

Title: The Functioning of Explanatory Complex Sentences (ECS) with the Conjunction ‘chto’ in Written Texts of L2 and Heritage Learners of Russian (Advanced Level)  
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**Abstract:**

The class of explanatory complex sentences (ECS) in Russian has attracted increased attention among linguists after publication of the Lexico-Syntactic Dictionary of Russian Language: Models of Complex Sentences (2007). ECS typology (e.g. sentences with proper object clauses vs. sentences with object-topical clauses), categories of contact/supportive words in the structure of ECS, conjunctive words (e.g. questions about the emergence of a new joint o tom, chto), the textual/discourse function of ECS, and other related questions became subjects of discussions. Among these, the suggested explanations of the function and usage of the demonstrative pronoun to (correlative word) in the superordinate part of ECS are of particular interest in the context of second language pedagogy. This paper presents an analysis of how L2 and heritage learners of Russian (advanced level) use ECS with the conjunction chto in written texts about general interest (non-personal) subjects (social issues, politics, education, history). The genres of texts analyzed are typical of academic writing: annotation, argumentation, expository essays, and research papers. The data is based on texts included in the Russian Learner Corpus (RLC). One of the key notions I use in the analysis is the concept of “contact frame” (kontaktnaia ramka) which consists of a lexical component (a contact word in the superordinate clause) and a grammatical component (a conjunction in the depended clause). Following this rubric, I compile lists of lexico-syntactic models of ECS typical for written texts produced by L2 and heritage learners of Russian. The resulting compilation animates the subjects discussed in the paper: deviations from the norm when constructing ECS, the function of demonstrative pronoun to in the structure of ECS (notably, how the correlative word to in the main clause of ECS impacts the pragmatic meaning of its depended clause [syntax-pragmatics relations]), and possible approaches for teaching the syntax of complex sentences to learners of Russian.