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Linguistics : Grammar

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Copular Sentences in Russian

A Theory of Intra-Clausal Relations

- A novel account of copular sentences in Russian
- Focus on nominative-instrumental case alternations
- Subtle semantic distinctions between copular types reconsidered
- Clear and concise overview of previous literature about copular sentences in Russian

This book provides a detailed study and a novel Minimalist account of copular sentences in Russian, focusing on case marking alternations (nominative vs. instrumental) and drawing a distinction between two types of copular sentences. On the assumption that Merge is defined in the simplest way possible, it is argued that not all syntactic structures are a(n)ti-symmetrical. One of the copular sentence types is analyzed as a poster child for symmetrical structures, while the other type is treated as asymmetrical. The originality of this study lies in treating the copula in the two types of copular sentences neither as completely identical nor as two distinct lexical items; instead, the two types of copula are derived through the process of semantic bleaching. Furthermore, it is argued that the two types of the copula need to combine with post-copular phrases of different categories. It is concluded that Russian draws a distinction between saturated DPs and unsaturated NPs, in spite of its renowned lack of overt articles.

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