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The use of onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function in Russian and other languages:

A perspective from the Corpus of Parallel Texts of the Russian National Corpus

Abstract

Onomatopoeic interjections (words such as the Russian *bac* and *tjap* and their English equivalents *bang* and *pow*) are not only used to imitate sounds. Russian linguistics has long acknowledged their use in predicate function instead of verb forms (for example, *bac ego po lbu* ‘bang (interjection) him on the forehead’), but similar use is not widely reported for other languages. Instead of using the intuition of native speakers to test the possibility of this construction in different languages, we test the usefulness of a parallel corpus for such linguistic purposes.

This study uses six different bilingual corpora and the multilingual Corpus of Parallel Texts of the Russian National Corpus to investigate the possibility of such uses as well as the meaning components involved and thus explicated in the translations. We conclude that predicate function seems to be a feature very characteristic of Russian, but it occurs in other languages as well. In translations from or into Russian, where Russian uses an onomatopoeic interjection in predicate function, the other language tends to use a verb, a combination of an interjection and a verb, or finds fit to explicate the deliberately ambiguous but very expressive Russian meaning in other ways.

Keywords: onomatopoeia, interjection, predicate, Russian, Slavic, Russian National Corpus, parallel corpora

0. Introduction

This study uses the parallel corpus of the Russian National Corpus (hence: RNC, www.ruscorpora.ru) in order to analyze the use of onomatopoeic and verbal interjections in predicate function in Russian and other languages included in the corpus. This question is interesting because the use of Russian onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function (for example, *On pljuch v vodu* ‘he splash (interjection) into the water’) has long since been acknowledged, and to some extent described, but the same does not apply to other languages. This leads us to ask whether this is due to the impossibility of such use in other languages. At the same time, there is a need to take a closer look at the predicate function in Russian in the light of authentic language data and in comparison with other languages.

The studies describing onomatopoeic interjections have so far often relied on the linguistic intuition of native speakers. The reason for this is obvious: since onomatopoeic interjections are infrequent in written texts, it is difficult to gather data reflecting their use. However, the intuitions of individual native speakers have proved an unreliable source of information for these words. Native speakers both use and interpret these words differently, and indeed acknowledge their use and their very existence to varying degrees (some would not admit using them themselves¹). Modern corpus materials have changed the picture and it is therefore nowadays possible to study the use of these words in a new way. This study explores the possibilities of relatively small parallel corpora in doing this.

Our research questions were the following: 1) Can onomatopoeic interjections be used similarly to the Russian predicate function in other languages (including other Slavic languages well represented in RNC), and 2) What constructions in other languages are equivalent to the use of Russian interjections in predicate function and what does this reveal about the meaning components involved in such Russian use? The underlying assumption of this study is that material from a parallel corpus gives interesting new cross-linguistic information. Question 1 is approached by analyzing material from six bilingual corpora and question 2 through two case studies with multilingual material.

In this paper, we will first give a survey of previous research on the use of onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function. We will then present our research methods and material, followed by the results and conclusion.

1.0 Previous studies on onomatopoeic interjections and their use in predicate function

Scholars have not so far reached agreement on how Russian verbal and onomatopoeic interjections should be classified as words. The use of these interjections has thus far not been analyzed in detail either. Most of the previous literature consists of short notes in grammars that merely state the existence of such peculiar words. When it comes to the theoretical interpretation of these interjections, the Academy Grammar (Грамматика 1980: §1705) offers two alternatives: they may be treated either as reduced verb forms connected to Old Russian aorist forms, or as “vocal gestures” not directly related to verbs. In some other works they are called “interjectional verbs” (*verbe interjectionnel*) (Karcevski 1941), “truncated verb forms” (*usečënnnye glagol’nye formy*) (Потебня 1941: 191), “ultrapunctual aspect forms” (*ul’tamgnovennyj vid*) (Peškovskij 1927: 200, Reformatskij 1963: 129), or “sound gestures” (*Lautgebärden*, Isačenko 1975) (translation of the terms from Nikitina 2012: 167). What is common to all these studies is that none of them is based on the analysis of naturally occurring language data.

The different terms used for Russian onomatopoeic verbal interjections in the 20th century research introduced above reflect their different relevant features. They are interjections that have verb-like features; they also have a clear relation to gestures, both in often being used together with them and in having gesture-like reference features to things that are not linguistically explicated. One of their typical uses is also pointing at a very short event.

Russian onomatopoeic interjections can be used to replace a verb form, i.e. in syntactic predicate function. This use is, according to the Academy Grammar, the main syntactic function of Russian onomatopoeic and verbal interjections (Грамматика 1980: §1705). This also differentiates them from

other interjections (ibid.). First attempts have been made to study empirically how and why onomatopoeic interjections are used as predicates instead of verb forms. According to Irina Kor Chahine (Кор Шаин 2008), these words are used as narrative predicates, while D. Paramonov (1999) interprets them as noncongruent predicates that express modal meanings. Nikitina (2012) discusses predicate function of verbal interjections, but excludes onomatopoeic interjections from her analysis. Following S. Ja. Lur'e (Лурье 1955), she calls verbal interjections “verboids”. The term refers to the interpretation of onomatopoeic interjections as a verb-like category between interjections and verbs. According to Nikitina (2012), Russian verbal interjections are in their predicative uses, on the one hand, syntactically similar to verb forms in that they may combine with subjects, objects, and oblique arguments and can be modified by adjuncts (ibid: 169). On the other hand, verbal interjections differ from Russian verbs in their phonological form, and in that they take hardly any suffixes, are generally unacceptable in infinitival complements and subordinate clauses, do not occur in questions, and are more general in meaning than Russian verbs usually are (ibid). Nikitina supports the view that sees verbal interjections as homonymous to interjections and separates these two forms. She argues that verbal interjections cannot be interpreted as truncated verb forms since their use is not restricted to contexts where past tense forms could be used.

Russian onomatopoeic interjections and verbal interjections have generally been regarded as two separate but related word categories, and, for example, the Academy Grammar does not explicate the relationship between them. The distinction is based on two views. Firstly, onomatopoeic interjections are perceived to depict sound, while other sensations are associated with verbal interjections.

Secondly, onomatopoeic interjections are root words, whereas verbal interjections are considered to have been truncated from verbs. These criteria, however, are controversial, since they overlap – verbal interjections can convey sound as well, and in addition, while onomatopoeia are primarily related to the sense of hearing, it is difficult to separate auditive input from the information delivered by other senses. Evidence from cognitive science and psychology confirms that the different perceptual systems (vision, hearing, touch, olfaction, and taste) are heavily dependent on one another and do not function in isolation (Shams 2010, Schürmann 2010, Spence 2010, Wallace 2010, Zellner 2010). In

many cases where the presence of actual sound can be questioned, there is some tactile or visual input, and a combination of several senses may be involved. Furthermore, the direction of word formation is often difficult to prove. Our assumption is that onomatopoeic and verbal interjections belong to the same syntactic category. In addition, we do not want to exclude clearly onomatopoeic interjections from our discussion of the predicate function of verbal interjections as in Nikitina (2012), because in our opinion the nuances of meaning brought by onomatopoeic and other sensorimotor elements are especially interesting in discussing the predicate function of these interjections, and the number of different interpretations is especially high with them. They are also more interesting from the viewpoint of cross-linguistic comparison.

For other languages there are descriptions of partly similar units (called “imitatives”, “descriptive words”, “onomatopoeic expressions”, “mimetics”). Some recent ones include Bańko (2008), Fidler (2014), Katsuki-Pestemer (2014), and Jääskeläinen (2013). In a wider perspective, the study of these expressions is connected to the examination of ideophones (words where the connection between the form and the meaning is not fully arbitrary) (e.g. Akita 2017, Bartens 2000, Dingemanse 2012, Leskinen 2001, Voeltz & Kilian-Hatz eds. 2001, Ibarretxe-Antuñano 2017) and even wider sound symbolism and iconicity in language in general (e.g. Hinton et al. 1994, Lockwood & Dingemanse 2015); its expression with linguistic and extralinguistic means in spoken and sign languages (e.g. Perniss & Vigliocco 2014); or systematicity of sound symbolism and its effects in language learning and processing (e.g. Lockwood, Dingemanse & Hagort 2016). The information gained from these studies that do not use Russian data is fully compatible with what is already known of Russian onomatopoeic interjections, although experimental psycholinguistic methods have not yet been implemented for it.

It is plausible that the widespread use of onomatopoeic interjections as predicates is peculiar to Russian and possibly to other Slavic languages (Лурье 1955: 30, Nikitina 2012: 166). Лурье (Lur'e (Лурье 1955), while also discussing other cases in which Indo-European languages use non-declinable words as predicates, comes to the conclusion that such use has been common both in Indo-European languages and in other languages but has disappeared from them. Literature on other Slavic languages

besides Russian has not paid much attention to predicate use of onomatopoeic interjections. There are brief remarks on predicate use similar to Russian in Serbian and in Croatian (Тошович 2006: 341–3). Bańko (2008) in his discussion of Polish onomatopoeia and Fidler (2014) on Czech onomatopoeia do not directly address this issue. Fidler does, however, refer to some of the uses of Czech onomatopoeic interjections in her examples as predicate forms (Fidler 2014: 11, 38, 44) but does not discuss this function among the syntactic functions of Czech onomatopoeic interjections (ibid: 31–34). In any case, her notion that they are often used in discourse for vivid foregrounding of dynamic punctual events (ibid: 46–47) binds them very closely to similar Russian words.

2.0 Material and methods

Before introducing our material we need to explicate our standpoint on using a parallel corpus with translated texts for linguistic purposes. While using translations in studying the options for expressing a given idea in different languages is by no means a new approach, it involves a number of problems that modern translation studies have paid attention to. It is well known that translated texts differ from texts originally written in the same language. Translated texts have features that are either typical of translated texts in general or are influenced by the language of the original. They are more explicit than the original texts, often use only a certain limited, standard set of means available in the target language, have a lesser proportion of features that are typical of the target language, and can include features that are untypical in the target language (e.g. Volansky et al. 2015).

The use of the parallel corpus of RNC for studying the possible use of onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function is further complicated by the fact that the corpus consists of literary texts. Literary texts represent a special genre among translated texts (Kozanecka 1996: 241). They also involve elements mimicking speech that place them somewhere between written and spoken texts. All this needs to be taken into consideration when interpreting the results gained by comparing the use of onomatopoeic interjections in predicate position in different languages with the help of parallel texts. However, the use of this method does provide data that cannot be obtained by other means.

Overall, a parallel corpus is not a sufficient source for contrastive judgments about the frequency or centrality of the predicate function of onomatopoeic interjections, but it can provide solid evidence for the possibility of using this construction in a given language, or at least offer indications of its impossibility. The evidential power of this kind of corpus data is enhanced by the fact that the translations in the corpus were not produced for research purposes and the specific research questions could not have affected them.

The total size of the parallel corpus of RNC is constantly growing; at the time of writing it stands at about 72 million word uses. The subcorpora for individual languages vary considerably in size, the largest being the Russian–English subcorpus that consists of 24.6 million word uses. While the multilingual subcorpus is especially interesting from the viewpoint of this study, it is also especially limited – it consists of 12 literary texts in several languages and includes only about 5 million word uses.

The material for this study was obtained firstly by means of a series of searches for the onomatopoeic verbal interjections *babach, bac, bach, brjak, buch, bul', bulych, cap, carap, chlop, chrjap, chrust', chvat', čik, čmok, cok, derg, gljad', kuvyrk, pljuh, pryg, pych, šark, šast', ščelk, skok, skrip, šlep, šmjak, šmyg, stuk, švark, tjap, tjuk, top, trach, tres', tyk, vert', vžik, zyrk*, [14.12.2015] in the parallel corpus of RNC. The list of the words used was taken from Се́реда (2005: 159). The subcorpora chosen as points of comparison were the Belarusian–Russian–Belarusian, Bulgarian–Russian–Bulgarian, English–Russian–English, German–Russian–German, Polish–Russian–Polish, and Ukrainian–Russian–Ukrainian subcorpora. The results of the searches in the bilingual corpora were saved in a Microsoft Access database for further analysis.

Many of the searches gave no results at all, and several of them resulted in only a few occurrences. For example, the search for *bulych* in the Russian-Bulgarian subcorpus yielded no occurrences and the search with the string *tyk* in the Russian-English subcorpus produced only two hits. Altogether, the data collected from the bilingual subcorpora consisted of 1164 examples of use for Russian

onomatopoeic interjections with a translation from or into Belarusian, Bulgarian, English, German, Polish, or Ukrainian. Table 1 shows the distribution of our material from the bilingual subcorpora. It portrays the number of examples in our data, showing the number of hits for each Russian interjection in the bilingual subcorpora included in this study. The bottom row shows how many examples were found for each language altogether.

	Belarusian –Russian– Belarusian	Bulgarian – Russian– Bulgarian	English– Russian– English	German– Russian– German	Polish– Russian –Polish	Ukrainian – Russian– Ukrainian
<i>babach</i>	1	3	3			6
<i>bac</i>	8	8	15	5	5	16
<i>bach</i>	18	1	23		4	26
<i>brjak</i>	4	1	4	1	2	7
<i>buch</i>	13	2	7	5	2	19
<i>bul'</i>			1			1
<i>bultych</i>	10		1		1	8
<i>cap</i>			2	4	1	
<i>carap</i>	1					
<i>chlop</i>	9	7	9	9	3	
<i>chrjap</i>						1
<i>chrust'</i>	3		4			
<i>chvat'</i>	19	10	6	10	8	37
<i>čik</i>		3				6
<i>čmok</i>			2			5
<i>cok</i>	1		4			12

<i>derg</i>	1		4			13
<i>gljad'</i>	63	6	24	17	6	114
<i>kuvyrk</i>	1					2
<i>pljuh</i>	3		9	9		7
<i>pryg</i>	14	2	2	2	3	13
<i>pyh</i>		1	2			2
<i>šark</i>						2
<i>šast'</i>	11	3	3		1	
<i>ščelk</i>		6				10
<i>skok</i>	8		2	4	2	10
<i>skrip</i>	8	6	13		5	14
<i>šlep</i>			11			8
<i>šmjak</i>	7		1			
<i>šmyg</i>	3		2		1	2
<i>stuk</i>	31	4	50	12	15	25
<i>švark</i>			1	1		
<i>tjap</i>	4	2	4		4	4
<i>tjuk</i>	2					
<i>top</i>	6	3	8	3		6
<i>trach</i>	23	3	18	1	10	21
<i>tres'</i>	2					6
<i>tyk</i>			2			6
<i>vert'</i>	5			2		4

vžik	2		2			
zyrk						2
	281	71	239	85	73	415

Table 1. The number of examples from the bilingual corpora of the RNC

Besides using these 1164 examples with their translations from the bilingual subcorpora to determine whether the use of interjections in predicate function is possible in other languages besides Russian, the research method included a close study of certain uses found with the same search strings in the multilingual corpus [26.10.2016]. The multilingual corpus of RNC includes 12 literary texts.² The languages included are not the same for all the texts, but depend on the existing translations; the total number of languages represented in the subcorpus is 26. The small size of the multilingual subcorpus was reflected in the fact that many of the searches resulted in no hits at all – this was the case for *babach*, *brjak*, *bulych*, *cap*, *carap*, *chrap'*, *chvat'*, *čik*, *čmok*, *cok*, *derg*, *jurk*, *kuvyrk*, *pryg*, *pych*, *šark*, *ščelk*, *skok*, *skrip*, *šlep*, *šmjak*, *šmyg*, *stuk*, *švark*, *tjuk*, *tres'*, *tyk*, *vzik*, *vert'*. For each of the remaining 12 interjections, there were 1–5 occurrences, amounting to a total of 21 examples in Russian. Although this is a small number in itself, the availability of 10–20 translation variants in each case means that the material gives an overview of how these interjections work in different (especially Slavic) languages and what other options exist for translating them or conveying the same meaning in another language. It is noteworthy that not all Russian texts in the multilingual subcorpus include onomatopoeic interjections: all the occurrences come from four novels, three of which can be classified as children's literature (Bulgakov's "Master and Margareta", A. A. Milne's "Winnie the Pooh", and L. Carroll's "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" and "Through the Looking-Glass and what Alice found there"). Table 2 shows the amount of data found in the multilingual corpus: how many occurrences each Russian interjection in predicate function yielded and which languages have a translation variant of the text containing a certain interjection. It is worth noticing that the Russian occurrences are both from Bulgakov's original Russian text and from translations (from English). The

same goes for English, while the translation variants listed in the table for other languages are all translations either from English or Russian.

	<i>ba c</i>	<i>ba ch</i>	<i>bu l'</i>	<i>bu ch</i>	<i>chl op</i>	<i>chru st'</i>	<i>glja d'</i>	<i>plj uh</i>	<i>to p</i>	<i>tra ch</i>	<i>tja p</i>	<i>šas t'</i>
Belarusian	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		4	1	1
Bulgarian	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	4	1	1
Croatian	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		5	1	1
Czech	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		5	1	1
Dutch	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		5	1	1
English	1	2	1	2	1	6	3	1	1	6	2	2
French		1		2		3	2	1		3	1	1
German	1	2	1	2	1		1	1		3		
Greek		1		2			1	1		1		
Italian		2	1	2	1	3	2	1		5	1	1
Latin	1	2	1	2	1		1	1		4		
Latvian	1	1	1		1					2		
Lithuanian	1											
Macedonian	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		5	1	1
Polish	2	4	2	4	2	3	3	2	1	8	1	1
Portuguese		1		2			1	1		1		
Romanian		1		2			1	1		1		

Russian	2	5	2	6	2	3	4	3	1	9	1	1
Serbian	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		4	1	1
Slovak	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1		4	1	1
Slovene	1	2	1	2	1	3	2	1	1	4	1	1
Spanish		1		2			1	1		1		
Swedish	1	2	1	2	1		1	1		3		
Ukrainian	2	3	2	2	2	3	2	1	1	6	1	1
Upper Sorbian	1	1	1		1					2		

Table 2. The amount of data available in the multilingual corpus of the RNC

As can be seen from Table 2, the information available for different languages in the multilingual corpus is scattered, but still it can provide bits of independent information for a number of languages and give ground for a more detailed cross-linguistic analysis of the phenomenon.

3.0 Results: Use of onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function in different languages

In the following we will deal with the use of onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function by considering examples where the original, the translation, or both use an interjection in this function. The analysis is based on the 1164 Russian examples with an onomatopoeic or verbal interjection in bilingual corpora and their translations or originals in Belarusian, Bulgarian, English, Ukrainian, German, or Polish. Examples of Russian-like pure predicate function, where the interjection is used completely like a verb form with the same stem and this is the only or at least primary interpretation of the form, were found in the Slavic languages that are included in the bilingual corpora (Belarusian, Bulgarian, Polish, Ukrainian) and English, but not in German. None of the 85 examples where the Russian variant used an onomatopoeic or verbal interjection had a similar use in German.³ Lur'e

(Лурье 1955: 34) states that Germanic, Romance languages, and Greek and Latin almost always require a declined verb form in such uses. Nevertheless, he cites (ibid: 40) an example where *plumps* is used without an accompanying verb (*plumps ins Wasser.*)

In the following, we will first look at examples where interjections are used exactly like verb forms with the same stem and are likely to be interpreted as such. Then we proceed to examples where the use of an interjection in predicate function includes additional information or can also be interpreted as not being a predicate. Together with this, we discuss the features that are involved in how the undeclined form is interpreted. We believe that one of the reasons for using verbal interjections and other similar forms is that they are less explicit, often ambiguous, and leave more room for different interpretations than forms with morphological marking (cf. Jääskeläinen 2013: 337).

3.1 Predicate function corresponding to a verb form with the same stem

In the following examples (1–3), Russian onomatopoeic verbal interjections function like verb forms of the same stem in such position (cf. Nikitina 2012: 167).

(1) a) (Polish) Czekaliśmy w lesie nocy i po ciemku w tę rzekę łomot na koniach. [Stefan Żeromski. Popioły (2) (1902)]

‘We were waiting for the night in the woods and in the darkness łomot (‘splash’) on the horse into the river’

b) (Russian) Дождались мы ночи в лесу и в темноте бултых на конях в реку.

(2) a) (Russian) Петровна взялась за ботву, вытащила свеклу из кучи, ловко повернула ее корнем к себе и чик ножом! — листья отлетели. [Г. Н. Троепольский. Белый Бим Черное ухо (1971)]

‘Petrovna took hold of the top, snatched the beetroot from the pile, skillfully turned it with the root towards her and čik (‘zap’)_with the knife! – the leaves flew’

b) (Ukrainian) Петрівна взялася за ботвіну, витягла буряк з купи, спритно повернула його коренем до себе і — чик! — ножом: ботвина одпала.

(3) a) (Belarusian) А той — бух яму яйка ў лоб! [Народная казка. Іван Світаннік]

‘And the other one – buch (‘bang’) his forehead with an egg’

b) (Russian) А тот—бац ему в лоб яйцом!

In these examples, the interjection is used with the same prepositions and case forms that a verb with the same stem would be; a verb form could replace the interjection without changing the syntax of the sentence. For example in (1), the interjection is interpreted as an action that the subject of the sentence (*my* ‘we’) performs, and riding a horse is expressed with the same prepositional phrase *na konjach* ‘on horseback’ and the object *v reku* ‘(in)to the river’ that would be used with a verb form *bulychnuli* ‘we splashed’. According to Nikitina (2012: 181), such constituents are obligatory, since they coordinate the interpretation of the non-declined form. At the same time, it is not always the case that a given constituent is obligatory simply because an interjection is used instead of a verb; in example (2) the instrumental form *nožom* ‘with the knife’ would be equally obligatory for the correct interpretation if a verb with the same stem were used.

The interjection without a verb provides sufficient information about a certain action – to fall into the river (1), to cut rapidly with a knife (2), or to bang on the forehead (3). The other Slavic languages in these examples use these interjections in a similar way to Russian; there is even a morpheme-to-morpheme correspondence within the originals and translated sentences, with only a slightly different word order in (1) and (3).

The Russian translation of Ray Bradbury's *Fahrenheit 451* (4b) is interesting in that it uses verbs to depict the action, but supplements these verbs by repeating the use of interjections as in the original:

(4) a) (English) "Life becomes one big pratfall, Montag; everything bang; boff, and wow!"
[Ray Bradbury. *Fahrenheit 451* (1953)]

b) (Russian) — Жизнь превращается в сплошную карусель, Монтэг, все визжит, кричит, грохочет, бац, бах, трах!

The explication made by the combination of both verbs and interjections is unnecessary from the viewpoint of Russian syntax and it restricts the interpretation of the original interjections.

Although syntactically a verb form can be replaced by an interjection in a sentence, these choices are not semantically identical. As a rule, using an interjection in a sentence instead of a verb conveys more information, but at the same time offers the possibility of different interpretations. In the following, we will investigate such uses.

3.2 Additional meanings

In many cases the onomatopoeic interjection in predicate function conveys not only information about the action as such, but also additional information. This both links these interjections to verb forms and creates a distinction between the two. Russian verb forms tend to contain much more information than, for example, English verb forms (in the form of prefixes, aspect marking, conjugation, etc.). However, forms that include only the stem without prefixes or suffixes do not include this kind of information even in Russian. Thus, the use of an interjection makes it possible for the deictic relations and other components of meaning to be interpreted in different ways.

3.2.1 Predicates emphasizing manner

Describing a sound is only one of the possible additional meanings that onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function can bring. The use of these interjections does not even need to include the

possibility of sound or other sensation. They rather describe the manner in which the action is performed.

(5) a) (English) There was Miss Clayton, who, when I slumped in my chair, would poke me in the middle vertebrae and then smilingly throw back her own shoulders to show what she wanted of me --- [Vladimir Nabokov. *Speak, memory* (1954–1966)]

b) (Russian) Была мисс Клэйтон, которая, когда, бывало, развалюсь в кресле, тут же меня тык костяшками руки в поясницу да еще улыбнется и расправит плечи, показывая, значит, чего ей от меня надобно —⁴

While the English text (5a) uses the verb *poke*, the Russian version (5b) relies on an interjection *tyk*. In a chain of events described otherwise by perfective verbs indicating their sequence, the use of a verbal interjection emphasizes the suddenness and quick manner of poking. In both languages the construction used refers to habitual action: The English “*would poke...and then*” and the Russian use of the interjection in the chain of perfective verbs (*razval’jus’* ‘I will fall’ – ‘she *tyk*’ – *ulybnetsja* ‘she will smile’ – *raspravit* ‘she will correct (the position of shoulders)’ after *byvalo* ‘it sometimes happened’.

In (6) and (7) the verbal interjection used is clearly onomatopoeic, but nevertheless includes more than just a description of a sound that accompanies an action.

(6) a) (English) -- The general meaning of the song was only too plain; for now the goblins took out whips and whipped them with a swish, smack!⁵ --[J. R. R. Tolkien. *The Hobbit* (1937)]

b) (Russian) -- Смысл песни был достаточно ясен: гоблины достали кнуты и погнали пленников перед собой, хлеща их: вжик, вжик! –

(7) a) (Ukrainian) Коли се — двері рип! і — на порозі появилася Марина. Панас Мирний. Повія. Ч. 3 (1882)]

‘And suddenly – the door rip (‘creak’) – and on the doorstep appeared Marina’

b) (Russian) И вдруг дверь — скрип! — и на пороге появилась Марина.

The interjections used here convey the sharp sound of whipping (6) and the creaking of a door (7), and refer to the way in which the action takes place. In (6), while in the English construction *whipped them with a swish, smack!* the words *swish* and *smack* are interjections describing the sound of whipping (although directly referring to action, emphasized by the exclamation mark), the Russian translation uses a gerund form *chleščā* ‘whipping’ and does not include a word for *with*. Thus, although the translation is highly equivalent to the English original, the Russian onomatopoeic verbal interjection used with repetition in this example can be interpreted to mean ‘smacked, smacked’ instead of ‘whipping while causing the sound *smack smack*’. Nevertheless, this slight difference in structure does not mean that these examples from English and Russian could not both be interpreted as predicative uses in which the interjection complements the information provided by a verb form by indicating the manner in which the action takes place. The sound involved is left in the background – for the reader to interpret the meaning of this sentence, it is more likely to be important to know what kind of action with what kind of consequences this sound is connected to than simply to interpret it as a description of a sound sequence.

On other occasions, though, the manner of doing something plays a larger role:

(8) a) (Belarusian) Шлёпаць Лёксу было шмат ахвотнікаў, і як перасталі саромецца Лявона—шлёпалі яе па дзве і па тры асобы наперабой і толькі: лёп-лёп-лёп! [Максім Гарэцкі. У чым яго крыўда? (1925–1926)]

‘There were many who were willing to slap Lëksa, and when they stopped being shy of Ljavon they slapped her, two or three at a time, just: lëp lëp lëp (‘slap slap slap’)’

b) (Russian) Шлепать Лёксу было много охотников, и когда перестали стесняться Лявона — шлепали ее по двое и по трое наперебой и только: шлеп, шлеп, шлеп.

In this example (8), the sound and the manner of performing the action are both significant. While in both the Belarusian original and Russian translation the interjection can be interpreted as merely describing the sound of clapping hands, at the same time it can also describe the way it is done or be equal to a verb form. In this way, a more explicit translation of the part ‘just: slap slap slap’ could be, for example, ‘each slapped three (or several) times and caused a slap-sound’, ‘each slapped several times causing pain’, or ‘each slapped several times and did this as if...’. Thus the use of the interjection can, besides describing the sound, at least describe the action, its possible effects or refer to another event as if imitating it. The use of the word *tol’ko* ‘just’ is typical of such uses, although it can also be omitted. Our translation shows that maintaining such a level of ambiguity is possible also in English. The evidential function of onomatopoeic interjections is strongly present here: by using the interjections the speaker may indicate that the events described really took place and that he or she was witnessing them but wishes to distance him/herself from them.

Fidler (2014: 195) points out that in some cases, Czech onomatopoeic expressions can be perceived to function as discourse markers. That seems to be the case with Russian verbal interjections as well. As a discourse marker, an interjection represents a sudden, rather unexpected turn of events:

(9) a) (Russian) – а потом, как сеанс кончился, публика вышла на улицу, и – хвать – все оказались голые! [М. А. Булгаков. Мастер и Маргарита (1929–1940)]

‘ – and then, when the show ended, the audience went out on the street, and – chvat’ (‘poof’) – everyone was naked!’

b) (Bulgarian) – а после, когато представлението свършило и публиката излязла на улицата – изведнъж всички се видели голи!

While the concrete meaning of the interjection *chvat*’ is ‘to grab’, in this example its meaning is very figurative, since no actual grabbing occurs. Instead, the interjection depicts the change into a new,

unexpected, perhaps even somewhat dramatic situation. According to Fidler (2014: 195), this usage adds “dimensions and depth” to narration. That is plausible, since this use shows how expressive verbal interjections can in fact be; the change that occurs between two events, the surprising nature of the change, and some indication of how the unexpected change happened, can be expressed with only one word.

The translation into Bulgarian differs substantially from the Russian original in that no interjection is used. To indicate the transition between the two events, the Bulgarian translation uses a dash and the word *izvednǎž* ‘suddenly’. This, however, quite obviously does not contain the same features as the Russian interjection does. To sum up, examples (5)–(9) show how predicate uses of Russian onomatopoeic verbal interjections can in one word include not only the action itself but also further information.

3.2.2 Concrete and abstract meanings and conceptual metaphors

The use of verbal interjections can also be metaphorical (in the sense introduced by Lakoff and Johnson 1980) and combine information provided by the different senses. They do not even need to contain any real or imaginable sound. The next example (10) describes an action (cleaning beetroots) that happens in a very quick and unexpected manner:

- (10) a) (Russian) Трах! — свекла в стороне, уже в новой, очищенной, кучке. [Г. Н. Троепольский. Белый Бим Черное ухо (1971)]

‘Trach! (‘Woosh’) – beetroots to one side, in a new cleaned pile’

- b) (Ukrainian) Торох! — буряк уже збоку, уже на новій, обчищеній купці.

Here the interjection signals a change from one situation to another. There is probably no perceptible sound involved, and the focus is on the effectiveness of the action. Thus, the use of the interjection is figurative and works on the basis of a metonymical conceptualization of related events. This kind of

use is not restricted to certain interjections, since same interjections can be used to convey more concrete or more abstract meanings (see ex. 11):

(11) a) (English) The fellow in the Labyrinth ate up her meager portions of bread and cheese and beans as a toad eats a fly: snap! [Ursula Le Guin. The Tombs of Atuan (1971)]

b) (Russian) Пленник же поедал скудные порции хлеба, сыра и бобов, как лягушка муху — хлоп!

In this case, the interjection indicates concrete action, eating at a great speed and with eagerness (11), while in the next example it means something taking place suddenly:

(12) a) (English) And I'm not one of those sickly miscarrying fools! [Margaret Mitchell. Gone with the Wind, Part 2 (1936)]

b) (Russian) Я не из тех дохлых кошек, которые — хлоп! — и выкидыш!

The original English version of this pair of examples (12a) uses no interjection, but in the Russian translation (12b) the suddenness and lack of control involved in the incident of miscarriage is emphasized by using *chlop* 'snap', although there is no concrete snapping involved.

While in example (13) the snuffbox falling into the water is concrete and the splashing sound is imaginable, although not necessarily real, in the next example (14) no actual splashing occurs and the essential meaning is that of failure.

(13) a) (Belarusian) Падняла табакерку, каб паказаць катку, ды не ўтрымала: табакерка плюх у мора! [Народная казка. Ох і залатая табакерка]

'She lifted up the snuffbox to show it to the kitten, but couldn't hold it in her hands - the snuffbox pljuch ('splash') into the sea'

b) (Russian) Подняла табакерку, чтобы показать котику, да не удержала—табакерка и бултых в море!

(14) a) (Russian) Тут же только что надо решить в чью из нас пользу, а хватятся, у нас денег нет; тут, по каким-то причинам, дело — бултых! [Григорий Квитка-Основьяненко. Пан Халявский (1839)]

‘Here it just needs to be decided which of us is to benefit, and then they realize that we have no money; here, for some reason, the case – bulych (‘kerplunk’)

b) (Ukrainian) А тут, де треба тільки вирішити, на чію з нас користь, — кинуться, а в нас грошей нема; і вже, з якихось причин, діло — шубовість!

To sum up, the examples (10), (11), (12), and (14) include a metaphorical conceptualization: the use of onomatopoeic interjections for quick, sudden, or unintended action that is not literally related to the sounds that the interjection refers to. The interpretation of the metaphor by the reader is not necessarily exactly the same as intended by the writer, although often such conceptualizations are highly conventional.

3.2.3 Uses where a verb complements the information provided by the interjection

Some interjections are less readily intelligible than others, and their interpretation may to some extent depend on additional information provided in the sentence. Even if the interjection as such is easily comprehensible to a native speaker, it may convey multiple meanings that need to be explicated. One common way of doing this is to add a subsequent verb denoting the action:

(15) a) (Russian) — [], а упадешь на землю, кошка — чик! и слопает! – [Максим Горький. Воробышко (1912)]

‘[] you fall down to the ground, the cat – čik! (‘snap’) and devours (you)!’

b) (Ukrainian) — Та не чим, а впадеш на землю, кішка — чик! І злопає! –

The interjection *čik* ‘snap’ (15) is not as informative as some other interjections, and in the context of this children’s tale part of its function is to mimic bird language (*čik-čirik* being the standard Russian rendering of the chirping of a sparrow). The interjection could scarcely stand alone in this sentence, but the addition of the verb (‘to devour’) makes the meaning clear. Further examples of this type of use will be given later (cf. Case studies).

To summarize, verbal interjections in predicate function are typical of Russian, but according to the material collected from the parallel corpus they occur in other Slavic languages and at least in English as well. In the majority of cases in our material, nevertheless, a Russian interjection is replaced in translation with a verb. When onomatopoeic interjections are used in predicate position, they convey the meaning of action, but characteristically also include other meaning elements, giving room for an individual interpretation of the manner and evidential tones. While, as was noted already by Peškovskij (1927), Russian onomatopoeic interjections often convey a sense of the action happening even faster (compared to a verb of the same stem) and being of even shorter duration, this is not their only use.

3.3 Case studies

The following two case studies illustrate with concrete examples how Russian and English onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function have been translated into other languages.

3.3.1 A case study of an onomatopoeic interjection in Russian appearing in predicate position without a verb form: *tjap* in Mikhail Bulgakov’s *The Master and Margarita*.

A characteristic example of the use of a Russian onomatopoeic interjection in predicate function comes from Mikhail Bulgakov’s novel *The Master and Margarita* with fifteen translations in the corpus, two of which into English. The original Russian reads:

(16) а) Я полез в кошелек, а оттуда пчела—тяц за палец!

The interjection *tjap* indicates a short loud sound. It is worth noting that there are no verbs at all for the bee and its actions: flying out of the bag is indicated with the adverb *ottuda* ‘from there’ and stinging on the finger with the interjection. The dash (—) is also meaningful here, since it indicates a transition from one event to another.

Two of the Slavic translations have retained the same construction with an onomatopoeic interjection in predicate function without a verb.

b) (Belarusian) Я палез у кашалёк—адтуль пчала—джыг у палец!

c) (Macedonian) Ја вовлекувам раката во портмонето, а оттаму пчала—цап за прст!

Also, the second English translation (16d) and the translations into French (16e) and Italian (16f) have retained the use of an onomatopoeic interjection, while the Dutch (16g) translation uses a reduced clause without a subject or a verb:

d) (English 2) I go to my wallet, there’s a bee there — zap in the finger!

e) (French) Je fourre le billet dans mon porte-monnaie et crac ! une guêpe me mord le doigt, aïe !

f) (Italian) Metto la mano nel borsellino, ne esce un’ ape, zac nel dito!

g) (Dutch) Ik voel in mijn portemonnee, vliegt er een bij uit, prik in m'n vinger!

These translations differ from Belarusian (16b) and Macedonian (16c) in that the action is described more explicitly than in the original – especially in the French one (16e), where the use of the interjection is explicated with a verb. In the second English translation (16d) and in the Italian one (16f), the onomatopoeic interjection is used without a verb (similarly to the original) but the sentence as a whole contains more explication. The explication is made with the construction “there’s a bee there” in the English translation, and the notion of the bee escaping in the Italian. The Dutch translation (16g) uses a noun *prik* ‘sting’ in a reduced clause without a subject or a verb; literally, ‘a sting in my finger’ in the sense of ‘suddenly there is a sting in my finger’.

Most of the Slavic translations (16h)–(16o) and one of the English translations (16p) use an inflected verb form meaning ‘bites’ or ‘snaps’.

h) (Ukrainian) Я поліз у гаман, а звідти бджола—як шпиگونه у палець!

i) (Polish) Sięgam do portmonetki, a tam – pszczoła. W palec mnie ucięła!

j) (Czech) Odejde, mrknu do peněženky a vtom vám odtud vylítne včela a píchne mě do prstu.

k) (Slovak) Pozriem do peňaženky, a stade vyfrngne včela a sekne ma rovno do prsta!

l) (Slovene) Sežem v denarnico, iz nje pa čebela—in me piči v prst!

m) (Croatian) Gurnem ruku u novčanik, a odatle pčela—bode mi prst!

n) (Serbian) Ja да отворим новчаник, а одатле пчела и уједе ме за прст!

o) (Bulgarian) Бъркам в портфейла, от него изхвърча оса, ужили ми пръста!

p) (English 1) I look in my bag and out flies a bee! Stings me on the finger!

This case study shows how economical Russian interjections can be in expressing meanings. In most of the fifteen translations the translators chose to explicate the meaning in one way or another. Part of them made the sentence more explicit by using a verb form. Some explicated that the finger where the bee snaps belongs to the speaker, while others saw fit to explicate that it was the bee that snapped. Punctuation is also used in explication. All this necessarily also involves interpretation.

3.3.2 A case study of an onomatopoeic interjection describing an event related to another verb:

***bac* in A. A. Milne’s Winnie the Pooh**

Bac ‘bang, bam’ is the most frequent of the Russian onomatopoeic interjections included in this study. Both our material and a recent frequency dictionary of Russian (Ляшевская & Шаров 2009)

confirm this. The frequency of this word can easily be explained by its meaning: not only does *bac* refer to the sounds of shooting and falling, but it is also widely used in contexts that do not actually include such events. In these uses, *bac* indicates a physiological reaction related to sudden, unexpected actions. Such uses build on a blend of the cognitive domains of loud sounds, the physiological results of such a sudden sound to the human ear, and other physiological reactions such as seeing the results of the burst, shivering, etc. The sounds that can be described with this word can, in fact, be quite different – from the very loud and sudden sound of shooting to the barely audible sound of something or someone hitting the ground.

There is one occurrence of the word *bac* in one of the Russian translations of *Winnie-the-Pooh* by A. A. Milne included in the multilingual parallel corpus of RNC. In the first example, Winnie is flying with a balloon and starts to think of what would happen if he let go of the string. The English original is as follows:

(17) a) Winnie-the-Pooh hadn't thought about this. If he let go of the string, he would fall—BUMP—and he didn't like the idea of that.

The onomatopoeic interjection is used for describing the event of hitting the ground. Describing the sound itself is, in our interpretation, less important here, especially since this is a case of imagined sound – Winnie-the-Pooh is not falling, he is merely imagining what would happen if he fell.

Among the 22 translations of *Winnie-the-Pooh* into 19 languages in the corpus (including two alternative translations into Russian, Ukrainian, and Polish), there are four kinds of translation variants for the part that includes the onomatopoeic interjection *bump* in the English original.

1) The first variant corresponds directly to the English original, using a combination of a verb with the meaning of falling and an onomatopoeic interjection. In many of them (17b)–(17i) the order of the verb and the interjection is the same as in the original (first falling, then bump). This makes verbal interpretation of the interjection possible, and the sequence of events is also clearest when the word order reflects it.

b) (Swedish) Nalle Puh hade inte tänkt på den saken. Om han släppte snöret, skulle han falla—duns—och det tyckte han inte riktigt om.

c) (Lithuanian) Mikė Pūkuotukas apie tai nebuvo pagalvojęs. Jeigu paleistų virvelę, nukristų žemyn,—bumpt!—ir ta galimybė jam nelabai patiko.

d) (Polish 2) O tym Fredzia Phi-Phi nie pomyślał. Gdyby puścił sznurek- spadłby- BEC- a ten pomysł wcale mu się nie podobał.

e) (Czech) Na to Medvídek Pú dosud nepomyslel. Kdyby se pustil provázku, spadl by—bac -, a to se mu moc nezamlouvalo.

f) (Slovene) Na to Winnie Pu ni pomislil. Če bi spustil vrvc, bi padel—ŠTRBUNK—in to mu ni prav nič dišalo.

g) (Croatian) Na ovo Medo Winnie zvani Pooh nije mislio. Ako ispusti konopac, past će—TRAS—a ta mu se zamisao nije sviđala.

h) (Serbian) Na to Vini zvani Pu nije mislio. Ako pusti kanap, pašće—BUP—a tako nešto nije mu se sviđalo.

i) (Macedonian) За ова Вини Пу немаше размислено. Ако ја пуштеше врвката, ќе паднеше—TPAC—а такво нешто не му се допаѓаше.

In others (17j–17l), the interjection is given before the verb.

j) (German) Darüber hatte Winnie-der-Pu nicht nachgedacht. Wenn er die Schnur losließ, würde er—BUMS—fallen, und dieser Gedanke gefiel ihm nicht.

k) (Latin) Qua de re Winnie ille Pu nondum secum meditatus erat. Funiculo repente e manibus misso—bump—praecipitaret et imaginem eam in animo abhorrebat.

l) (Slovak) Na to Medvedík Pú nepomyslel. Keby sa pustil povrázka, tak by—BUM—spadol, a táto myšlienka sa mu nepozdávala.

In German and Latin the word order may be interpreted to depend on grammar, and in Slovak to be merely a choice made for more expressive power, but at the same time the word order directs in all of them the interpretation of the interjection towards describing the manner of falling.

2) The second variant includes, besides the verb for falling and the onomatopoeic interjection, some kind of explication for the use of the interjection. This can be the direction of the movement ‘down’ (*naar beneden* and *dele* in (17m) and (17n)), a prepositional phrase meaning ‘to the ground’ (*на земята* in (17o)), an onomatopoeic verb indicating the bumping (17q), repeating the same stem both in the interjection and the verb) or both an onomatopoeic verb (of a different stem) and a prepositional phrase meaning ‘to the ground’ (17p).

m) (Dutch) Daar had Winnie-de-Poeh nog niet over nagedacht. Als hij het touwtje losliet, zou hij zO—boem—naar beneden vallen en daar voelde hij niet veel voor.

n) (Upper Sorbian) Winij Puw njebě wo tym přemyslowaŕ. Hdy by štryčk pušćiŕ, by—bum—dele padnyŕ a tajka myslička so jemu njelubješe.

o) (Bulgarian) Мечо Пух не бе помислил за това. Ако пуснеше връвта—щеше да падне изведнъж " бум! " на земята, а това никак не му се харесваше.

p) (Russian 1) Вот об этом Винни-Пух не подумал. Он мог бы отпустить нитку и... бац!—шлепнуться на землю, но мысль эта ему не понравилась.

q) (Belarusian) Аб гэтым Віня-Пых не падумаў. Калі б ён адпусьціў матузок балёніка, ён бы ізноў балюча – шмяк! – шмякнуўся, таму гэтая ідэя яму не падыходзіла.

3) The third variant is one that uses an onomatopoeic verb in addition to a verb for falling, but no interjections. The use of perfective verbs in these Slavic languages shows that falling and hitting the ground (with the sound described by the second verb) are successive rather than simultaneous events.

These translation variants include further explication meaning ‘again’ that refers to an earlier falling that is not explicated in the English original.

r) (Russian 1) Об этом Винни-Пух как раз еще и не подумал. Если он выпустит из лап веревочку, он упадет и опять бумкнет. Эта мысль ему не понравилась.

s) (Ukrainian 1) Саме над цим Вінні-Пух досі й не думав. Якщо випустити з лап мотузочку, він упаде і знову бумкне. Такий вихід йому не подобався.

t) (Ukrainian 2) Про це Вінні-Пух саме ще й не подумав. Якщо він випустить із лап мотузок, він упаде і знову бумкне. Ця думка йому не сподобалася.

There is also one use similar to the previous one, but the onomatopoeic verb is replaced by a similarly expressive deverbial noun (17u).

u) (Latvian) Par to Vinnijs Pūks nebija padomājis. Ja viņš palaistu aukliņu vaļā, tad nokristu, un bumsīšanās viņam pietika jau no pagājušās reizes.

4) The fourth translation option includes the use of a verb with the meaning of falling and a prepositional phrase meaning ‘to the ground’, without any onomatopoeic features (17v). The existence of such a variant gives evidence for the strong verbal features of the original.

v) (Polish 1) Kubuś Puchatek nie pomyślał o tym. Gdyby wypuścił sznurek z łapki, zleciałby na ziemię i to mu się nie bardzo uśmiechało.

The different syntactic choices made in the translation can include interpretation of the relationship between the two events; the possibility of this interpretation is based on the (deliberate) vagueness of the information provided by the interjection and the expressiveness related to this. The fact that the different syntactic constructions used across the languages in the corpus include onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function, onomatopoeic verbs, and verbs without onomatopoeic characteristics serves as evidence for the imitation of sounds not being the only function of these

interjections. When the interjection is explicated by adding constituents it no longer has the morphological freedom of deixis and its verbal characteristics become less obvious.

To sum up, the different translations of the hypothetical event of letting go, falling, and bumping, besides showing the differences in syntax, also reflect differences in the conceptualization (cognitive processing) of the described situation. While the English original represents summary scanning of falling, bumping on the ground, and the pain caused by it, different translations, in explicating different parts of this event, present it as sequential scanning (cf. Langacker 1987: 144–145).

4.0 Conclusions

We return to the research questions introduced earlier. Onomatopoeic verbal interjections can be used in predicate function in Russian. Our material also shows very similar uses for other languages, especially Slavic languages and English. Nevertheless, the study of translations shows that when an onomatopoeic interjection is used in Russian in predicate function, other languages very often use a verb instead. It seems to make no difference whether the Russian version is a translation or the original. The verb that is used can itself be onomatopoeic, but this is not automatically the case. Another frequent construction equivalent to the predicate function of a Russian interjection in our material is a verb combined with an interjection. The verb can provide additional information to help interpret the interjection, or the interjection can substantiate the meaning of the verb. An adverb or a noun phrase combined with a verb and an interjection is another possible construction.

While onomatopoeic interjections in predicate function can replace a verb form, they do not always indicate only action, but can also have additional meanings such as sound and manner. The case studies that included material from many languages showed the Russian expressive use seems to be difficult to convey without some kind of explication even in other Slavic languages. This may either be due to the nature of translations in general or reflect the uniqueness of Russian and maybe other East Slavic languages in this respect.

The study showed that while the bilingual corpora definitely offer more opportunities for judging the possibility and limits of predicative interpretation in a certain language, a multilingual parallel corpus with the same texts in translations into many languages can also provide interesting information especially on the different meaning components included in one indeclinable form. The possibility and limitations of predicate use for onomatopoeic interjections in different languages should be studied in more detail. We suggest that different parallel corpora alongside traditional linguistic materials and modern experimental methods should be used to tackle this question in the future.

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¹ This information is based on our observations but is consistent with information in (Jääskeläinen 2013: 341, Nikitina 2012: 179) and in other works cited in them.

² The originals for the texts and the languages of the translations in the corpus are the following: Dan Brown. *The Da Vinci Code* (original English; translations: Dutch, Russian, Ukrainian, Czech, Slovak, Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian); Lewis Carroll. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* (original: English; translations: German, Dutch, Swedish, Latin, French, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, Romanian, Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Upper Sorbian, Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian); Lewis Carroll. *Through the Looking-Glass and what Alice found there* (original: English; translations: Russian, Ukrainian, Polish, Slovene, Bulgarian); Paulo Coelho. *O Alquimista* (original: Portuguese; translations: English, Dutch, Russian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Serbian, Bulgarian); Carlo Collodi. *Pinocchio* (original: Italian; translations: Latin, French, English, Dutch, Russian, Polish, Czech, Croatian, Macedonian); Arthur Conan Doyle. *The Hound of the Baskervilles* (original: English; translations: French, Russian, Polish, Bulgarian); A. A. Milne. *Winnie-the-Pooh* (original: English; translations: German, Dutch, Latin, Lithuanian, Latvian, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Upper Sorbian, Czech, Slovak, Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian); Antoine de Saint-Exupéry. *Le petit prince* (original: French; translations: Latin, Italian, Romanian, English, German, Dutch, Swedish, Greek, Russian, Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Upper Sorbian, Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian); Михаил Булгаков. *Мастер и Маргарита* (original: Russian; translations: Ukrainian, Belarusian, Polish, Czech, Slovak, Slovene, Croatian, Serbian, Macedonian, Bulgarian, English, Dutch, French, Italian).

³ E.g. (Ge) Und er geht so auf den Alten zu, und auf einmal, plumps, liegt er ihm zu Füßen. Cf (Ru) Подходит таким манером к старичку – хлоп в ноги. [Л. Н. Толстой. *Война и мир* (том 4) (1865-1869)]. In the German variant the interjection is used merely to add information to the verb (and the whole text), whereas in the Russian it functions as predicate. Also, on many occasions in our data, when Russian uses an onomatopoeic interjection as predicate, German uses an onomatopoeic verb instead.

⁴ The Russian translation of Nabokov's book of memoirs is by S. П'ин (1999). A broadly equivalent sentence in Nabokov's own Russian words is to be found in his *Другие берега* (1954) and also contains the interjection *тык* in predicate function: Я уже упоминал о довольно строгой мисс Клэйтон, Виктории Артуровне: бывало, разваливаюсь или горблюсь, а она тык меня костяшками руки в поясицу, или еще сама противно расправит и выгнет стан, показывая, значит, как надобно держаться.

⁵ The grammatical interpretation of *swish* and *smack* in this construction is open to debate. The exclamation mark suggests that they should be treated as either imperatives or interjections, despite the indefinite article (cf. "with a swish and a smack", where they would certainly count as nouns).