On the nature of dative arguments in Russian constructions with “predicatives”* 

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Based on diachronic corpus data, the ability of Russian predicatives (категория состояния, items like холодно ‘it is cold’, грустно ‘it is sad’, приятно ‘it is pleasant’) to co-occur with dative Experiencers is compared to the ability of corresponding adjectives to co-occur with Experiencers. The hierarchy (predicatives > short forms of adjectives > long forms of adjectives) is put forward, which reflects decreasing ability to co-occur with dative Experiencers. The predicatives are divided into several classes based on how their syntactic properties are related to properties of corresponding adjectives. It is shown that none of the usual types of analysis (structural-syntactic, derivational, constructional) adequately captures the properties of all the groups of predicatives, but rather that each of these approaches is best suitable for a particular subtype of predicatives. It is hypothesized that a possible way out could be to assume that in the experiential predicative construction the dative position is directly linked with the Experiencer, so that this structure is “blind” to the role structure of the head lexeme.

Keywords: Russian; dative; argument structure; predicatives; adjective; corpus linguistics; derivation; constructional approaches; diachrony

1. Outlining the problem

Russian “predicatives” (“предикативы”, also known as “категория состояния”, “предикативные наречия” etc. in Russian linguistics) are a class of forms that can

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only function in the position of a (non-verbal) predicate and are not able to take canonical subjects in the Nominative case:¹

(1) Мне было приятно хранить эту жалкую тайну. (Сергей Довлатов. Чемодан (1986))
'I was glad to keep this poor secret.'

(2) Право, мне жаль, что я его обманул. (А. И. Куприн. Куст сирени (1894))
'I really regret that I have deceived him.'

Like all non-verbal predicates, predicatives take overt copula быть 'to be' in all tenses (1), except for the present indicative, in which they are used without overt copula, as in (2).²

Constructions with predicatives are usually viewed as impersonal (subjectless) (Vinogradov et al. 1953:632; Guiraud-Weber 1984). However, infinitives and subordinate clauses, when they are present in constructions with predicatives, do show some syntactic properties of subjects (Letučij 2012). In any case, the copula in these constructions is always in the default agreement form, e.g. 3rd person singular in the future tense (будет) or neuter singular in the past tense (было). Whether this non-agreeing pattern is due to the lack of subject or to the lack of case property in clause-like subjects is irrelevant for the present discussion.

Although there are predicatives that are not homonymous to any other expression, like жаль ‘it is a pity/regretful’ in (2), the vast majority of predicatives have the form of expressions of other types (for an overview see Vinogradov et al. 1953:633–634; Cimmerling 2003), most frequently of neuter “short” (i.e. predicative, as opposed to “long”, i.e. attributive) forms of adjectives. Traditional grammars usually differentiate between neuter short adjectives and predicatives based on whether there is an overt nominative subject; hence курение вредно ‘smoking (noun) is harmful’ is viewed as a clause with nominative subject, zero copula and neuter short form adjective that agrees with the subject in gender, whereas курить вредно (same meaning, literally ‘to smoke is harmful’) is often viewed as an impersonal clause with predicative.

¹ This is the definition that is used throughout this paper. In the literature the term предикативы is sometimes understood differently, either in a wider sense, e.g. including agreeing short forms of adjectives (Timberlake 2004:281), or in a narrower sense, e.g. as limited to non-agreeing modal predicates only (Švedova 1980:705).

² In fact, non-finite verbal predicates (independent infinitives and participles) behave similarly to non-verbal predicates in this respect, that is, take an overt copula (сф. мне было не выйти ‘I could not escape’) in all tenses except for the present (сф. мне не выйти ‘I cannot escape’). On these constructions see Israeli, this volume.
Many researchers analyze predicatives as a separate part of speech (starting with Ščerba 1928/2004 and then Vinogradov 1947), whereas others are against this view (Babby 1974). The former analysis naturally suggests itself for those few predicatives that can’t be used otherwise, like жаль ‘it is a pity’; it would be problematic to treat these words as belonging to any major part of speech. However, adjective-like predicatives can be treated either (1) as just neuter short forms of adjectives used in particular types of syntactic environment and endowed with particular types of meaning or (2) as separate lexemes that formally coincide with neuter short forms of adjectives. Evidently, the choice between the two analyses is largely dependent upon the criteria for part-of-speech differentiation and identification.3

This controversial topic is not directly addressed below. What is beyond doubt, though, is that “adjectival” predicatives are closely related to corresponding adjectives and share many of their semantic and syntactic properties, cf., e.g. the discussion in Bonč-Osmolovskaja (2003: 144–145). A possible line of research, then, is to compare individual grammatical properties of predicatives with those of corresponding adjectives. It is exactly this line that is pursued here.

The particular property that will be explored is the ability of the predicative to co-occur with the dative argument denoting a sentient participant whose role can be broadly characterized as “Experiencer” (including perceiver, bearer of a modal state, sometimes cogniser, etc.). The main empirical question of the study is the following: how the predicative’s (in)ability to take a dative Experiencer can be related to (a) whether the Experiencer is present in the semantic structure of the corresponding adjective and, if yes, to (b) what is the syntactic position of the Experiencer in constructions with the corresponding adjective. Evidence on this empirical question is further relevant for a more abstract theoretical issue: what is the nature of the relationships (both on the semantic and syntactic levels) between argument structures of predicatives and corresponding adjectives?

One can outline beforehand the following calculus of possible answers to that latter question.

3. Many predicatives coincide in form not only with adjectives, but also with adverbs. Some researchers even view predicatives as a subclass of adverbs, cf. “предикативные наречия” in Švedova (1980:705). However, for the topics discussed in this paper the relationship between predicatives and adjectives is more relevant than the relationships between these two types of entities and adverbs.
A. The predicative and the corresponding adjective are manifestations of the same lexical entry and have the same *lexical* argument structure (thematically motivated or given by lexical rule), including the dative slot. Under this assumption, the differences between predicatives and adjectives can only be accounted for by very general principles of syntax (similar to, e.g. differences between finite and non-finite verb forms), while the dative is subcategorized for and the Experiencer is semantically selected by the unitary lexeme as such. 

B. There is a *derivational* relation between the predicative and the adjective. In particular, predicatives can be related to adjectives via a certain kind of rule that influences argument structure (e.g. the dative slot can be introduced) and changes the semantics of the lexeme correspondingly. 

C. The dative position in the argument structure stems from the syntactic properties of the *construction* as such. This position is associated with a particular component in the meaning of the construction. It is not subcategorized for by the predicative lexeme, although this lexeme has to somehow match the meaning of the construction.

In previous literature on the topic it was often tacitly assumed that predicatives form a homogeneous class and much more effort was applied to propose various across-the-board analyses than to unearth relevant differences between predicatives in terms of their argument structure (but see a notable exception in (Kustova 2002)). Importantly, in the present study it is **not** a priori assumed that predicatives must empirically show a uniform pattern of behaviour and, consequently, it is not assumed that they have to call for a uniform analysis in terms of the possibilities outlined above. On the contrary, I will try to figure out the **individual** patterns of semantic and syntactic correspondence between argument structures in constructions with predicatives and adjectives, establish groups of predicatives based on these patterns and eventually point out those theoretical analyses that will perform better for capturing the observed empirical findings in each case. The ultimate theoretical goal of this study is to compare several types of analyses (which seem to be mutually exclusive) and to show that, somewhat surprisingly, their adequacy varies depending on the choice of the data. Thus, essentially this study is data-driven: theoretical interpretations are chosen based on what is suggested by particular sets of data.

The alternatives in A, B and C above were presented in a rather informal general manner. For any theorist, formal implementations of these analytic patterns would depend on which particular theoretical model is used. However, I assume that essentially the choice between the alternatives listed in A, B and C is relevant for various syntactic models, from traditional, to generative, to constructional etc. For example, the two extreme possibilities, “lexical” (A) and “syntactic” (C),
were actually proposed for various predicatives as early as in Peškovskij (1956 and earlier editions). In particular, Peškovskij argued that in мне было холодно ехать ‘I was cold when traveling’ “дательный падеж не связан ни со словом было, ни со словом холодно в отдельности, а только с обоими словами вместе, т.е. с самой безличной конструкцией, соответствуя дательному других безличных предложений” (Peškovskij 1956/2001: 356), which corresponds to analysis C here; by contrast, for мне было свойственно краснеть ‘I used to blush’ it was argued that, despite surface similarity, “дательный падеж зависит исключительно от прилагательного свойственно, управляющего вообще, во всяком положении дательным падежом” (ibid.), i.e. falls under the analysis in A.

The remainder of the paper is organised in the following way. Section 2 contains a brief discussion of methodological issues. In Section 3 I propose a four-way classification of predicatives based on their and corresponding adjectives’ ability to co-occur with dative arguments. Sections 4 to 6 elaborate on this classification, providing information on the semantic interpretation of the predicative’s dative argument and on its relation to the argument structure of the corresponding adjective. Such an approach makes it possible to propose the second level of classification of predicatives, so that each of the three sections is devoted to a particular type of predicatives. Section 7 contains conclusions, including the comparison of analytic models that are mentioned with respect to individual classes of predicatives discussed in Sections 4–6.

2. Data and methodology

The data have been gathered from the Russian National Corpus (RNC; www.ruscorpora.ru); unless stated otherwise, all numbered examples given in separate paragraphs are taken from this source. Attention is paid not only to whether a particular type of structure is possible and attested in the RNC, but also to the frequency of various constructions, including diachronic changes in frequency. The procedure of gathering quantitative data consisted of two stages.

4. The preference for natural examples and corpus frequencies over contrived examples and introspection-based grammaticality judgements is largely due to ideological reasons (decades-long debate on the nature of evidence in linguistics only shows that this issue remains largely a matter of personal conviction) and would not be discussed here in any detail. It can only be mentioned that for the constructions at issue such an approach can make a difference, since there are many types of uses that are somewhere in the grey zone between grammaticality and ungrammaticality. All this said, I don’t intend to say that grammaticality judgments will not be used in the study, though.
i. Automatic search for 53 different adjective-like predicatives and corresponding short and long adjectives in various syntactic environments. The list of predicates is a slightly shortened variant of the list that was used in Bonč-Osmolovskaja (2003: 147–148). The automatic search method was a pilot study that yielded rough estimates for overall frequencies of the very elements under study and their combinations with a dative nominal in either of the two adjacent positions, preliminary diachronic trends etc. However, these estimates were rather inaccurate, as there was a lot of corpus junk in search results.

ii. Based on this pilot study, a more precise (and time-consuming) method was used for a small group consisting of 12 predicatives that co-occur with dative arguments (“X” in the translations corresponds to that argument, when overt): безразлично ‘X is indifferent’, грустно ‘X is sad’, известно ‘it is known to X’, любопытно ‘X is curious’, обидно ‘it hurts X/it is a pity to X’, приятно ‘it is pleasant for X’, скучно ‘X is bored/has a tedious time’, странно ‘it seems strange to X’, темно ‘it is (too) dark for X’, тесно ‘X is cramped’, тяжело ‘it is heavy/hard for X’, холодно ‘X is cold’. For each of these predicatives 100 random uses from modern (1979 onward) texts were manually analyzed. For every token it was established: (a) whether there is an overt argument that corresponds to an Experiencer-like participant; if yes, (b) whether this participant is coded with a dative NP or in some other fashion.

The same procedure was then repeated for random 100-token samples of examples with corresponding short (only masculine and feminine forms were searched for the sake of unambiguousness) and long adjectives. Overall, 300 uses were analyzed for every stem under study. In order to implement the diachronic dimension, another 300-example sample was gathered for each stem in the same fashion from texts created between 1700 and 1850. Thus, in principle there were 600 examples per adjectival stem, although in some cases the actual groups of examples under analysis were smaller, because there were not enough tokens in the RNC.

3. Co-occurrence with the dative: An overview

The observed distribution of co-occurrence with the dative arguments on the part of predicatives, corresponding short adjectives, and long adjectives suggests the following two implicational generalizations:

(3) If the long (attributive) form of an adjective can co-occur with a dative argument, its short (predicative) form can co-occur with a dative argument as well. The reverse is not true.
(4) If the short (predicative) form can co-occur with a dative argument, then the corresponding predicative can co-occur with a dative argument as well. The reverse is not true.

In other words, the following hierarchy of forms represents their co-occurrence with the dative:

(5) Predicatives > Short (predicative) adjectives > Long (attributive) adjectives

Items that are higher on this hierarchy can show better or equal ability to co-occur with datives than items that are lower on the hierarchy.\(^5\) The hierarchy in (5) yields a four-way classification of predicatives, as schematically represented in Table 1.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type 1</th>
<th>Type 2</th>
<th>Type 3</th>
<th>Type 4</th>
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<tr>
<td>predicative</td>
<td>–</td>
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<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>short adjective</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>+</td>
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<tr>
<td>long adjective</td>
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Type 1 encompasses predicatives that cannot co-occur with the dative argument. Both predicatives in the following example belong to this group (cf. *мне тихо, *мне солнечно):

(6) На дворе октябрь, а солнечно и тихо, как летом. (А. П. Чехов. Вишневый сад (1904))
'It's October outside, but it's as sunny and as quiet as if it were summer.'

As follows from the implicative hierarchy in (5), adjectives corresponding to these predicatives, even in their short form, cannot co-occur with the datives as well:

(7) Но голос его был по-прежнему тих (*мне). (Ю. О. Домбровский. Хранитель древностей, часть 2 (1964))
'But his voice was still quiet.'

\(^5\) Although this hierarchy is proposed based on yes-or-no parameters (grammaticality and occurrence in the RNC), it is also supported by quantitative data: for the majority of stems items higher on the hierarchy show comparable or higher ratios of uses with overt datives than items lower on the hierarchy. For example, the predicative тесно 'X is cramped' is used with a dative argument in some 50% of occurrences, whereas for the corresponding short form adjective the ratio is around 10% and for the long form adjective it is below 0,5%. See also the data for приятно 'pleasant' in Table 2.
Predicatives of this type are not discussed below, as the study is devoted to the nature of the dative argument. It may be noted in passing, however, that such predicatives mostly denote properties of the setting (пустынно ‘it is deserted’), including atmospheric states (солнечно ‘it is sunny’) that are viewed as objective, independent of any sentient observer.

Type 2 consists of predicatives that can co-occur with dative NPs, but correspond to adjectives that cannot. It will be shown below that this discrepancy can manifest itself in two different semantic-syntactic patterns, so that Type 2 will be further divided into two subtypes. These subtypes are conventionally labeled as subtype холодно ‘it is cold/X is cold’ (see Section 4) and subtype грустно ‘it is sad/X is sad’ (see Section 5).

Predicatives of type 3 can take dative arguments (8) and are related to adjectives that can also take dative arguments when used in the short form (9):

(8) Я говорю, нам тесно, нас 6 человек в комнате. («Отечественные записки», 2003)
I say, we are cramped, we are six persons living in one room.’

(9) Наш уголок нам никогда не тесен. (Людмила Гурченко. Аплодисменты (1994–2003))
‘Our corner never seems too small for us.’

In the 100-token sample of contemporary uses of short forms тесен or тесна there were 11 examples that contained an overt dative Experiencer as in (9). The long form of the adjective (тесный ‘cramped,’ small,’ tight’) was not registered in co-occurrence with such NPs in either of its two 100-token samples. Similar discrepancies were observed for тяжело ‘it is hard/heavy’, скучно ‘it is boring’, странно ‘it is strange’ and corresponding adjectives. This fact allowed me to (conventionally, see immediately below) classify these items as belonging to Type 3.

Predicatives of Type 4 can also take dative arguments (like those in Types 2 and 3) and are related to adjectives that can also take dative arguments in both short and long form, cf. приятно ‘it is pleasant’, известно ‘it is well-known’. However, even in this group the frequency of co-occurrence with the dative is lower for long adjectives than for the other two types of forms. It might be conjectured then that there is no strict boundary between types 3 and 4: this distinction was conventionally based on counts from small samples of examples, but it can be somewhat blurred if larger counts are taken into account. Indeed, although тесно ‘X is cramped’ was classified as belonging to type 3 based on the small working sample, one can infrequently attest examples like (10):

(10) Тот … неуклюже развернувшись в тесной ему канцелярии … двинулся потихоньку к дверям. (Олег Павлов. Казенная сказка (1993))
‘He awkwardly turned around in the office, which was too small for him, and slowly directed his steps towards the door.’
The distinction between types 3 and 4 will not be relevant for further discussion, because in both groups the predicatives are such that they can co-occur with dative Experiencers and are related to adjective that can do so as well. Ultimately, the distinction between types 3 and 4 is related to the syntax and semantics of adjectives (short vs. long form) and is thus beyond the scope of this paper.

Thus, Sections 4 and 5 are devoted to two subtypes of predicatives classified as belonging to type 2, i.e. to predicatives that can co-occur with dative Experiencers, whereas corresponding adjectives cannot; predicatives of types 3 and 4 are analyzed together in Section 6.

4. **Subtype холодно ‘it is cold/X is cold’**

Among those dative-taking predicatives that are related to adjectives not co-occurring with datives this subtype is distinguished based on the following criterion: when in their long form, the adjectives in question have a meaning that does not presuppose any Experiencer. The contrast between the predicative and the adjective is illustrated by the following example:

(11) Почему ей не холодно в холодной воде? (Google)

‘Why is not she cold when swimming in cold water?’

The predicative denotes a “personal-feeling” temperature that can be caused by either external or internal conditions. The presence of a sentient Experiencer is indispensable for this meaning; moreover, it is exactly the state of the Experiencer that is expressed by these constructions. If overt, the Experiencer is expressed with a dative NP. By contrast, the long form adjective with the same stem describes the temperature of some objects or substance objectively, placing it lower than average on some contextually conditioned scale: холодная вода is water that is colder than usual for particular circumstances. The coldness of water does not depend on the actual presence of any Experiencer; in other words, the semantic representation of the adjective as such lacks references to any actual Experiencer.

This semantic property of the long form adjective is echoed by its syntactic property, viz. by the lack of the dative argument in the syntactic structure (cf. холодная мне вода, intended meaning ‘the water which is cold for me’). In other words, the predicatives in this subtype have a subjective meaning that is crucially different from the meaning of the long adjective. This can be easily seen in (11) where the water is described as ‘cold’, but the Experiencer is not ‘cold’ when swimming in the water.

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6. For the semantic types of temperature expressions see Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2007).
In fact, the correspondence between the two readings (personal feeling vs. objective temperature) and two types of structures (predicatives vs. adjectives) is not as straightforward as outlined above. For example, those uses of predicatives in which there is no overt dative Experiencer are open to two types of interpretation and sometimes are ambiguous. Consider the following two examples:

(12) В прошлом году об эту пору уже снег шёл, если припомните, а теперь тихо, солнечно. Только что вот холодно... Градуса три мороза. (А. П. Чехов. Вишневый сад (1904))

'Last year at this time the snow was already falling, if you remember, and now it’s nice and sunny. Only it’s rather cold... There’s three degrees of frost.'

(13) Как холодно, у меня руки закоченели. (А. П. Чехов. Вишневый сад (1904))

'It is freezing (= I am freezing), my hands are numb with cold.'

In (12) the reading of холодно is objective, which is implied by a series of meteorological statements in previous discourse and mentioning of objective measurement (three degrees Celsius) in the next clause. This use of the predicative does not presuppose an Experiencer. The situation is slightly more complicated in (13). There is no overt dative argument either, but the context unequivocally shows that the reading is “personal feeling”, the Experiencer being the speaker (cf. “my hands are numb with cold”). A natural way of analyzing construction in (13) is to view it as containing a predicative холодно that has a dative slot which is semantically associated with the Experiencer (cf. кому холодно? ‘who is cold?’, lit. ‘to whom is cold?’), but remains overtly unoccupied. This non-overness of the Experiencer is due to more general principles of discourse organization in Russian, like omission of speech-act participants; for possible reasons of omitting dative arguments in constructions with predicatives, see Guiraud-Weber (1984: 175–177). Of course, there can also be ambiguous or even intermediate uses, in which it would be difficult to figure out whether there is an Experiencer within the speaker’s perspective.

The following generalizations can be thus proposed for this pair. The adjectival stem as such denotes an objective property of external reality which is related to human senses but does not presuppose any actual instance of sensation; the dative slot does not belong to the argument structure of the adjective (the long form adjective never has dative dependents). The corresponding predicative can be used in two constructions. The one that lacks the dative slot is similar to the adjectival construction, the difference being that the objective property is predicated of the setting in general (12), rather than of a particular object or substance. The one that does have a dative slot (11, 13) differs crucially: it describes actual sensation on the part of a sentient being, namely, the kind of sensation that is similar to the sensation which humans normally experience when placed in an environment with the corresponding objective property. When overtly expressed, the referent associated
with the dative slot is interpreted as the bearer of actual sensation. Like many other referents in Russian syntax, this referent can also remain implicit due to ellipsis.\footnote{Interestingly, \textit{холодный} 'cold' and other long adjectives from this group sometimes are used with arguments that denote sentient beings, as in the following example:}

Similar relationship in the semantic and syntactic properties of predicatives vis-à-vis corresponding adjectives is observed for other units belonging to this subtype. Most adjectives in this type denote physical properties of objects or the environment in general, especially in terms of temperature or illumination, cf. \textit{темный} 'dark', \textit{прохладный} 'cool', \textit{светлый} 'light', \textit{душный} 'stifling, stuffy', \textit{теплый} 'warm'. Simplifying somewhat, the predicatives in this group are ambiguous: their interpretation is related to whether the dative argument slot is or is not present.

It is crucial that this type of semantic correspondence is productive to the extent that the expected kind of subjective sensation is conceivable as a natural reaction to the physical property in question. The following example is illustrative in this respect:

\begin{align*}
(14) & \quad \text{Я кликаю на фото – все равно мне мелко. (Google)} \\
& \quad 'I click the picture (on the Internet, – S.S.), but still I can't see it properly, because it is too small.'
\end{align*}

In this sentence the speaker describes not only the objective size of a particular object, but also the uncomfortable sensation that s/he gets when trying in vain to scrutinize closely a small-size picture.

On the interpretative level, it would be uneconomical and counterintuitive to posit transparent and productive pairs of lexemes such as e.g. \textit{холодно1} and \textit{холодно2}, so that the former is only used without the dative and describes a physical state, whereas the latter has a dative slot and denotes an actual sensation that is triggered by internal or external factors. It is more attractive to assume that the

\begin{align*}
\text{(i) } & \quad \text{Если невская вода слишком холодна для сих интересных чужестранцев…} \\
& \quad (\text{Ф. М. Достоевский. Крокодил (1865)}) \\
& \quad 'If the water in the Neva river is too cold for these curious foreigners…'
\end{align*}

However, the object in the prepositional phrase headed by \textit{для} 'for' cannot be interpreted as a usual 'Experiencer'; rather, it corresponds to what can be called 'evaluating subject'; cf. the notion of \textit{ориентир оценки} introduced in Serdobol'skaja and Toldova (2005). Indeed, in (i) the “foreigners” are described as mentally evaluating the temperature of the water as too low (for swimming) rather than actually experiencing the sensation of being cold when swimming. By contrast, in (11) actually being in the water is presupposed.
“**dative + predicative**” construction is endowed with a meaning of its own, which involves an **actual experiential state**. The dative slot of the construction is directly associated with the Experiencer. This construction can host adjectival stems to the extent that they are semantically compatible with the meaning of the construction, even though the adjectives as such do not describe an experiential event and do not presuppose any Experiencer. The question of the nature of the aforementioned compatibility needs further research. At this point it can be prematurely noticed that those adjectival stems which describe such objective properties of objects that can naturally trigger particular types of experiential states (e.g. ‘cold’ or ‘dark’) are more compatible with the constructional meaning than those adjectival stems that do not have this property (e.g. presumably there is no special experiential state that is triggered by sunny weather; hence, whereas predicative солнечно ‘it is sunny’ exists, it is poorly compatible with the constructional meaning, cf. *мне солнечно*, although see footnote 8).

In short, predicatives of this group are best analyzed within a constructional approach.

5. **Subtype грустно ‘it is sad/X is sad’**

This is the other kind of predicatives that differ from corresponding adjectives in that they do co-occur with dative Experiencers (15), whereas the adjectives do not (16):

(15) **Ему было грустно одному идти через лес.**
    ‘He felt sad walking alone in the woods.’

(16) **Значит, жизнь далеко еще не так грустна (**мне**).**
    (Андрей Ростовский. По законам волчьей стаи (2000))
    ‘This means that life is not that sad (*to me)*.’

However, the reason for this discrepancy is different from that described for the previous subtype of predicatives: the meaning of the very stem in грустный ‘sad’

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8. In fact, this model is so productive that sometimes predicatives that denote physical properties of the environment and that were classified as not co-occurring with datives (Type 1 above) are used in this structure for poetic or metaphorical reasons:

(ii) **Дождь в Риме промочил насквозь все мои бумажные пакеты с покупками, но все равно по настроению мне было солнечно.** (Google)
    ‘The rain in Rome soaked all my paper bags, but nevertheless in terms of mood I felt sunny.’
On the nature of dative arguments in Russian constructions with “predicatives”

requires a sentient participant. Indeed, various types of mood (sad, cheerful, calm, etc.) are properties of humans and humans only. When used attributively, adjectives of this group can take sentient participants as their heads (грустная девушка ‘a sad girl’), when used predicatively, they can predicate of those sentient participants (девушка была грустна ‘The girl was sad’). In other words, Experiencer is an indispensable part of the semantic structure of these adjectives.

Thus, the dative argument of the predicative corresponds to the internal argument of the adjective. The group of predicatives that are related to adjectives in this fashion is relatively small. Along with грустно, it chiefly encompasses a handful of other predicatives denoting emotional states: весело ‘cheerful’, спокойно ‘calm’, радостно ‘joyful’, тоскливо ‘sad, melancholic, dreary’, одиноко ‘lonely’ (however, голодно ‘hungry’ also belongs to this group).

In this group, too, there is a correlation between the type of construction and the distinction between subjective and objective components in the semantics: the dative-oriented construction (construction with the predicative) correlates with a more subjective reading. This point can be clearly illustrated by the pair одинокий and одиноко ‘lonely’. The adjective одинокий can denote feeling lonely, or just living alone (e.g. одинокая женщина can refer to an unmarried woman, not necessarily implying that she feels lonely), or both. The predicative, however, always describes a particular emotional state, the feeling of loneliness:

(17) Гоголю неприятно в лицее, одиноко среди сверстников, он часто переживает приступы тяжелой скуки и тоски. (Александр Воронский. Гоголь (1934))
‘Gogol feels desolate at the lyceum, he feels lonely among his peers, he often endures attacks of devastating boredom and anguish.’

This class of predicatives is lexically limited: many adjectives that also denote internal emotional states of human beings (e.g. довольный ‘content’, угрюмый ‘sullen’, несчастный ‘happy’) do not have corresponding predicatives of this kind:

(18) *Ему было довольно/угрюмо/несчастно.
Intended: ‘He was content/in a sullen mood/happy’.

The next property of the predicatives at issue is that they convey a meaning that is somewhat different from that of corresponding adjectives, which can be seen if one compares pairs of quasi-synonymous construction like он весел – ему весело, roughly ‘he is cheerful’ – ‘he feels cheerful’. This problem is extensively studied in the literature; cf. discussion in Guiraud-Weber (1984: 173–174). It has been argued, for instance, that constructions with predicatives of this kind always denote an internal state of the Experiencer regardless of whether it is noticeable to others, whereas adjectives denote external manifestations of these states
(Zolotova 1987:684; Kustova 2002:18). Predicative-based constructions of this class also belong to a larger family of Russian constructions with dative arguments that are quasi-synonymous to constructions with canonical subjects (for potential semantic invariant in the meaning of dative-oriented impersonal constructions see Guiraud-Weber 1984:173 ff.). Among such constructions is, e.g. the so-called “modal-deagentive” reflexive construction: мне не спится ‘I can’t get asleep, I am not in the proper state for sleeping’.

We are now in a position to make a generalization with respect to the nature of these predicatives: (i) they have the same sets of semantic arguments as corresponding adjectives; (ii) there is a difference in the syntactic status of the Experiencer participant: the internal argument (the head noun or subject in constructions with long resp. short form adjectives) in structures with adjectives vs. dative argument in constructions with predicatives; (iii) this syntactic difference reflects a noticeable semantic change; (iv) the pattern is severely restricted lexically. The combination of properties in (ii–iv) suggests that the relation of adjectives to predicatives is best analyzed as a valency-changing operation, namely, a derivation that demotes the subject into an oblique (dative) position.9

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9. In principle, one could also consider the possibility of comparing constructions like мальчику грустно ‘the boy feels sad’ with such uses of the adjective грустный where this property is metonymically predicated of some objects, circumstances, places (грустные обстоятельства ‘sad circumstances’) etc. rather than persons (грустный мальчик ‘a sad boy’). Such an approach could be tempting in some respects, first of all, because it would allow us to abandon the idea of demotion of Experiencer to the dative position, which is unique to this subtype of predicatives within the approach advocated in the main text.

However, such an alternative approach has to be refuted for a number of reasons that can be briefly summarized as follows. (1) This type of metonymy is more typical of adjectives used attributively (cf. грустный день ‘a sad day’), than of predicative short adjectives (день был грустен ‘the day was sad’). (2) Short forms of adjectives never co-occur with dative Experiencers (*она мне грустна). (3) The two types of structure always have different meanings, even when the subject in the construction with the short form of adjective is a semi-dummy pronoun, like это ‘this’ or всё ‘everything’. Consider the following example that contains a short form adjective грустно that agrees in gender and number with the subject (одно ‘one thing’):

(iii) Одно было грустно (*ей) – нет Яшина. («Наш современник», 2004.04.15)
    ‘There was one thing that made her sad – Jashin was not there’

As in many other metonymic uses, this adjective means that a particular state of affairs (absence of Jashin in this case) can cause someone’s sadness, not that there was an Experiencer who was actually in a sad mood; this causal metonymic shift is a typical model of adjectival polysemy (Kustova 2002) but is not characteristic of predicatives.
6. **Type приятно ‘it is pleasant’**

The last large group contains predicatives that are related to adjectives which semantically select Experiencers and which put them into the dative slot, at least in some of their uses (for the sake of simplicity, we will now disregard the difference between adjectives that take and do not take a dative argument when used attributively, see Section 3). In other words, unlike predicatives discussed in the two previous sections, these predicatives (20) are parallel to corresponding adjectives (19) in terms of co-occurrence with and interpretation of the dative argument:

(19) Они стали перечислять приятные им названия городских улиц, ресторанов, кино. (Василий Гроссман. Жизнь и судьба, часть 2 (1960))

‘They started to recall the names of streets, restaurants and cinemas, that sounded pleasant for them.’

(20) Признаюсь, мне было приятно слышать такие комплименты. (И. А. Архипова. Музыка жизни (1996))

‘I have to confess that it was pleasant for me to hear such compliments’.

The semantics of both the adjective приятный ‘pleasant’ and the predicative приятно ‘it is pleasant’ contains obligatory reference to a sentient participant. This has an important consequence for the interpretation of such predicatives: even if the dative slot is left unoccupied, Experiencer is obligatorily interpreted as either contextually recoverable given NP or as a generalized NP, as in (21):

(21) Приятно после долгой ходьбы и глубокого сна лежать неподвижно на сене. (И. С. Тургенев. Хорь и Калиныч (1847))

‘After a long walk or a deep sleep it is pleasant to lie motionlessly on hay.’

In (21) the presence of an Experiencer in the semantic structure is further shown by its obligatory co-reference with the non-overt subject of the infinitive (лежать) and of the nominalization (ходьбы). Thus, these predicatives cannot yield an “objective” reading: unlike the personal feeling of temperature comfort (see Section 4), the feeling of pleasure as such does not have any measurable objective counterpart.

This property (semantic obligatoriness of a sentient participant) is reminiscent of the previous group discussed, namely, of predicatives like грустно (see Section 5). The crucial difference is that adjectives like грустный ‘sad’ can be used with Experiencers in their head noun position. By contrast, adjectives like приятный ‘pleasant’ cannot be used in such a way; indeed, приятный человек can only mean ‘a pleasant person,’ that is, a person who can, roughly speaking, cause positive reaction on the part of Experiencers and not the person who experiences something pleasant him- or herself. In other words, the long form adjectives
related to predicatives from this group are modifiers to head nouns that are interpreted as Stimuli, rather than as Experiencers.

These predicatives of the приятно-type are semantically heterogeneous; they include predicatives describing emotional (приятно ‘it is pleasant’, обидно ‘it hurts X’, безразлично ‘X is indifferent’), mental (интересно ‘it is interesting’, понятно ‘it is clear/understandable’), deontic modal (нужно ‘it is necessary’), and other (полезно ‘it is profitable/useful for X’, скучно ‘it is boring/X is bored’) states, as well as two perception predicatives (видно ‘it is visible = X can see’ and слышно ‘it is audible = X can hear’), which are exceptional in that they are basically the only predicatives that can take direct objects, cf. мне слышно музыку ‘I can hear music’.

It is crucial that constructions with predicatives of this group are semantically very close to constructions with short forms of adjectives. Their main deviation is that the Stimulus is syntactically realized as an infinitive, subordinate clause, adverb, etc., that is, as a constituent that has no case feature and is unable to trigger agreement, see Bonč-Osmolovskaja (2003) for the typology of Stimuli in constructions with predicatives. Thus, structures like мне было приятно здесь/гулять в парке/когда она была рядом ‘I liked it here/walking in the park/when she was beside me’ are quite similar to e.g. мне было приятно твое общество ‘I liked your companionship’. The former are usually treated as (impersonal) constructions with predicatives, whereas the latter as constructions with agreeing short adjectives. In fact, however, they are related to each other in exactly the same way as, e.g. constructions like мне нравилось здесь/гулять в парке/когда она рядом are related to мне нравилось твое общество (roughly same meanings); needless to say, nobody assumes two lexical entries for agreeing and impersonal нравилось.

Now we see that the simplest way to analyze these predicatives is to view them as syntactically determined uses of the “default” (neuter) forms of corresponding short (predicative) adjectives. The dative argument is subcategorized for by the adjectival stem as such, i.e. lexically determined. For this group, the differences between “predicatives” vs. (other) short forms of adjectives could be accounted for by very general rules of syntax that are independently motivated (e.g. patterns of default agreement). In short, for this group (and for this group only!) the analysis could easily follow such proposals as in Garde (1982) and Babby (1974). Although diverging in many respects, these scholars make an important common point: both view “predicatives” as a type of use of adjectives that can be deduced from the interaction of semantic and syntactic rules.

However, even in this group of adjectival stems predicatives seem to favour the use of dative arguments if compared to the corresponding adjectives. This bias is largely due to the fact that adjectives of this group often co-occur with sentient arguments coded by prepositional phrases with для ‘for’: 
Whether dative NPs and prepositional phrases with для 'for' express the same semantic role is a matter of debate, cf. discussion in, e.g. Serdobol’skaja & Toldova (2005). On the one hand, they are mutually exclusive, that is, an adjective can co-occur with a dative NP or with a prepositional phrase with для 'for', but never with both. This seems to be an argument for viewing them as morphologically distinct manifestations of the same semantic role. In all probability the two (and – for some adjectival stems – maybe even more) morphological means for coding this argument used to be non-differentiated (or weakly differentiated) semantically in the 18th century. However, it is argued by Guiraud-Weber that this subsystem underwent reorganization during the 19th century so that the dative came to be closely associated with the Experiencer “au sein de la construction impersonelle à proprement parler, c’est-à-dire celle qui exprime les états, les sensations et les sentiments d’un être vivant” (Guiraud-Weber 2003: 71), whereas other coding devices, including prepositional phrases with для 'for' in the first place, became related to evaluative meanings. Guiraud-Weber describes this tendency for the development of impersonal uses only, but it appears that the RNC provides cross-construction quantitative data that further support her idea. The relevant data are in Table 2.

<table>
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<th>&gt;1979</th>
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<td>58</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>36</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

It can be seen that in the earlier subcorpus both dative and other peripheral coding options were attested (though not equally distributed) for sentient arguments in all three types of constructions. This can be illustrated by (23) where the predicative co-occurs with the prepositional phrase headed by для:

(23) … для меня было очень приятно видеть на сыне моем тот же самый крест и в том же самом крае, где я получил оный 48 лет тому назад. (М. С. Воронцов. Кавказские письма М. С. Воронцова к А. П. Ермолову (1845–1855))
Lit. 'For me it was very pleasant to see my son wearing the same cross and wearing it in the same lieu where I was awarded such a cross 48 years before.'
In modern texts there is a more pronounced bias in the distribution of patterns for coding the sentient participant. Indeed, predicatives no longer co-occur with forms other than the dative; the example in (23) would sound somewhat awkward in modern Russian and the dative (мне) would be definitely preferable. On the contrary, when used attributively, приятный ‘pleasant’ can take prepositional phrases with для (24), whereas the dative coding of the sentient participant is disfavoured (see Table 2), although it is not altogether impossible (25).

‘The 20-minute conversation, enjoyable for both parties, ended with an examination of his pipes.’

(25) С другой стороны – так же я раздражаю приятных мне людей меньшего дохода. (Наши дети: Дошкольники и младшие школьники (форум) (2005))
‘On the other hand, I irritate in the same way those people who are pleasant for me, but earn less than me.’

This bias nicely fits Guiraud-Weber’s semantic interpretation: the semantic core of the constructions with predicatives is the meaning of actual sensation, which is in its turn associated with the dative. Similar distributions and diachronic trends are observed for other adjectival stems from this group.

These findings make it possible to enrich the interpretation proposed above. Indeed, as stated above, adjectival stems from this group require Experiencer in their role structure and this argument can be coded with a dative NP. However, the diachronic evidence discussed above suggests that even in this group predicatives are not just a syntactic subtype of short forms. Constructions with predicatives favour the choice of the dative option for coding the sentient participant and this fact nicely fits the semantic peculiarities of predicatives. In other words, in structures like (20) the Experiencer is both subcategorized for by the adjectival stem and belongs to the constructional pattern. An essentially similar analysis of some uses of predicatives, although in quite different terms, was suggested in Шевдова (1978/2005: 283–284).

On a more general level, such double motivation of arguments (lexeme-based and construction-based) is found in some versions of Construction grammar, cf.: “… the argument must satisfy the specifications of both the argument role of the construction and the participant role of the verb. That is, the argument role of the construction may be “fused” with a participant role of the verb” (Goldberg 2005: 24).

This is to say, for other stems of this group co-occurrence with для-phrases is more typical of (long form) adjectives than of predicatives (with the exception of видный ‘visible’ and слышный ‘audible’, as these two adjectival stems generally co-occur with для-phrases very rarely).
7. Discussion and conclusion

1. In the present paper, a two-level classification of Russian predicatives is proposed. On the first level of classification they are grouped based on whether they and their corresponding adjectives in short and long forms are able to co-occur with dative NPs denoting sentient participants. A hierarchy (predicatives > short forms of adjectives > long forms of adjectives) is put forward, which reflects decreasing ability to co-occur with dative Experiencers. On the second level of classification predicatives are grouped based on the semantic relationship between their dative arguments and the argument structure of corresponding adjectives. The following types of these relationships have been distinguished: (i) the predicative’s dative argument is not related to any of the adjective’s arguments (subtype холодно, see Section 4); (ii) the predicative’s dative argument is related to the adjective’s internal argument (subtype грустно, see Section 5); (iii) the predicative’s dative argument is related to the adjective’s dative argument (type приятно, see Section 6).

2. When analyzed in isolation, various types of predicatives call for different types of analyses. In particular, the properties of predicatives from the subtype холодно ‘it is cold/someone is cold’ (Section 4) are best captured by a constructional analysis, in which it is the construction as such that accounts for the presence of the dative argument and this argument is linked to a component in the constructional meaning. The adjectival stem has to be loosely compatible with the meaning of the construction but does not semantically select any Experiencer. The combination of the constructional and lexical meanings yields an overall interpretation; e.g. for [X-DAT холодно]: X experiences the feeling that is normally triggered by the environment of low temperature. Predicatives of the subtype грустно ‘it is sad/X is sad’ (Section 5) are best analyzed as separate lexemes that are derived through a valency-changing operation from corresponding adjectives (the subject is demoted to the dative slot). Finally, predicatives of the type приятно ‘it is pleasant’ (Section 6) can be generally analyzed as inflectional forms of corresponding adjectival lexemes. Their use is deducible from very general syntactic rules of the Russian grammar.\textsuperscript{11}

\textsuperscript{11} One also has to keep in mind that there are predicatives that do not correspond to any adjective (cf. example 2) and these have to be posited as independent items in the lexicon.
3. This comparison of various possible approaches and demonstration of their relative suitability for various subsets of data was not aimed at arguing for any single one of them. Nor was it intended to claim that the subtypes of predicatives represent syntactically unrelated phenomena and to propose a very complex syntactic model that would encompass all the competing mechanisms. On the contrary, it was aimed at showing the limitations of possible individual explanations that are so usual in the domain of studying argument structures of related constructions: no one of them alone seems to be adequate for the whole range of data, only for a subset. This is a pessimistic methodological outcome of this study. Needless to say, once this pessimistic conclusion is arrived at, one starts seeking a possible way out. At this point such a solution can be suggested in a very tentative form only. Its essence is the following.

The experiential predicative construction encompasses a dative slot that is directly related to the Experiencer in terms of argument-linking. Informally speaking, this constructional pattern is “blind” to the argument structure of the corresponding adjective. If the adjective itself is subcategorized for an oblique (dative or otherwise) Experiencer, the predicative construction preserves it (and “chooses” dative coding when other options are available for the adjective). If the adjective semantically selects Experiencers but normally puts them into internal argument position, then the predicative construction demotes the Experiencer into the dative slot. If the adjective itself does not select the Experiencer, then this argument is coerced by the construction. In still more informal terms, what is important for the construction is the product rather than the source (cf. the notion of product-oriented schemas in morphology (Bybee 2001: 126–129)).

4. On a methodological level, this case study raises the issue of how our theoretical models are dependent upon our data. In terms of efficiency and intuitive adequacy, the competing theoretical models (e.g. constructional, semantic-compositional, head-driven) might thus turn out to be complementary rather than mutually exclusive. In other words, it might be more sensible to seek the ways of combining these models, rather than arguing for the choice of the best among them.

References


