some examples supporting these suggestions.

2.1 THE COORDINATE CONJUNCTION A ‘AND, BUT’ IN DIFFERENT MEANINGS

The Russian conjunction *A* has three main meanings, each of them representing a separate entry (Krejdlin — Padučeva, 1974). Here is the list of them in outline (for more details see Uryson, 2002; 2004a):

- (i) “a marker of an abnormal effect”.
More precisely: $Q, a P \approx$ ‘*P* is an abnormal effect of *Q*’. Cf.
- (6) *P’esa slabaja (Q), A zal polon (P)*.
‘The play is poor (*Q*), BUT the hall is full of people (*P*).’

(In Russian there are two conjunctions corresponding to *BUT* — *A* and *NO* ‘but’. They slightly differ in semantics (Uryson, 2004b; 2011). For simplicity, I ignore this difference now.)

- (ii) “a marker of comparison”.
More precisely: $Q, a P \approx$ ‘The speaker compares *Q* and *P*’. Cf.
- (7) *On bogatyj (Q), A ona bednaja (P)*.
‘He is rich (*Q*), BUT/AND she is poor (*P*).’
- (iii) “a marker of a topic change” (or alternatively “a marker of a narration turn”). Cf.
- (8) *Ja stojal na ostanovke, ždal avtobusa (Q), a moroz byl gradusov tridcat’ (P)*.
‘I was standing at a stop waiting for a bus (*Q*), AND/BUT the frost was about 30 degrees Celsius (*P*).’ (The first clause (*Q*) is about the subject, while the second one (*P*) is about the frost.)

It is evident that the meaning of the conjunction *A* agrees with the meaning of the context. It does not follow that this conjunction has an “empty” meaning: on this assumption it would be impossible to distinguish Russian conjunctions *I* ‘and’, *A* ‘and, but’ and *NO* ‘but’, which can be used in the same context.

The conjunction *A* in each of these meanings is soft. Cf. (9)–(11) where *A* joins text fragments. In (9) *A* is “a marker of an abnormal effect”; in (10) *A* is “a marker of comparison”; and in (11) *A* is “a marker of a topic change”.

- (9) *Delo k vesne. Den’ udlinilsja, solnce svetit jarče. Na kalendare — seredina marta (Q). | A moroz vsě žestče. Veter rezkij, severnyj (P)*.
‘The spring is near. The day is longer, the sun is brighter. It is the middle of March (*Q*). | BUT the frost is harder. The north wind is severe (*P*).’

- (10) *Katja — intelligentnaja devuška iz xorošej sem'i. Ejo roditeli — vrači. Ona eščě v detstve rešila stat' xirurgom (Q). | A Daša — prostaja, iz sela. Mama u neě do-jarka. Otec byl traktoristom, pil i rano umer. Ni o kakom universitete Daša ne po-myšljaet (P).*

'Kate is an intellectual girl of a good family. Her parents are physicians. Being a small girl she has already decided to be a surgeon (Q). | BUT/AND Daša is an ordinary girl. Her mother is a dairymaid. Her father was a tractor driver, drank hard and died early. Daša does not think about studying at a university (P).'

- (11) *Stoju na ostanovke, ždu avtobusa. Sumka u menja nepoděmnaja (Q). | A moroz gradusov tridcat'. Vokrug ni duši (P).* (The verbs in the Russian text are in the Praesens historicum.)

'I was standing at a stop waiting for a bus. My bag was extremely heavy (Q). | AND/BUT the frost was about 30 degrees Celsius. There was not a single person around (P).'

In all the meanings discussed the conjunction A can join paragraphs, so in all these meanings it is absolutely soft.

Still, this conjunction has another meaning in which it is hard. Cf.

- (12) *Vyxožu ja včera iz doma (Q), A v našem dvore stoit mašina moego prijatelja (P).*

'Yesterday I left my home (Q), AND (suddenly saw that) there is my friend's car in the yard (P).'

This example expresses the meaning 'Q, the subject suddenly reveals that P', which is due to the conjunction A. To make sure, let us omit the conjunction in this sentence:

- (13) *Vyxožu ja včera iz doma (Q), v našem dvore stoit mašina moego prijatelja (P).*

'Yesterday I left my home (Q), there was my friend's car in the yard (P).'

Example (13) does not contain the conjunction and as a result does not express the meaning 'the subject suddenly reveals that...'

We are dealing here with a separate meaning of A. It has been described in Sannikov (1989, pp. 176–177). I will call this entry "a marker of sudden disclosure". Cf. another example (by V. Z. Sannikov):

- (14) *Tronul gubu (Q), A u menja iz-pod guby — klyk (P).* (V. Majakovskij).

'I touched my lip (Q), AND (suddenly discovered that) there is a fang from under the lip (P).'

It is easy to verify that A as "a marker of sudden disclosure" can join only clauses. Let us transform the sentence (12) into a text consisting of two sentences, cf.

- (15) *Vyxožu ja včera iz doma (Q). A v našem dvore stoit mašina moego prijatelja (P).*

'Yesterday I left my home (Q). AND there was my friend's car in the yard (P).'

Example (15) does not express the meaning ‘I suddenly saw/revealed that...’. In this text the conjunction *A* marks “a topic change” (or “a narration turn”): the first sentence contains information about the speaker, while the second one is about his friend’s car in the yard. So, (12) and (15) differ not only in syntax, but also in semantics. Due to this semantic difference each of these examples presupposes its own text. Let us imagine that sentence (12) is the beginning of a text. The most probable continuation of this text is: ‘I was amazed: when did he park?’. So, the whole text deals with the subject’s surprise caused by finding the car in the yard. As for sentence (15), its most conceivable continuation is: ‘Some time ago I had permitted my friend to park his car in my yard. And now I thought that...’. This continuation deals with the subject’s friend and his car — that is the topic of the sentence (15).

It should be noted that *A* “a marker of a topic change” can join clauses, cf. (8). Strictly speaking, sentence (12) can also contain the conjunction *A* in this meaning. Due to this, (12) has two meanings: ‘*Q*, AND (the subject suddenly discovers that) *P*’ vs. ‘*Q*, AND (a topic change) *P*’. Each of these meanings requires its own specific prosody. So, these meanings differ in their surface realization.

The point is that the conjunction *A* “a marker of sudden disclosure” can join only clauses but not sentences. Thus, the conjunction *A* in this meaning is hard.

2.2 THE COORDINATE CONJUNCTIONS *I*, *A* TAKŽE, *DA* ‘AND’

The conjunction *I* connecting two clauses expresses one of its two main meanings (for more details see Uryson, 2000; 2011):

- (i) “a marker of a normal effect”.
More precisely: $Q, i P \approx$ ‘*P* is a normal effect of *Q*’. Cf.
- (16) *P’esa slabaja (Q), I publika na neě ne idět (P)*.
‘The play is poor (*Q*), AND the hall is empty (*P*).’
- (ii) “a marker of a topic change absence” (or alternatively “a marker of a narration turn absence”). Cf.
- (17) *Sijalo solnce (Q), I dul veter (P)*.
‘The sun was shining (*Q*), AND the wind was blowing (*P*).’ (Both clauses (*Q*) and (*P*) deal with the weather at the described moment.)

It is easy to see that the conjunction *I* in the first meaning (“a marker of a normal effect”) correlates with the conjunction *A* in its first meaning (“a marker of an abnormal effect”). These two meanings can be represented as antonyms. In a similar manner, the conjunction *I* in the second meaning (“a marker of a topic change absence”) correlates with the conjunction *A* in its third meaning (“a marker of a topic change”).

The meaning of *I* ‘and’ agrees with the meaning of the context. Nevertheless, it is convenient to describe *I* as a polysemic conjunction but not as an “empty conjunction” with broad syntactic functions and no specific meaning.

The conjunction *I* in these two meanings is soft. Cf. (18)–(19): in both examples *I* joins text fragments; in (18) it is “a marker of a normal effect”; in (19) it is “a marker of a topic change absence”.

- (18) *On vsegda pomagal mne, byl rjedom v trudnuju minutu. Deti očen' ego ljubili (Q). | I ja stala dumat', čto naši otnošenija mogut byt' pročnymi. Ja načala nadejatsja na nego (P).*
 ‘He always helped me in my difficulties. My children liked him (Q). | AND I began to think that our relations can be durable. I began to rely on him (P).’
- (19) *Sneg taet. Lyži končilis' (Q). | I den' uže očen' dlinnij. Nebo večerom byvaet zelenovatym (P).*
 ‘The snow is melting. Skiing came to an end (Q). | AND the day is already very long. In the evenings the sky is greenish (P).’

In many cases the conjunction *I* ‘and’ (no matter what its meaning is) joins two paragraphs, so it is absolutely soft in both meanings.

Now let us consider the conjunction *A TAKŽE* ‘and’, lit. ‘and also’. Although it consists of two parts and is spelt as two separate words, it is in fact one word. The conjunction is bookish, in contrast to neutral *I* ‘and’. *A TAKŽE*, similarly to *I*, can join words or clauses. We will consider *A TAKŽE* connecting clauses.

A TAKŽE ‘and’ resembles *I* “a marker of a topic change absence”. (It should be mentioned that contrary to *I*, *A TAKŽE* cannot mark “a normal effect”.) There is a slight semantic difference between *A TAKŽE* and *I* “a marker of a topic change absence”: *A TAKŽE* signals that the piece of information *P* is given as an addition to *Q*. Cf.

- (20) *V dome razbity okna (Q), A TAKŽE vybita dver' (P).*
 ‘The windows are broken in the house (Q), AND (ALSO) the door is knocked out (P).’
- (21) *V konce semidesjatyx godov v rjade stran bylo zapreščeno ispol'zovanie freonov (Q), A TAKŽE sokraščeno samo proizvodstvo freona (P).*
 ‘In the end of the seventies in some countries the use of Freons was forbidden (Q), AND (ALSO) the making of Freon was cut down (P).’

In these examples *A TAKŽE* joins clauses that have a common group. Cf. *V dome* ‘in the house’ in (20); *V konce semidesjatyx godov v rjade stran* ‘in the end of the seventies in some countries’ in (21). It is a peculiar syntactic feature of this conjunction that in narration it normally cannot join clauses that have no common part. Because of this, one could believe that *A TAKŽE* is a hard conjunction. However, in special cases *A TAKŽE* can join sentences and even longer text fragments. Cf.

- (22) *Objasnite, prav li ja, sil'nejšij povelitel' zemel' islama, trebuja, čtoby xalif bagdaskij podčinjalsja mne (Q)? A TAKŽE objasnite, čto ja dolžen delat', esli xalif mne ne pokorjaetsja (P)? (V. Jan).*

‘Explain to me, the most potent ruler of Islamic countries, am I right to request the Baghdad caliph to obey me (Q)? AND ALSO explain to me: what should I do if the caliph does not obey me (P)?’

- (23) *Ja vynužden potrebovat’, čtoby vy podpisali ètu bumagu. Objazatel’stvo nikuda ne uežžat’ v bližajšie dva mesjaca. I javljatsja po moemu vyzovu, esli v ètom vzniknet neobxodimost’ (Q). A TAKŽE očen’ očen’ sovetuju vam: vspomnite nakonec, gde vy byli pjatnadcatogo ijunja (P). (I. Efimov).*

‘I am obliged to demand that you sign this document. It is your promise not to leave for anywhere in the next two months. And to come to me if I call you (Q). AND ALSO I advise you to recollect where you were on the fifteenth of June (P).’

It is easy to see that neither (22) nor (23) is a normal narration. In these examples both Q and P express requests. A *TAKŽE* can join sentences only in such a specific context. Strictly speaking, this conjunction is soft, but it is not nearly as soft as *I*. In fact, *A TAKŽE* is close to hard conjunctions.

Let us now turn to the conjunction *DA*. It has interesting stylistic features being colloquial in some contexts and slightly poetic in others. *DA* can join clauses and in that case it is a close synonym of the conjunction *I* “a marker of a topic change absence”. There is a small semantic difference between them: using *DA* the speaker estimates the state of affairs — (s)he believes that not only Q and P but also more situations could have a place in the described moment. In other words, *DA* expresses that there are few elements in the described set of situations {Q, P}. Cf.

- (24) *Zolotyè iskry leteli v temnotu (Q), DA vdali, po polotnu, krasnel fonar’ poslednego vagona (P). (B. Zajcev).*

‘Golden sparks flew into the dark (Q), AND the red lantern of the last carriage lightened along the railway (P) (nothing more was seen).’

DA freely joins clauses, cf. (24). It can also connect sentences: it is possible to transform the compound sentence (24) into two sentences. Cf.

- (25) *Zolotyè iskry leteli v temnotu (Q). DA vdali, po polotnu, krasnel fonar’ poslednego vagona (P).*

‘Golden sparks flew into the dark (Q). AND the red lantern of the last carriage lightened along the railway (P) (nothing more was seen).’

But due to its meaning the conjunction *DA* can hardly join longer text fragments. In the strict sense, *DA* is a soft conjunction, but it is close to hard ones.

2.3 SOME SUBORDINATE CONJUNCTIONS

The conjunctions *POTOMU ČTO* ‘because’ and *XOTJA* ‘though’ are soft. In texts (26) and (27) these conjunctions join fragments consisting of two or more sentences. Cf.

- (26) *Maša vsě delaet dlja Peti. Ona pomogala ego mame, kogda ta byla v bol'nice. Ona našla dlja nego xorošuju rabotu. Ona daët emu den'gi v dolg (Q). POTOMU ČTO ona do six por ljubit ego. Vse eë plany svjazany s nim (P).*
 'Maša does everything for Petja. When his mother was in hospital Maša helped her. Maša managed to find a good job for Petja. She lends money to him (Q). BECAUSE she still loves him. She links her future to him (P).'
- (27) *My dolgo i uporno delali ètu rabotu. Sideli nočami. Tščatel'no proverjali točnost' rasčetov (Q). | XOTJA ètot proekt nam vsem uže nadoel. Každyj iz nas iskal druguju rabotu (P).*
 'We had been doing this work persistently and for a long time. We sat working at night. We thoroughly checked the calculations for accuracy (Q). | THOUGH we had been already bored with this project. Each of us had been searching for another job (P).'

It is possible to transform these examples, so that each fragment *P* and *Q* is a paragraph. Thus, both conjunctions *POTOMU ČTO* 'because' and *XOTJA* 'though' are absolutely soft.

The main Russian neutral temporal conjunction *KOGDA* 'when' usually joins clauses, cf.

- (28) *Ja zakryl knigu (Q), KOGDA stalo sovsem temno (P).*
 'I closed the book (Q), WHEN it grew quite dark (P).'

KOGDA can also join sentences, but not in all contexts. Cf. the abnormal transformation (29) of sentence (28) and the normal text (30).

- (29) *??Ja zakryl knigu (Q). KOGDA stalo sovsem temno (P).*
 'I closed the book (Q). WHEN it grew quite dark (P).'

- (30) *Petja časami igraet v kompjuternye igry. On boltaet po telefonu i ne prikasaetsja k učebnikam (Q). Kogda otca net doma (P).*
 'Petja plays computer games for hours. He chatters over the phone and does not touch his textbooks (Q). WHEN his father is not at home (P).'

In the normal text (30) the speaker underlines the fact that the situations *Q* take place — this information is new and unexpected (for the addressee). He also underlines the temporal relation of *Q* and *P*. In such a case *KOGDA* can behave as a soft conjunction joining sentences or longer text fragments. In other words, in such a context *KOGDA* behaves as a contextualizer.

In (28)–(29) both situations *Q* and *P* are trivial and expected, so nothing should be underlined. In such a case a complex sentence, like (28), cannot be transformed into two sentences, cf. (29). *KOGDA* functions here as a hard conjunction.

In general, *KOGDA* is close to hard conjunctions; it can be a contextualizer only in particular contexts. In this regard the neutral subordinate conjunction *KOGDA* is similar to the bookish coordinate conjunction *A TAKŽE*.

Another Russian temporal conjunction *VTO VREMJA KAK* 'while' is hard — it joins only clauses. Cf.

- (31) *On byl ženat na bednoj dvorjanke, kotoraja umerla v rodax (Q), V TO VREMJA KAK on naxodilsja v otežem pole (P).* (A. S. Pushkin).
 ‘He was married to a poor noblewoman who died giving birth to a child (Q),
 WHILE he was hunting (P).’

Note that *V TO VREMJA KAK* ‘while’ is a bookish conjunction in contrast to the neutral one *KOGDA*.

2.4 CONCLUSION

Russian conjunctions (both coordinate and subordinate) differ in their ability to join clauses vs. sentences vs. longer text fragments. Furthermore, a conjunction in one of its meanings and the same conjunction in another meaning can contrast in their syntactic properties. It follows that syntactic features of a conjunction should be described in a dictionary; a conjunction in each meaning should be described as a separate lexical entry with its syntactic peculiarities.

It is of interest to consider syntactic properties of conjunctions in different languages. It is quite possible that in some languages conjunctions act as contextualizers, in other words they are generally soft. It may appear that there are also languages in which conjunctions are in general hard, and for the most part they cannot behave as contextualizers.

3. CONTEXTUALIZERS AND SYNTAX THEORY

In this section I will compare conjunctions and contextualizers in terms of the actant theory.

3.1 INITIAL ASSUMPTIONS

For simplicity let us consider conjunctions in the position between two clauses but not between sentences or longer text fragments. Let us call the first position hard.

A conjunction is a predicate describing a certain situation (or a state of affairs) with two participants (= semantic actants) *P* and *Q*, each of them in its turn being a situation. Cf.

- (32) $P \leftarrow \text{WHEN} \rightarrow Q$ [e.g. *When you come (P), I will leave (Q).*]

- (33) $P \leftarrow \text{IF} \rightarrow Q$ [e.g. *If Peter comes (P), Maša will be glad (Q).*]

Let us assume that the first semantic actant of a subordinate conjunction is expressed by the subordinate clause (*P*); so the main clause (*Q*) expresses its second semantic actant. Let us represent it as follows:

- (33a) *When P, Q : P = 1, Q = 2.*

In a sentence a subordinate conjunction immediately precedes the subordinate clause. In other words, a subordinate conjunction immediately precedes the expression of its first semantic actant. Let us represent coordinate conjunctions in similar way. Cf.

(34) $Q \leftarrow \text{AND} \rightarrow P$ [e.g. *It was raining (Q) and it was cold (P).*]

(35) $Q \leftarrow \text{BUT} \rightarrow P$ [e.g. *It was warm (Q) but he put on his coat (P).*]

(35a) $Q \text{ and } P : P = 1, Q = 2.$

Let us assume that the clause matching the given semantic actant of the conjunction is a syntactic actant of this conjunction. So, a conjunction in the hard position has two syntactic actants. Both of them can be fully described by strict syntactic rules. In this regard syntactic actants of a conjunction in the hard position are similar to verb complements, which also can be defined by strict morphological, syntactic or morphosyntactic rules.

Let us now consider semantic and syntactic actants of a contextualizer. We start with contrasting a conjunction and a contextualizer with close meanings.

3.2 THE CONJUNCTION *XOTJA* 'THOUGH' AND THE CONTEXTUALIZER *TEM NE MENEĖ* 'NEVERTHELESS, STILL, YET'

We can easily compare the Russian subordinate conjunction *XOTJA* 'though' and the Russian contextualizer *TEM NE MENEĖ* 'nevertheless, still, yet' (it is spelt as three separate words but in effect it is one word). Cf.

(36) *XOTJA bylo očēn' pozdno (P), on prodolžal rabotat' (Q).*
'THOUGH it was very late (P), he went on working (Q).'

(37) *Bylo očēn' pozdno. TEM NE MENEĖ, on prodolžal rabotat'.*
'It was very late. STILL he went on working.'

The conjunction *XOTJA* has two semantic actants each of them being a situation. The first actant (it is *P*) is the situation that usually prevents the existence of a situation like *Q*; e.g. late time usually prevents working. In other words, the actant *P* is "the obstacle", or the "hindering" situation for *Q*. The actant *Q* (which is the second actant of the conjunction) is the situation that in the given case takes place despite *P*. Let us call *Q* the "key" situation. In (36) *XOTJA* is in the hard position, so each semantic actant of this conjunction is expressed within the same sentence: the actant *P* is expressed by the subordinate clause while the actant *Q* by the main one.

It is obvious that the contextualizer *TEM NE MENEĖ* 'nevertheless, still, yet' has the same semantic actants: one of them is the "key" situation and the other is the "hindering" situation. Let us assume that similar to a conjunction, a contextualizer is placed immediately ahead of the expression of its first semantic actant (this assumption will be refined below):

- (38) $P \leftarrow$ *TEM NE MENE* ‘nevertheless, still, yet’ \rightarrow Q
 [Bylo očēn’ pozdno (P). *TEM NE MENE*, on prodolžal rabotat’ (Q).
 ‘It was very late (P). *STILL* he went on working. (Q).’]

We see that the conjunction and the contextualizer differ in their positions: the former precedes the expression of the “hindering” situation (P) while the latter precedes the expression of the “key” situation (Q). This is an important syntactic difference between *XOTJA* and *TEM NE MENE*. According to our assumption we represent it as follows:

- (38a) *XOTJA* ‘though’ $P, Q : P$ “the hindering situation” = 1.

- (38b) $P. TEM NE MENE$ ‘nevertheless, still, yet’ $Q : Q$ “the key situation” = 1.

It is easily seen that the conjunction *XOTJA* ‘though’ and the contextualizer *TEM NE MENE* ‘nevertheless, yet, still’ are converse terms. It is an interesting point, and yet the essential difference between conjunctions and contextualizers is in their other peculiarities.

Let us consider the expression of “the hindering situation” of our entries. In the case of the conjunction this semantic actant is denoted by the subordinate clause, so it can be entirely described in terms of syntax. As for the contextualizer *TEM NE MENE*, its semantic actant “the hindering situation” can only be found in the preceding text. Moreover, it can be denoted by quite large text fragments. Cf. examples (39)–(40) extracted from the texts in which the description of “the obstacle” (in fact of many various hindering situations) takes several paragraphs or even pages.

- (39) *TEM NE MENE* *koštjum ot redakcii ja polučil.* (S. Dovlatov).
 ‘*STILL* the administration of the newspaper gave me a new suit.’ (The story deals with a journalist whom the administration promised to give a new suit for interviewing famous people; they did not want to keep their promise and invented many reasons for breaking it.)
- (40) *TEM NE MENE* *drug k drugu oni [bratja] čuvstvovali nastojaščuju prijazn’ i razgovarivali obo vsēm soveršenno svobodno.* (Ju. Dombrovskij).
 ‘Yet they [two brothers] liked each other and talked quite freely about everything.’ (The brothers were different in all respects including their relations to women, to the communist party, etc. and several previous paragraphs deal with their distinctions.)

The expression of the semantic actant P “the hindering situation(s)” of the contextualizer *TEM NE MENE* cannot be described by strict syntactic rules. Comprehension of a broader context but not syntactic or morphological information is required for finding the expression of this actant in a text.

Examples like (39)–(40) are quite usual. There are also many typical cases when the actants P “the hindering situation(s)” and Q “the key situation” are expressed within the same sentence. Cf.

- (41) *Podavennyj všem slučivšimsja (P), on TEM NE MENEĚ prodolžat pet' svoju ariju (Q).*
'Being depressed (P), he NEVERTHELESS is singing his aria (Q).'
- (42) *Malo čto ponimaja po-nemecki (P), Ivan TEM NE MENEĚ dogadyvalsja, kak izde-vaetsja nad vsem vidennym Georg Majzel' (Q).*
'Understanding German very little (P), Ivan NEVERTHELESS guessed that George Maisel was mocking at everything around (Q).'
- (43) *V ètom gorode, gde uže stol'ko let vytravljaetsja dux priključenija (P), ono TEM NE MENEĚ živět, polzet po ulicam, lepitsja k oknam (Q).* (V. Aksënov).
'In this city where the spirit of adventure is being exterminated for already many years (P), it is NEVERTHELESS alive, it crawls along streets, it clings to windows (Q).'

We see that the semantic actant P "the hindering situation(s)" of the contextualizer *TEM NE MENEĚ* 'nevertheless, yet, still' can be denoted by a variety of means: by the group of a participle as in (41), by the group of a converb as in (42), by a subordinate clause as in (43). Again, it is impossible to describe the expression of this semantic actant in strict terms of syntax. Conceptual analysis is required for revealing it in a sentence.

As for the semantic actant Q "the key situation" of the contextualizer *TEM NE MENEĚ*, it is ordinarily expressed by the sentence (clause), in which *TEM NE MENEĚ* is located. The contextualizer can precede this sentence (clause) but this is not necessarily so. Cf.

- (44) *TEM NE MENEĚ on prodolžal rabotat'; On TEM NE MENEĚ prodolžal rabotat'; On prodolžal TEM NE MENEĚ rabotat'; etc.*
'STILL he went on working.'

However in the general case the second semantic actant (Q) of *TEM NE MENEĚ* 'nevertheless, yet, still' can be expressed by a longer text fragment and thus cannot be described in terms of syntax. Cf.

- (45) *TEM NE MENEĚ kostjum ot redakcii ja polučil. Premiju mne tože dali.*
'STILL the administration of the newspaper gave me a new suit. They also gave me a bonus.'

Here two sentences express the semantic actant Q of *TEM NE MENEĚ*.

An important point is that both semantic actants of the contextualizer *TEM NE MENEĚ* 'nevertheless, yet, still' are obligatory: each of them must be expressed in a text. Moreover, there are some formal requirements for their expression.

(A) The first semantic actant (Q "the key situation") cannot be placed before the contextualizer *TEM NE MENEĚ*; and its second semantic actant (P "the hindering situation") cannot be put after the contextualizer.

(B) The expression of each semantic actants must include a rheme (for P it may be secondary, cf. (42)-(44)).

Still, this information is too scanty — generally it is impossible to reveal in a text the expression of semantic actants of *TEM NE MENEĖ* ‘nevertheless, yet, still’ by strict syntactic rules.

3.3 THE GENERAL CASE

A contextualizer presupposes a preceding text fragment and a succeeding one; cf.: *Q. Still P; Q. First P; Q. Meantime P*. It is impossible to describe semantics of a contextualizer without taking into account *Q* and *P* (Wierzbicka, 1971). It means that a contextualizer has (at least) two semantic actants. The preceding fragment (*Q*) expresses one semantic actant of a contextualizer and the succeeding one (*P*) expresses its other actant.

A contextualizer marks the borderline between the expression of its one actant and the expression of its other actant. However the whole expression of the semantic actants (though it is obligatory) cannot be described in strict terms of syntax. Comprehension of a broad context and conceptual analysis are necessary for finding them in a text.

I believe that it is the main peculiarity of contextualizers. They form a special group of predicates. Similar to conjunctions in the hard position, verbs, etc., contextualizers have semantic actants, but contrary to these well studied predicates, surface expression of contextualizer actants can be defined by strict syntactic rules only partially.

The expression of a semantic actant of a well studied predicate (such as a verb) usually is designated by a syntactic actant of the predicate (Mel’čuk, 1974; Apresjan, 1974) or a syntactic scope of the predicate (Boguslavskij, 1996). Note that syntactic actants (as well as syntactic scopes) can be described by strict morphological, (morpho)syntactic, prosodic, thematic-rhematic, etc. rules. In this regard the surface expression of a semantic actant of a contextualizer sharply differs from that of a traditional syntactic actant or a syntactic scope. I suppose that the notions of syntactic actant and syntactic scope do not apply in the case of contextualizers. Another term should be coined for describing the syntax of this particular group of predicates (Uryson, 2013).

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ABSTRAKT:

Podle tradiční gramatiky jsou spojky slova, která spojují klauze (nebo slova či slovní spojení). Některé spojky však mohou spojovat i věty nebo delší textové pasáže, a ve skutečnosti tak plní funkci tzv. kontextualizátorů (jde o tzv. „měkké“ spojky), zatímco jiné spojky mohou spojovat pouze klauze (jde o tzv. „tvrdé“ spojky). V ruštině existují jak tvrdé, tak měkké spojky (kontextualizátory), a to vždy souřadné i podřadné. Všechny tvrdé spojky i kontextualizátory spojují vždy (minimálně) dva sémantické aktanty. Příspěvek se zabývá rozdíly mezi povrchového vyjádřením sémantických aktantů u spojek a kontextualizátorů.

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