Semantics of the Russian Conjunction POKA (while, before, until)
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To Daniel, for a warm and memorable friendship
Poka zemlja ešče vertitsja...
‘While the Earth is still turning...’
B. Okudžava

1 The Problem Stated
One of the most conspicuous properties of the Russian subordinate conjunction POKA ‘while, before, until’ is its illocutive use. An illocutive use of a subordinate conjunction CONJ is its use in a construction “P, CONJ Q” where it semantically relates the situation denoted by the subordinate clause Q to the fact of uttering the main clause P, rather than to the situation denoted by P, as subordinate conjunctions prototypically do.

Thus, in sentence (1a) the conjunction POKA relates situations Q and P, expressing their simultaneity, while in sentence (1b) POKA relates the situation Q and the fact of uttering the question «P?». Namely, it indicates that this questioning occurred before the end moment of Q, that is, while Q is still taking place:
(1a) Poka deti v škole [Q], roditeli otdyhaют [P]
‘While the kids are at school, the parents rest’.
(1b) Poka deti v škole [Q], čto skazal vrač [aP]?
‘While the kids are at school, [I ask you] what did the doctor say?’

In (1b), POKA does not express a temporal relation between the kids’ being at school [Q] and the doctor’s having said something [P], but rather a relation between Q and the Speaker’s uttering his question: ‘I ask my (sensitive) question now—before the situation “the kids are at school” ends’.

However, not all Russian subordinate conjunctions have an illocutive use. Thus, DO TOGO KAK ‘before’ and KOGDA ‘when’ cannot be used in such a way, although there are no semantic reasons for this:
(2a) A Do togo kak deti pridut [Q], čto skazal vrač [aP]?
‘Before the kids come back, what did the doctor say?’

1 On relating a logical proposition to the fact of uttering another proposition, see, e.g., Thompson & Longacre 1985: 207 and Padačeva 1985: 46ff. The notion of the illocutive use of a conjunction was introduced in Jordanskaja 1988. An analysis of some Russian and French conjunctions that allow for the illocutive use is offered in Jordanskaja 1988 and Jordanskaja & Mel’čuk 2007: 415-501. Samnikov 2005 puts forward the notion of illocutive construction, based on the idea of syntactic ellipsis of a speech verb (of the type I will ask, I will advise, etc.) in case where there is no semantic connection between the propositions in P and Q. We will return to this idea in Subsections 4.2 – 4.3. On the illocutive use of adverbs, see, e.g., Boguslavskij 1996: 137-139.

'When the kids are at school, what did the doctor say?'

Therefore, the possibility of an illocutive use of a conjunction must be lexicographically specified; in particular, this possibility must be marked for some uses of POKA. Moreover, the illocutive use of a conjunction is associated with a host of other linguistic properties: prosodic, syntactic, and parapragmatic. Such bundles of properties have to be described as separate senses of POKA. In order to do it rigorously, we have to present all the other senses of the conjunction POKA, which leads to the following structure of this paper: Section 2 formulates three preliminary semantic remarks necessary for the subsequent exposition; Section 3 contains a full lexicographic description of the vocabulary POKA, supplied with linguistic comments; Section 4 sums up some interesting general issues.

2 Preliminary Semantic Remarks

Our semantic description of POKA calls for three remarks concerning 1) several temporal semantemes, 2) the semanteme ‘Enunciator’, and 3) ‘interval’ senses of the Russian perfective aspect.

1. Temporal semantemes

The following temporal semantemes used in this paper need some explanations.

— 'Moment of X' is understood as 'the moment Y at which a momentary fact X takes place'. (Thus, 'moment of X' is an abbreviation for the two-place predicate 'moment Y of X'; in other words, 'moment' means 'moment Y'.)

— 'Time interval of X' = 'the time interval Y such that at each moment of it X is taking place'. The expression 'time interval' corresponds to one semanteme; the name is chosen so as to disambiguate the noun interval, which denotes either a spatial or a temporal interval. The meaning 'interval' implies boundaries, i.e., having a beginning point and an end point: an interval is always between two moments. ('Time interval' is again an abbreviation for 'time interval Y'.) For the special case of Russian delimitative verbs (of the type pospat' 'have slept a bit'), a particular type of 'time interval' is needed: the interval denoted by a delimitative verb is conceived as a non-analyzable whole that can be called a 'compact time interval'. A compact time interval is not a moment, but it is close to a moment in its non-analyzability. Therefore, the component 'compact time interval' can appear in definitions in disjunction with 'moment'.

— 'Time of X' stands for the disjunction 'moment Y or time interval Y of X'. ('Time' means of course 'time Y'; the same type of abbreviation as above.)

2. ‘Enunciator’

The semanteme ‘Enunciator’ represents the disjunction ‘Speaker [= the executor of a primary speech act] or the executor of a secondary speech act’. A primary speech act is a regular sentence; a secondary speech act is a sentence reported in a primary speech act (Ivan skazal, čto poka deti spali, on rabotał Ivan said that while the kids were asleep he was working: the boldfaced part constitutes a secondary speech act). ‘Speaker’ means the same as 1; the Speaker is the author of any sentence. The person to whom the Speaker attributes the reported sentence (in our example, Ivan) is the author of the secondary speech act.

3. ‘Interval’ reading of the Russian perfective aspect

The semantics of POKA is intimately related to the aspectual properties of the verb it introduces. In particular, the fact that some perfective aspect verbs can denote an event that occupies a time interval turns out to be of crucial importance.

The Russian perfective aspect is prototypically associated with momentary events: the sentences Maša prosnulas’ pot v tri časa 'Masha woke up at three o’clock' and Ivan ujděl po 1 v tri časa 'Ivan will leave at three o’clock' denote momentary events that take place at particular moments. But no less often a perfective form can be associated with a time interval;2 here are three relevant cases.

• A semantically resultative verb in the perfective aspect denotes a momentary event E1, which is the achievement of the result of the last event E2 denoted by the corresponding imperfective verb. However, in appropriate contexts a perfective resultative verb can denote an interval event E2. Thus, the sentence Maša vymylala pot za tri časa 'Masha washed the floor in three hours' is associated with an interval during which the last event E2 ‘Maša myšla pot = Masha was washing the floor’ is taking place.

• A semantically delimitative verb (its meaning being ‘having done V a bit during a certain time interval’), which is always in the perfective aspect, obviously denotes an ‘interval’ event: Maša pospala pot v tri časa 'Masha has slept a bit—for three hours’; it cannot be taken to denote a moment: *Maša pospala pot v tri časa 'Masha has slept a bit at three o’clock’. (True, this is a particular type of interval, see above, but still an interval.)

• A negated vol, i.e., NE → Vvol, even a semantically punctual one, can be associated with a time interval: such that at each moment of this interval the

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2 Glovinskaja (2001: 271) indicates that all verbs in the perfective aspect—with the exception of momentary-punctual ones—‘agree quite well with the idea of temporal duration.’ Three of the four major semantic types of perfective verbs she has established accept the ‘interval’ prepositional phrase ZA + Num + N ‘in Num N’, e.g., za tri dni ‘in three days’.
situation (denoted by) V is not taking place, as in, for instance, Maša ne ušel proč v
těčení blízkých dvou časů. The situation “Masha has not left” will last for the next two hours. However, an
interval interpretation for a NE→Vpet verb is appropriate only under certain
conditions, of which we will indicate three that are relevant for the use of a NE→Vpet
verb in Poka-clauses.

First, the aspect of the main clause verb: namely, this verb’s being in the
imperfective makes the interval interpretation of the verb in the Poka-clause possible.

3. A Maša čitala knihu, pok s Ivan ne ušel
Maša was reading the book while Ivan had not left.

b. *Maša pročítala knihu, pok s Ivan ne ušel
Maša completed reading the book while Ivan had not left.\(^1\)

Second, the referentiality of the Poka-clause: in order to allow for an interval
interpretation, NE→Vpet must refer to a non-actual situation, that is, a situation
that exists only in an imaginary world. Thus:

4. a. Maša mohla by pozval Ivanu
Maša could have called Ivan
... esli Maša pozvolila Ivanu
... if Masha calls Ivan
Pozval Ivanu
Call Ivan

Here, the non-actuality of the situation referred to by the subordinate clause is en-
tailed by the modality of the main clause (subjunctive, conditional, imperative). In
case the Poka-clause refers to an actual situation, the sentence is ungrammatical:

b. *Maša pozvala Ivanu, pok s on ne ušel
Maša called Ivan while he had not left.

Third, an interval-impliring expression—such an adverbial as (všel) ušel ‘still,
yet’—enhances the acceptability of interval reading. This factor is the strongest
one: the bad sentences (3b) and (4b) can be salvaged by introducing Ušel (Maša
pročítala knihu/pozvolila Ivanu, pok on ušela ne ušela).\(^1\)

The interval reading of a resultative or negated perfective verb in a given
context does not of course preclude this verb having—in another context—a
momentary reading, as in Maša vymyšlená pok v tri času. Masha washed the floor
at three o'clock [a resultative Vpet] and Ivan ne ušel v tri času. Ivan didn’t leave

at three o’clock [a negated punctual Vpet]. A delimitative Vpet cannot have a
momentary reading (in accordance with its meaning), but, as indicated above, it
denotes a compact interval, which in some contexts is equivalent to a moment.

In what follows, P and Q stand both for situations and the clauses describing
these situations; we will write V(P)V(Q) for ‘the lexical verb of P of Q’. For
instance, if P = Nado bylo položit ... ‘It was necessary to obtain’, then V(P) =
POLOŽIT ‘obtain’.

3 Lexicographic Description of the Vocabular Poka

The study of the conjunction Poka revealed vast families of its uses with a high
level of disagreement among speakers. We are not a position to launch a socio-
linguistic investigation to obtain reliable statistical data; therefore, we decided to
simplify our task by considering all dubious or questionable cases as ungrammati-
tical: we lack facts for a more refined characterization. On the other hand, Poka
being polysemous, many sentences are ungrammatical with a particular lexeme of
Poka, while with another lexeme they pass. Therefore, an asterisked example in
what follows always refers to a particular meaning (= lexeme) of Poka.

The lexicographic description of the vocabular Poka is carried out in accor-
dance with the principles and conventions of Explanatory Combinatorial lexico-
graphy (see, for instance, Mel’čuk et al. 1995 and Mel’čuk 2006b). We will
assume sufficient familiarity with it and, more generally, with the main concepts
and techniques of Meaning-Text linguistic theory, while limiting ourselves to two
short remarks.

- The form of the definition: Along with the verbal definition of the headword,
we offer also its formal semantic representation—in the form of a Meaning-Text
theory semantic network, in which the communicatively dominant component is
shown by underscoring and the presupposed part, by a dashed-line rectangle.

- Linear order of the clauses P and Q: In Russian, a clause introduced by a
subordinate conjunction (= subordinate clause) can generally precede or follow—
or even be inserted into—the main clause; this is the default case, for which we
use in the left-hand side of the definition the order “Main Clause P → CONJ →
Subordinate Clause Q.” Otherwise, the possible linear position of the subordinate
clause must be explicitly indicated in the lexicographic description of the
conjunction introducing it (see the lexical entries for PokaCL and PokAI).

Note that the order of the clauses P and Q is not arbitrary: it is controlled by
the communicative structure of the sentence. However, we will allow ourselves to
make abstraction from this important aspect of the sentence meaning.

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Lexical Entries for the Vocaleble POKA

POKA ≈ ‘while, before, until’, descriptive subordinate conjunction

POKAI, non-illocutive

POKAI.1 ‘while/as long as’ [Poka Ivan rabotal, Masha čitala ‘While Ivan was working, Masha was reading’]

POKAI.2a ‘before’ [Maša pročoviti, poka Ivan ne prosmušja ‘Masha will call before Ivan wakes up’]

POKAI.2b ‘[last]ing until’ [Maša budet stičat, poka (ne) otkrijtu ‘Masha will knock [on the door] until they open’]

POKAI.3 ‘until ..., enough time’ [Nu, poka Ivan vreměišja. Masha viš prigotovit ‘Well, until Ivan comes back, Masha will have enough time to prepare everything’]

POKAI, illocutive

POKAI.1 ‘while’ [Poka deti spjat, čto s Mašej? ‘While the kids are asleep, what is happening to Masha?’]

POKAI.2 ‘before’ [Poka Ivan ne vreměišja, čto s Mašej? ‘Before Ivan came back, what is happening to Masha?’]

POKAI, non-illocutive

1.1. Definition

P, poka Q ³ P, while/as long as Q, ⁵ [P,] the time of P being included in the time interval of Q,

[[the Enunciator believing that P and Q are connected]]

\[ 'P' \begin{array}{c}
\text{'time interval'} \\
\text{'be included'}
\end{array} \quad 'Q' \]

\[ 'Enunciator' \begin{array}{c}
\text{'be connected'} \\
\text{'believe'}
\end{array} \]

⁴ Descriptive conjunctions express ‘objective’ semantic relations between facts (e.g., a temporal relation: We were working when it was raining); rhetorical conjunctions mark ‘rhetorical’ semantic relations between clauses (e.g., a concessive relation: We were working although it was raining). A rhetorical relation between clauses necessarily embodies the Speaker’s attitude. See Iordanskaja 1992 and Iordanskaja & Mel’čuk 2007: 421ff.

⁵ The English conjunctions WHILE and AS LONG AS, used to gloss POKAI, are distributed, in accordance with their own semantics, as follows: in case where the ends of the intervals P and Q coincide, AS LONG AS is chosen, see examples (8) – (11); otherwise, WHILE is chosen.

Government Pattern

\[ Q \Leftarrow II \]

1. CLAUSE

Syntactic Properties

If V(Q) is in the perfective aspect:

1) If V(Q) is resumptive and in the past tense, then the sentence is ungrammatical;

2) If V(Q) is delimitative and V(P) is not delimitative, then if V(P) is either punctual or both not punctual and and the sentence is ungrammatical;

3) If V(Q) is punctual, and has negation, and is not modified by EŠČE ≈ 'yet' and V(P) is in the perfective aspect, then if V(Q) refers to an actual fact, then the sentence is ungrammatical.

(For examples, see Comment 5 below.)

Lexical Functions

Syn : coll. pokuda.1, obsolelent pokamnest.1

Synγ : kogda; v to vremja kak; v tečenje

Examples

The interval of P is included in the interval of Q

(5) a. Masha mylaimport Pol, poka Ivan rabotalimport ‘Masha was washing the floor while Ivan was working’.

b. Masha ne mylaimport Pol, poka Ivan rabotalimport ‘Masha was not washing the floor while Ivan was working’.

c. Masha mylaimport Pol, poka Ivan ne rabotalimport ‘Masha was washing the floor while Ivan was not working’.

d. Masha ne mylaimport Pol, poka Ivan ne rabotalimport ‘Masha was not washing the floor while Ivan was not working’.

(6) Poka ozajain nativalimport gost’ malina ugonjalimport ‘While the host was pouring wine, the guest was driving away [instealing] his car’.

(7) Ja počišnjev, poka on postupil import ‘I’ll read a bit, while he’ll sleep a bit’.

(8) a. Oni budutimport živy, poka my ix ponimimport ‘They will be alive as long as we remember them’.

b. Oni ne umrutimport poka my ix ponimimport ‘They will not die as long as we remember them’.

(9) a. Oni budutimport živy, poka my ix ne zabudemimport ‘They will be alive as long as we will not forget them’.

in. ‘They will be alive as long as we will not forget them’.
b. Oši ne umri, voda na set počas, nápraví.
   'They will not die as long as we will not forget them.'
(10) a. Je na utečení {Zenit}, voda na set počas, nápraví
   'I won’t leave ‘Zenit’ [a soccer team] as long as we are the best.'
   b. Je na utečení {Zenit}, voda na set počas, nápraví
   'I didn’t leave ‘Zenit’ as long as we were the best.'
(11) Poka na podmienky, voda na set počas, nápraví
   'As long as we are able to joke, we remain (will remain) a great nation.'

The moment of P is included in the interval of Q.

(12) Maha prosnula 'pokřt', voda na set počas, nápraví
   'Masha woke up while Ivan was working.'
(13) Poka ty xodili v magazín, voda na set počas, nápraví
   'While you have been gone to the store, the radio announced the passing of the President.'
(14) Otravili jás v polikliniku, voda na set počas, nápraví
   'Go to see a doctor while you are in good health.'
(15) Ona prosnula 'pokřt', voda na set počas, nápraví
   'She woke up while it was still dark.'
(16) Poka Ivan zadýhal {pokřt} dýrku, voda na set počas, nápraví
   'While Ivan was filling up the hole, Masha cooked the dinner.'
(17) Ivan sodelal 'pokřt', voda na set počas, nápraví
   'Ivan will do his homework while Masha will have washed the floor.'
(18) Maha prosnula 'pokřt', voda na set počas, nápraví
   'Masha woke up while Ivan had still not left.'

Comments

1. Temporal characterization of P and Q
With POKA1, the clause Q can denote only an interval event; therefore, (19a), where Q specifies a moment (namely, the moment of leaving), is bad. In the correct sentence (19b), Q describes the interval during each moment of which Ivan has not left:
(19) a. Maha čitala 'pokřt', voda na set počas, nápraví
   'Masha was reading while Ivan left.'
   b. Maha čitala 'pokřt', voda na set počas, nápraví
   'Masha was reading while Ivan has not left.'
POKA1 is thus opposed to POKA2, where Q denotes a momentary event.

The clause P, on the contrary, can denote a lasting event (and thus be associ-
The first two disjuncts in the definition of KOGDA are related to the definition of POKALI. The first disjunct covers the interval inclusion: the meaning 'P interval is included in Q interval' is a particular case of the meaning 'P interval is simultaneous with Q interval'; the second is identical with the inclusion of the moment of P in the interval of Q. But the third, fourth and fifth disjuncts in the definition of KOGDA have no correspondences in the definition of POKALI. Therefore, POKALI can always be replaced with KOGDA (albeit with some semantic losses), but the converse is not true: in several uses KOGDA cannot be replaced with POKALI. Examples in (20) – (24) illustrate all five situations foreseen by the definition of KOGDA, indicating the possibility/impossibility of replacement with POKA.

(20) The time interval of P is simultaneous with the time interval of Q

a. Masha spalalaupert kogda Ivan xodiimpert v magazin

'Masha was sleeping when Ivan went to the store'.

b. Masha spalalaupert poka Ivan xodiimpert v magazin

'Masha was sleeping while Ivan went to the store'.

In (20a-b) the intervals of P and of Q are simultaneous. There are, however, two important differences between KOGDA and POKALI sentences:

• With KOGDA, the P interval is not limited by the end moment of the Q interval: the two intervals can overlap in the large sense of the term (in particular, the P interval can also be included in the Q interval). But with POKALI, the P interval only can be included in the Q interval, i.e., P does not last after Q ends.

• POKALI, but not KOGDA, carries a presupposition: by using POKALI, the Enunciator establishes some connection between P and Q (see Comment 4 below).

(21) The moment of P is included in the time interval of Q

a. Masa prosnulas part kogda byloimpert ešće temno

'Masha woke up when it was still dark'.

b. Masa prosnulas part poka byloimpert ešće temno

'Masha woke up while it was still dark'.

With the exception of the cases where V(Q) is in the perfective but not negated: cf. (18), where V(Q) is negated, so that replacing POKALI with KOGDA does not change the temporal relation between P and Q; while in (17), where there is no negation, such a replacement leads to a new temporal relation ('P follows Q').

(22) The time interval of P includes the moment of Q

Masha spalalaupert kogda (*poka) Ivan uščel*pret

'Masha was sleeping when (*while) Ivan left'.

POKALI is impossible because with POKALI Q can denote only an interval event, cf. (19).

(23) The moment of P coincides with the moment of Q

Vzryu proizasčel*pret raz v to moment, kogda (*poka) Ivan otkryl*pret dver

'The blast occurred exactly the moment Ivan opened the door'.

POKALI is again impossible—for the same reason as above: with POKALI, Q can specify only a time interval, not a moment.

(24) The time of P follows the time of Q

a. Masa prosnulas part poka kogda (*poka) Ivan uščel*pret (pospal*pret)

'Masha woke up when (*while) Ivan left (has slept)'.

b. Masa budet čitut part kogda (*poka) Ivan užičel*pret (opsis*pret)10

'Masha will read when (*while) Ivan will be gone (will have slept a bit)'.

Note that with POKALIa (as in Masa pozvonit, poka Ivan ne vrnjaša 'Masha will call before Ivan comes back') and POKALIb (as in Masa budet čitut, poka Ivan ne vrnjaša 'Masha will read until Ivan comes back') the fact P precedes the fact Q, while with KODGA the sequence of events is inversed, i.e., P follows Q. Thus, POKALIa/POKALIb and KOGDA are antonyms.

4. The presupposition P and Q are connected

The conjunction POKALI, unlike KOGDA, implies that P and Q are somehow connected—from the Enunciator’s viewpoint. In other words, the Enunciator affirms the existence of a link between Q and P: a causal link, a conditional link, a link of naturalness/unnaturalness of cooccurrence, etc. For instance:

(25) a. Petrov prodal*beat dom, kogda Ivan byl*pret za graničej

'Petrov sold the house when Ivan was abroad'.

b. Petrov prodal*beat dom, poka Ivan byl*pret za graničej

'Petrov sold the house while Ivan was abroad'.

In (25a), the Enunciator simply states that the moment of the sale of the house is included in the duration of Ivan’s being abroad. But in (25b), the Enunciator says more: he implies that both events—the selling of the house and the absence of Ivan—are, in his opinion, meaningfully linked: P happening during Q is not accidental. Indeed, (25a) can be easily uttered when Petrov and Ivan are
in reality not connected at all, and the Enunciator mentions Ivan being absent as a pure temporal reference point; in this case, POKAL1 would be inappropriate.

In (26), the unnaturalness of the situation “the Addressee amuses himself while his son is in serious danger” is obvious, and therefore, (26b) is more appropriate that (26a):

(26a) *Kogda ty razveklešas na kurorte, vtoj syn čut no u ner_part
1*When you were having good time at the sea resort, your son almost died.3

b. *Poku ty razveklešas na kurorte, vtoj syn čut no u ner_part
1*While you were having good time at the sea resort, your son almost died.3

Using POKAL1, the Enunciator does not specify the connection between P and Q. Thus, example (27a) can be complemented in two opposite ways:

(27a) a. *Poku Ivan xodilPart v magazin, Maša uspelePart vmytyPart pol
1*While Ivan was gone to the store, Masha washed the floor.4

b. *Poku Ivan xodilPart v magazin, Maša razumejša, uspelePart vmytyPart pol
1*While Ivan was gone to the store, Masha of course managed to wash the floor.4

c. *Poku Ivan xodilPart v magazin, Maša udivitelným obrazom uspelePart vmytyPart pol
1*While Ivan was gone to the store, Masha amazingly managed to wash the floor.4

In (27b), “P while Q” is characterized as natural (e.g., Ivan’s absence facilitates Masha’s business); in (27c), on the contrary, the Enunciator believes this to be unnatural (e.g., the store is too close). But in both cases, the existence of a connection between P and Q is implied.

From the viewpoint of Sem-Communicative Structure, the component ‘be connected’ is Presupposed: it is inaccessible for negation and questioning in case when the relation between P and Q is negated or questioned. Cf.

(28a) a. *Maša vmytyPart pol, no po ne poku Ivan xodilPart v magazin, a posle ego voz-vračenija *Masha washed the floor not while Ivan was gone to the store but after his return.5

b. *Maša vmytyPart pol, poku Ivan xodilPart v magazin?*[with interrogative prosody on the subordinate clause
1*Was it while Ivan was gone to the store that Masha washed the floor?5

In both (28a-b) only the temporal relation (= ‘while’—the assertion of the sentence—is negated or questioned; the connectedness of P and Q remains affirmed.

5. V(Q)is in the perfective aspect

As stated in Section 2, a Russian perfective verb can be associated with a time interval in three cases: if it is resultative, if it is deicticative, or if it is punctual and negated. The examples, illustrating the syntactic properties of POKAL1 used with a

perfective V(Q) (these properties were specified above), are grouped accordingly. V(Q) is resultative

(29) a. *Maša pozvonilaPart mne (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan zadelaPart dyrku in. *Masha called me ⟨cooked the dinner, slept a bit⟩, while Ivan has filled up the hole.1

b. *Maša pozvonilaPart mne (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan zadelaPart dyrku in. *Masha will call me ⟨will cook the dinner, will sleep a bit⟩, while Ivan will have filled up the hole.1

V(Q) is deicticative

(30) a. (i) *Maša pozvonilaPart mne, poku Ivan pospalapart
1 in. *Masha called me ⟨cooked the dinner⟩, while Ivan has slept a bit.1

(ii) *Maša pozvonilaPart mne, poku Ivan pospalapart
1 in. *Masha will call me, while Ivan will have slept a bit.1

b. (i) *Maša prigotovilaPart obed, poku Ivan pospalapart
1 in. *Masha cooked the dinner, while Ivan has slept a bit.1

(ii) *Maša prigotovilaPart obed, poku Ivan pospalapart
1 in. *Masha will cook the dinner, while Ivan will have slept a bit.1

c. (i) *Maša počitalePart, poku Ivan pospalapart
1 in. *Masha has read a bit, while Ivan has slept a bit.1

(ii) *Maša počitalePart, poku Ivan pospalapart
1 in. *Masha will read a bit, while Ivan will have slept a bit.1

V(Q) is punctual and negated

(31) a. (i) *Maša pozvonilaPart mne (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan ne ušelPart in. *Masha called me ⟨cooked the dinner, slept a bit⟩, while Ivan had not left.1

(ii) *Maša pozvonilaPart mne (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan ne ušelPart in. *Masha will call me ⟨cook the dinner, sleep a bit⟩, while Ivan will not have left.1

b. (i) *Maša pozvonilaPart mne (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan ečči ne ušelPart in. *Masha called me ⟨cooked the dinner, slept a bit⟩, while Ivan had not yet left.1

(ii) *Maša pozvonilaPart mne (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan ečči ne ušelPart in. *Masha will call me ⟨cook the dinner, sleep a bit⟩, while Ivan will not have left.1

c. A esli Maša pozvonilaPart (prigotovilaPart obed, pospalapart), poku Ivan ne ušelPart (ne ušelPart)? in. *And if Masha calls ⟨cooks the dinner, sleeps a bit⟩, while Ivan had not left (will not have left)?1

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(245)
L. JORDANSKAJA, I. MEL’ČUK

1.2a.
Definition
P. poka ne Q | P, before Q| 1 | [voluntary action P,] the time of P being before the
moment or the compact time interval of Q| 2 |
[[the Enunciator believing that this is convenient for doing P]]| 3 |

Government Pattern

\[
Q \leadsto \text{ii} \n\]

Lexical Functions

Syn: colt. pokudal 2a, oblosec. pokamest 1.2a

Syn\(\uparrow\): ranše čem; prežde čemi; doitogo kak; doit

Anti\(\downarrow\): kogda [Maša pozvonit, poka Ivan ne vernuljašja ‘Masha will call
before Ivan comes back’ vs. Maša pozvonit, kogda Ivan
ernešija ‘Masha will call after Ivan comes back’]

Examples

(32) Poka ja ne zabral man, ja dolžen skazat ‘par’ (napominaju ‘impert’) tebe sledujočee
‘Before I forget, I have to tell you (I am reminding you of) the following’.

(33a) Najdi oto sedel ‘par’, poka kdo-nibud’ drugoj ne sdelal ‘par’
‘It has to be done before someone else has done it’.

(33b) Ozi namerevalis’ oto sedel ‘par’, poka kdo-nibud’ drugoj ne sdelal ‘par’
‘They intended to do this before someone else has done it’.

(34) Ja pozvonjite ‘par’, poka Ivan ne vernuljašja ‘par’
‘I’ll call her before Ivan comes back’.

(35) Ja porabojatite ‘par’, poka ne stalo ‘par’ temno
‘I’ll work a bit before it got dark’.

(36) Ja hodu myi ‘impert pol’, poka Ivan ne vernuljašja ‘par’
‘I’ll wash the floor before Ivan came back’.

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b. Ja ujdu ‘par’ (Ja ne ujdu ‘par’), poka Ivan ne vernuljašja ‘par’
iit. ‘I’ll leave (I won’t leave) before Ivan came back’.

(37) My opublikoval ‘par’ etot rezultat, poka drugie éto nego ne sdelali ‘par’
‘We published this result before other people did it’.

(38) My ne ujde ‘par’, poka deti ne pospal ‘par’
‘We won’t leave before the kids have slept a bit’.

Comments

1. Expletive NE

POKA1.2a requires the use with V(Q) of the particle NE ‘not’, which in this context
does not function as negation: it is an expletive particle, and it is obligatory.
The presence of this asemantic NE opposes the lexeme POKA1.2a (and POKA1.2b) to
POKA1, and its obligatory character—through POKA1.2b. With POKA1 the particle NE
is used as negation; omitting it necessarily changes the meaning:

(39a) Ivan pozvonit ‘par’, poka [POKA1.2a] my rabotaem ‘Ivan will call while we work’, a

(39b) Ivan pozvonit ‘par’, poka [POKA1] my rabotaem
‘Ivan will call while we do not work’.

(40) Ivan pozvonit ‘par’, poka [POKA1.2b] ne načali ‘par’ rabotat’
iit. ‘Ivan will call before we started working’. [Without NE, (40) is ungrammatical]
In (39a), Q denotes the interval situation “we work,” and in (39b)—the interval
situation “we do not work;” here NE is semantic and means ‘not’. In contrast, in
(40), Q denotes the future momentary event “we start working;” here NE is exple-
tive and obligatory. On the other hand, (40) can also be used to express a different,
although pragmatically equivalent, meaning: ‘Ivan will call while we haven’t
started working [as yet];’ here Q corresponds to a time interval, POKA is POKA1,
and NE is semantic. Thus, (40) has a double reading; cf. Comment 5 below.

One could even speak of a compound conjunction POKA NE, if it were not for
the optional omissibility of the expletive NE—with POKA1.2b.

2. V(P) denotes a voluntary action

In examples (32) – (38), V(P) denotes a voluntary, teleological action; otherwise,
POKA1.2a cannot be used:

(41) *Ivan prošešija ‘par’, poka my ne načali ‘par’ rabotat’
iit. ‘Ivan will wake up before we started working’.

3. The past tense of V(Q) instead of the future tense

The V(Q) is in the past—even if, semantically, the clause Q refers to the future.
Such a clash of semantics and grammar is typologically plausible: in a number
of languages, a subordinate clause referring to the future time contains an expletive
particle and a ‘strange’ combination of mood and tense (thus, in Spanish, CUANDO
This case of paraphrasing illustrates a well-known linguistic phenomenon: a particular extralinguistic situation gives rise to two different linguistic meanings. When the Speaker faces the state of affairs represented by the schema in (44), he has a choice between two meanings—‘time interval’ or ‘end moment’—to describe the same reality: he can specify an event as occurring either during a particular time interval or before the end moment of this interval.

As a result, in some sentences POKA can be interpreted either as POKAL1 or as POKAL2. Thus, (43a) has two readings: one with an expletive NE, where Q (ne prosnulis) denotes a momentary event (POKAL2: before the kids wake up); the other one with a semantic NE, where Q (ne prosnulis) denotes an interval event (POKAL1: while the kids were not awake). The two readings are equivalent: they refer to the same state of affairs.

However, being equivalent, the two readings are not equally natural from a linguistic viewpoint. If the Speaker chooses to specify the interval T by indicating its end moment (for instance, ‘wake up’ for the interval of ‘sleeping’), then it is more natural to use the meaning ‘P takes place before X’s waking up’ than the equivalent meaning ‘P takes place during the interval whose end moment is X’s waking up’—just because the first one is simpler. As a consequence, POKAL2 is used, and the first reading of (43a)—with the expletive NE—is strongly preferred.

The existence of such ‘double readings’ makes the semantic description of POKA more difficult: its different senses are semantically equivalent in numerous contexts, which impedes one to perceive their distinctions. However, in other contexts these senses manifest different lexicographic properties: different government patterns, different syntactic cooccurrence, different synonyms and antonyms. This, we believe, justifies presenting these senses as different dictionary entries.

1.2b.

**Definition**

P, poka (ne) Q P, until Q: [P] the time interval of P lasting till the moment of Q, [[the Enunciatior believing that P and Q are connected]]

- ‘time interval’ ‘lastingly’ ‘moment’
- ‘be connected’
- ‘Enunciatior’ believe

---

11 The Speaker makes the choice ‘time interval vs. its end moment’ according to his focus of attention; the information about this is part of the communicative structure of the message (at the level of text planning).
Government Pattern
\[ 'Q' \leftrightarrow \Pi \]
1. (NE--)CLAUSE

Syntactic Properties
1. The expletive NE 'not' can be omitted in colloquial style, if and only if V(Q) is punctual, and V(Q) in the future tense, and V(P) is in the imperfective aspect, and Q follows P.
2. POKAL2 admits the use of the correlative prepositional phrase DO TEX (SAMYX) POR and DO TOJ (SAMOJ) PORY; the use of these phrases facilitates the omission of the expletive NE (Budu stučâť do tex por, poka otkrojut is. '[I] will knock on the door till the moment [they] open' sounds better than Budu stučâť, poka otkrojut).

Lexical Functions
- Syn 
- Synγν : colt. pokudal2b, obsolete. pokamest12b
- Synγ : (vplot') do2 togo, kak; (vplot') do1
- Antγν : kogda [Masha budet čitat', poka Ivan ne vernět'sja 'Masha will read until Ivan comes back' vs. Masha budet čitat', kogda Ivan vernět'sja 'Masha will wash the floor after Ivan comes back']

Examples
(45) Oti svažalís' imperf poka ne pobedíli
'I they fought until they have won'.
(46) Oni vsegdâ sijut na ulice, poka ne načinâtaši dožd'
'They always are outside until it starts raining'.
(47) a. Poka grom ne grijaet'parf, mužek ne perekreschîšis'parf
'Until it thunders, a peasant won't cross himself'.
   b. Mužek ne perekreschîšis'parf pokâ grom ne grijaet'parf
'A peasant won't cross himself, until it thunders'.
(48) Ja ne sjut'parf, poka ne vymojuj parf
lit. 'I won't leave until I will have washed the floor'.
(49) Ja porabolaj parf, poka ne stant parf temno
'I'll work a bit until it gets dark'.
(50) a. Ja budu stučâť imperf poka (ne) otkrojut
'I'll knock on the door, until they open'.
   b. Poka ne otkrojut parf ja budu stučâť imperf
'Until they open, I'll knock on the door'.

Semantics of the Russian Conjunction POKA

(51) Ja budu myt' imperf pol, poka Ivan (ne) vernět'sja
'I'll wash the floor until Ivan comes back'.
(52) a. A esli tup, tak derevo, rodiš' sja baobabom
   I budeš' imperf baobabom tyču let, poka pomrãs' imperf[V. Vysockij]
   'And if you are dull as a tree stump, you’ll be born a baobab
   And you’ll be a baobab one thousand years—until you die'.
   b. Cirkuliruj imperf poka sdosněš imperf 'Circulate until you croak!' } [the catch-line of a popular Russian joke]

Comments
1. Omissibility of the expletive NE
The omission of the expletive NE is possible under stringent conditions, formulated above; it is not possible:
   • in (45) – (46), because V(Q) is in the past, resp. present, tense, not in the required future;
   • in (47) – (48), because V(P) is in the perfective;
   • in (50b), because Q precedes P.
   The complete synonomy of sentences in (50a), (51) and (52) with or without NE (in (52) NE can be added) proves the asemantic character of NE in them.

2. Temporal characteristics of P and Q
P must denote an interval event, which explains the ungrammaticality of (53b):
(53) a. Ja budu zvonî imperf ej, poka Ivan ne vernět'sja
   'I'll keep calling her until Ivan comes back'.
   b. *Ja povozvî imperf ej, poka Ivan ne vernět'sja
      lit. 'I'll call her until Ivan comes back'.
Q must denote a momentary event. Example (46) does not contradict this constraint, since načinâtaši 'starts' in this sentence refers to a moment: the moment when the rain starts. Sentence (48) also meets this constraint: the resultative verb in it refers to a momentary event, namely, the completion of the operation—rather than to an interval event, as it does, for instance, in (17).

3. The presupposition
POKAL2b carries the same presupposition as POKAL:
(54) a. Petrov budet rabotat' imperf, poka proekt ne budet zaveršen
   'Petrov will work until the project is completed'.
   b. Petrov budet rabotat' imperf do zaveršenija proekta
   'Petrov will work till the project’s completion'.
While (54b) simply indicates the time limit for Petrov’s work, (54a) implies a connection between P and Q: Petrov’s work is somehow conditioned by the project’s completion.
4. Paraphrasing relation between POKAL2 and POKAL1

POKAL2b stands to POKAL1 in the same paraphrastic relation as POKAL2a, cf. (43):

(55) a. Maša budet citat'impar pok[POKAL2b] Ivan ne vernejšet'impar
   in. 'Masha will read until Ivan will come back'.
   b. Maša budet citat'impar pok[POKAL1] Ivan otsatvuet'impar
   in. 'Masha will read while Ivan is absent'.

Accordingly, sentences with POKAL2b admit 'double readings': for instance, (55a) can be interpreted as containing POKAL1 and means then 'Masha will read while Ivan has not come back'. See also (19b), where the sentence contains POKAL1, but admits a reading with POKAL2b.

1.3. Definition

POKA Q, P 'until Q, P': 'the length of the time interval lasting till the moment of Q being sufficient for P to happen [P]'

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{time interval} & \quad \text{lasts} \quad \text{moment} \\
\text{length} & \quad \text{sufficient} \\
\end{align*}
\]

Government Pattern

\[
Q \leftarrow i\quad ii
\]

Syntactic Properties

1. V(P) is in the perfective aspect.
2. Q preferably precedes P.

Prosodic Properties

Q may carry a special prosody: a rising contour on POKA, a lengthened last vowel, and increased tempo over the rest of the clause.

Lexical Functions

Syn = est. pokudal3, obduse pokamest3,3
Syn3 = prežde čem; do1 togo kak; do1; za to vremja čto

Examples

(56) a. Poka Ivan zadelal'est dyrku, Maša prigotovilat'impar (uspeļat'impar prigotovit'impar)
    obed 'Until Ivan filled up the hole, Masha cooked (had the time to cook) the dinner'.

b. Poka Ivan zadelal'est dyrku, Maša prigotovilat'impar (uspeļat'impar prigotovit'impar)
    obed 'Until Ivan fills up the hole, Masha will cook (will have the time to cook) the dinner'.

(57) Poka Ivan vernijšet'impar, Maša pozvoniti'impar domoj
    in. 'Until Ivan will come back, Masha will call home'.
(58) Peka stanet'impar, ja eščë porabotaju'impar
    in. 'Until it will get dark, I still will work some'.
(59) Poka Ivan zadelal'est dyrku, prošlo'impar tri časa
    'Until Ivan had filled the hole, three hours passed'.

Comments

1. Semantic particularities of POKAL3

POKAL3 differs semantically from POKAL1-2a, b in at least three respects:

• While the latter expresses a temporal relation between two facts P and Q, the former characterizes the time interval that ends at the moment of Q—by indicating the fact P that can happen during this interval.
• The sentences with POKAL3 introducing a resultative verb allow the paraphrases with ZA TO VREMJA, ČTO 'during the time that is necessary for ...: Poka on zakončit rukopis', možno tri raza sletat' v Pariž i obratno 'Until he completes the manuscript, one can fly to Paris and back three times' Za to vremja, čto on zakončit rukopis', možno tri raza sletat' v Pariž i obratno.
• POKAL3 lacks the presupposition of the connectedness between P and Q.

2. 'Double readings'

Sentences in (56) allow for an interpretation with POKAL1 (especially, if the linear order of Q and P is inverted).

3. The length of the time interval lasting until the moment of Q is sufficient

The presence of the semantic component ['the length of the interval is sufficient'] can be shown by the following examples:

(60) a. Poka Ivan pridet'impar, my pročitaet'impar catlyx tri glavy
    in. 'Until Ivan will come, we’ll have read as much as three chapters'.
    b. *Poka Ivan pridet'impar, my pročitaet'impar tol'ko tri glavy
    in. 'Until Ivan will come, we’ll have read only three chapters'.
(61) a. Poka Ivan pridet'impar, my uspeet'impar pročitat' pet tri glavy
    in. 'Until Ivan will come, we’ll have enough time to read three chapters'.
    b. *Poka Ivan pridet'impar, my ne uspeet'impar pročitat' pet tri glavy
    in. 'Until Ivan will come, we won’t have enough time to read three chapters'.

Semantics of the Russian Conjunction POKA
4. POKA1 vs. POKA2a-b
The following example demonstrates the contrasts between the three above senses:

(62) a. *Poka [POKA1] Ivan pridělal, Maša prigotovil obed
   In. °Until Ivan will come, Masha will have enough time to cook the dinner.°
   b. *Poka [POKA2a] Ivan ne pridělal, Maša budet gotovit' obed
   In. °Before Ivan has come, Masha will be cooking the dinner.°
   c. *Poka [POKA2b] Ivan ne pridělal, Maša budet gotovit' obed
   In. °Until Ivan will have come, Masha will be cooking the dinner.°

POKA1, illocutive
Syntactic Properties
Q precedes P.

Prosodic Properties
A falling contour “\-\-” on Q; a major pause “\|\|” after Q.

Definition
Poka Q, P

The moment of my saying P to you being included in the time interval of Q,
"I believe that this is convenient for my saying P to you\| [P, P]°

\presupposed\° \begin{align*}
\text{\textit{\begin{tabular}{l}
\textquoteleft say\textquoteleft \\
\textquoteleft \textit{moment} included\textquoteleft \\
\textquoteleft believe\textquoteleft \\
\end{tabular}}}
\end{align*}

\textit{\begin{tabular}{l}
\textquoteleft Q\textquoteleft \\
\textquoteleft time interval\textquoteleft \\
\end{tabular}}

Government Pattern
\(\textit{Q} \rightarrow \textit{P}\)

1. CLAUSE$_{prot}$

Lexical Functions
Syn
: coll. pokudalI1, obsolec. pokamesII1

Examples

(63) a. *Poka deti spijat, čto skazal vrač?
   °While the kids are sleeping, what did the doctor say?°
   b. *Poka deti spijat, kupi podarki zavtra!
   °While the kids are sleeping, go buy presents tomorrow!°
   c. *Poka deti spijat, u otca rak "While the kids are sleeping, Father has cancer.°

(64) *Poka miša v vozduše, korotko o sostava komand
   °While the ball is [still] in the air, a few words about the composition of the teams\[a soccer commentator\]

Comments

1. Common syntactic and prosodic properties of both illocutive POKA
There are two illocutive POKA1: POKA1 (= ‘while’, parallel to the non-illocutive POKA1) and POKA2 (= ‘before’, parallel to the non-illocutive POKA2a). Due to their illocutive characteristic, both share syntactic and prosodic properties.

   • Unlike the non-illocutive POKA1/2a, for an illocutive POKA, Q cannot follow P:

(65) *Čto skazal vrač, poka deti spijat?
   °What did the doctor say, while the kids are sleeping?°

   • The prosody of clauses with both lexemes of POKA allows for the distinction between POKA1 and POKA1/2a in cases where the subordinate clause Q precedes the main clause P:

(66) a. *Poka deti spijat, || Ivan gotovitšja k ot’ezdu [POKA1] °While the kids are sleeping, [I tell you that] Ivan is getting ready for his departure.°

   b. *Poka deti spijat, Ivan gotovitšja k ot’ezdu [POKA1]
   °While the kids are sleeping, Ivan is getting ready for his departure.°

The same happens even if Q is a question or an imperative:

(67) a. °Poka deti spijat, || gde otec? [POKA1]
   °While the kids are sleeping, [I ask you] where is Father?°

   b. °Poka deti spijat, gde otec? [POKA1]
   °While the kids are sleeping, where is Father?°

---

12 With POKA1 some verbs can be used as V(Q) in the past of the perfective aspect, if Q implies a resulting temporary state of affairs:

(i) Poka on razvedeli that mine požal štatište ego imejlo, kak u tehja dela?
   In. °While he has allowed me to use his e-mail, how are you doing?°

(ii) Poka Maša vyšla, čto s oteč? = In. °While Masha has stepped out, what about Father?°

This case was already mentioned in Footnote 7.
(68) a. Poka deti spjat, [ ] kupi podarki zavtra! [POKA1]
   ’While the kids are sleeping, I require you to] go buy presents tomorrow’!

   b. Poka deti spjat, kupi podarki! [POKA1]
   ’While the kids are sleeping, go buy presents’!

   In writing, the clause with POKA1 can be separated from the main clause by
   a colon or a dash, which indicates a longer pause and a more ‘final’ intonation.
   The same prosodic differences are characteristic of POKA12 and POKA12a.

   2. 'P vs. 'Enunciator

   The definitions of both lexemes of POKA include the semanteme ‘P = ‘Speaker’
   rather than ‘Enunciator’, which appears in all three lexemes of POKA. This is so
   because none of the POKA lexemes can be used in reported speech:
   (69) *Ivan skazal, čto, pokas deti spjat, u otca rak
   ’Ivan said that, while the kids are sleeping, Father has cancer’.

   3. The presupposition

   The presupposition in the definitions of POKA is more specific than in POKA1
   and POKA12b: it is identical to the presupposition of POKA12a. Instead of simply
   stating a connection between P and Q, it indicates that, in the Speaker’s opinion,
   the time of Q is convenient for the Speaker to utter ‘P’.

   II.2.

   Definition

   Poka Q, P [Before Q, P]: ’The moment of my saying P to you being before the
   moment of Q.
   [I believing that this is convenient for my saying P to you] [, P]’

   Government Pattern

   - Q ’⇒ II

   1. Nil⇒CLAUSE_pret, part

   Lexical Functions

   Syn   : prežde čemII; colt. pokudalII.2, obsolesc. pokametII.2

   Examples

   (70) a. Poka Ivan ne vernulsja_pret(*ne verněšsja_pret), čto s otcom?
   ’Before Ivan came back (*will come back), what about father?’

   b. Poka Ivan *verněšsja_pret(*verněšsja_pret), čto s otcom?
   [adem; in (70b) the verb is not negated].

   (71) a. Poka (ja) ne zabyl_pret, kuda ty edeš _impes?
   ’Before I forgot, where are you going?’

   b. Poka (ja) ne zabyl_pret, ssodi_pret za xlebom!
   ’Before I forgot, go buy some bread!’

   c. Poka (ja) ne zabyl_pret ty dolžen pozvoniti_pret Maše
   ’Before I forgot, you must call Masha’.

   (72) a. Poka deti ne průlili_pret, čto skazal_pret vrač?
   ’Before the kids came back, what did the doctor say?’

   b. Poka deti ne průlili_pret, kupli_pret podarki zavtra!
   ’Before the kids came back, go buy presents tomorrow!’

   c. Poka deti ne průlili_pret u otca rak
   ’Before the kids came back, Father has cancer’.

   Comments

   Synonymic substitutions of POKA12

   Besides colloquial POKUDAL2 or obsolescent POKAMESTII.2, the illocutive
   POKA12 has just one synonym, the conjunction PREŽDE ČEM ‘before’. This
   conjunction can also be used illocutively, although in this function it is less natural
   than the illocutive POKA12; it requires a longer pause after Q and a more ‘final’
   intonation on it, which is shown in writing by a colon or a dash:

   (73) Prežde čem deti průduť: čto skazal vrač? (… ssodi za xlebom! u otca rak)
   ’Before the kids came back: what did the doctor say? (… go buy some bread!
   / Father has cancer)’.

   Two other conjunctions, meaning roughly ‘before’—RANŠE ČEM and DO TOGO
   KAK, synonyms of the non-illocutive POKA12a, do not have an illocutive use:
4 Conclusion: Some General Issues

4.1 Particularities of the Proposed Description

It is useful to compare our lexicographic description of the conjunction POKA with its presentation in four major Russian dictionaries: Ušakov, Ožegov, Bolšoj Akademičeskij slovar’ and Malý Akademičeskij slovar’. These dictionaries treat POKA in a similar way: all distinguish two lexicographic senses of POKA: one of ‘simultaneity’ and one of ‘precedence’, which roughly correspond to our POKAL1 and POKAL2a. However, none of these dictionaries indicates the possibility of an illocutive use—our two POKAH, and none isolates the sense POKAL3 (‘the duration of Q is sufficient for …’). The main differences between the traditional descriptions of POKA and our proposal can be summed up in five points.

1. The structure of the vocabulary: in our description, the vocabulary POKA is subdivided into non-illocutive (POKAL1, 1.2a,b, 1.3) and illocutive (POKAL1 and 1.2) lexemes.

2. The presupposition: the definitions for all lexemes of POKA, except POKAL3, include presuppositions. POKAL1 and 1.2b presuppose a non-connected connection between Q and P; POKAL2a and POKAL1.2b indicate the Enunciator’s belief that the time of Q is good for doing P or uttering ‘P’.

3. The semantic components ‘time interval’ and ‘moment’: for the definitions of all lexemes of POKA, the temporal characteristics of P and Q turn out to be quite important. A systematic specification of these characteristics in terms of the semantic components ‘time interval’ and ‘moment’ allows for precise formulations in the definitions, so that a comparison of POKA with KOGDA can be carried out. On the other hand, the interplay of these components has revealed the interesting situation of two different, but equivalent meanings corresponding to the same state of affairs in the universe: Comment 5, the lexical entry for POKAL2a, p. 00.

4. The component ‘be included’ (in POKAL1): it ensures a precise expression of simultaneity of P and Q. Generally speaking, the simultaneity of two interval events allows for the overlap of the corresponding intervals; in the particular case of POKAL1 the event P cannot last after the end of Q.

5. Syntactic and prosodic properties: all lexical entries for different lexemes of POKA have their government patterns plus the indication, where necessary, of syntactic properties that cannot be described by the government pattern; POKAL3 and both POKAH are also characterized prosodically.

4.2 POKAL1 and POKAL2 as Separate Lexical Units

The two lexemes of POKA seem to lend themselves to a description that is diametrically opposed to ours: the POKAH construction can be described in terms of ellipsis (‘reduction’, ‘omission’, ‘deletion’) rather than by particular lexical entries for the two lexemes of POKAH. One could argue in the following way: the lexemes of POKAH differ from those of POKA only in that with POKA the expressions such as I (will) ask or I (will) tell you are simply dropped from the sentence; therefore, we do not need a separate senses for POKAH; instead, we should formulate a rule of ellipsis for these expressions, just as we state rules for the cases of the type Ivan left for London, and Mary (left) for Paris or Rus. Mme vremja tlet’, tebe (zvonila) cvesti [Pushkin] is ‘To me time [is] to rot, to you [it is] to bloom’; no one would ever think to describe such and similar constructions by creating special lexical entries (special lexical entries of what?). The proposal to deal with the illocutive uses of conjunctions in terms of ellipsis is put forth in Sannikov 2005. But we cannot agree with it.

First, the use of the term ellipsis is problematic in this respect. We prefer to call ellipsis the deletion of (a configuration of) specific signs in a specific context (see Mel’čuk 2006a: 494). But it is difficult to say what exactly is deleted in a sentence like (75):

(75) Poka ne zabył, zvonila Maša in. ‘Before I forgot, Masha called’.
I want you to tell me that …, I must say to you that ..., inform you that ..., I warn you that ..., etc. or something else? Sentence (75) does not sound like an ordinary syntactic ellipsis, which consists in removing a specific lexical unit, having particular government and agreement properties that leave observable traces in the neighboring context. This sentence contains an implicit expression of a vague enough meaning ‘Tell me to you ...’ In point of fact, this meaning even cannot be properly lexicalized, i.e., expressed explicitly: lexicalization makes it more specific. It is implicitly expressed by both POKAH as part of the meaning of the latter.

Second, and more importantly, the possibility of such an implicit expression of the meaning ‘I say ...’ is restricted to some particular Russian conjunctions. As was already stated (Section 1, example 23), some conjunctions nearly-synonymous with POKA do not allow for such expressions; here is another example:

(76) a. Poka deti spišat, u otca rak ‘While the kids are asleep, Father has cancer’.

b. *Kogda deti spišat, u otca rak ‘When the kids are asleep, Father has cancer’.

Therefore, the ability to express implicitly the meaning ‘I say ...’ has to be lexico-graphically marked for the corresponding conjunctions.

Third, this ability, that is, this semantic property, is linked to a set of other
lexicographic properties, as can be clearly seen from the lexical entries for POKA: namely, syntactic and prosodic properties. According to Criterion II.1 for the division of lexicographic senses (“Differentiating Lexicographic Information,” Mel’čuk 2006b: 294ff), we have to describe these facts by separate lexical entries for the lexemes of the vocable POKA.

4.3 An Additional Remark on the Notion of Illocutivity of Conjunctions
Sannikov 2005 allows for the illocutivity of a conjunction only in the case when there is no logical-cognitive link between the content of P and that of Q. However, the presence of such a link does not exclude the illocutivity of the conjunction that subordinates Q to P. Thus, in sentence (77)

(77) Začem ty pojďš v universitet (= P), raz tam nikogo net (= Q)?
13 What will you go to the university for if there is nobody there?13

the situations P and Q are of course logically and pragmatically linked: generally speaking, there being nobody at the university implies that it is unreasonable to go there. However, the conjunction RAZ, which means, roughly, ‘P being natural if Q’, cannot semantically bear on the proposition ‘you will go to the university’: going to an empty university is unnatural in the given context, which would contradict the meaning of RAZ. What is natural in (77) is my uttering the question. In other words, the conjunction RAZ is illocutive here. Here is a similar example with POKA:

(78) Poka my ne smerli s golodu, kuda ty del kolbasu?
14 Before we starve to death, where did you hide the sausage?

Although the meanings of P and Q are pragmatically linked in an obvious way, the conjunction indicates that what precedes our starving to death is my question rather than you hiding the sausage.

It is true that in many cases of the illocutive use of conjunctions the contents of P and Q are logically not linked; this, however, cannot be a criterial property.

4.4 POKA in Set Expressions

Some uses of the conjunction POKA are not—and should not be—covered by our lexicographic descriptions: namely, when POKA appears in set expressions. There are two types of such uses:

• POKA is morphologically governed (= specified in the government pattern of another lexeme). Thus, POKA marks the deep-syntactic actant it of ŽDAT ‘wait’:

(79) Ne nado ždat’, poka tebe proizgat ruku
15 You should not wait for someone to extend his hand to you.

13 For a semantic description of the Russian conjunction RAZ, see Iordanskaja & Mel’čuk 2007: 477ff.

14 This SemS is simplified; among other things, the corresponding Sem-Communicative Structure, except for the presupposition, is not shown.
In our case, the semantic ‘say’ [= ‘sa’] in the definition of POKAIL2 is allowed to map on ‘ask’ [question; = ‘o’]; ‘say’ is a general term for different speech acts, while ‘ask’ denotes a particular speech act (‘ask’ ⇒ ‘say’).

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