

Title: Specific Indefinites in Russian and the Use of 'odin' as an Indefinite Article
Author: Tania Ionin, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

This paper proposes that destressed *odin* 'one' in Russian is an emerging indefinite article which marks specificity (1), and provides an analysis of the felicity conditions on its use.

- (1) Masha vyshla zamuzh za odnogo lingvista.
#‘Mary married one linguist.’ [cardinal reading]
‘Mary married a specific linguist.’ [specific reading]

Semantically, specific *odin* (*odin-sp*) behaves like specificity markers cross-linguistically (cf. Lyons 1999), requiring widest scope. Pragmatically, the felicity of *odin-sp* depends on identifiability: (2) is pragmatically odd because fish are not normally identifiable. This is captured by the *speaker identifiability condition* in (3b) (cf. Abusch and Rooth 1997, Farkas 2002 for similar proposals concerning the English *a certain*). The semantics in (3a) accounts for the scope-taking properties of *odin-sp*.

- (2) Petr pojmal (#odnu) ogromnuju rybinu.
‘Peter caught one huge fish.’ [fine on cardinal reading]
- (3) a. **semantics:** A sentence of the form [*odin* α] β expresses a proposition only in those utterance contexts c where the speaker intends to refer to exactly one individual y which is α in c , **and the felicity condition in (3b) is fulfilled**. Then, [*odin* α] β is true at an index i if y is β at i and false otherwise.
- b. **pragmatics:** the speaker is able to name **an identifying property** $\varphi \in D_{(s,et)}$ such that $\varphi(w_c)(y)=1$ and $\forall z[\alpha(w_c)(z)=1 \text{ and } z \neq y] \rightarrow \varphi(w_c)(z) \neq 1$, and $\varphi \neq \alpha$ and $\varphi \neq \beta$.

The conditions in (3) have further empirical consequences regarding the obligatory *indefiniteness* of *odin*, which cannot be used with unique referents (4).

- (4) K nam zashla odna Petina kuzina/podrugа/#mat’.
‘A cousin/friend/#mother of Peter’s came by’

The indefiniteness of *odin* is derived from (3b): when the set contains only one element, using *odin* to indicate identifiability violates the Gricean Quantity Maxim. It will be shown that further support for this analysis comes from copular possessive constructions (cf. Kondrashova 1996).