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Pragmatic potential of Russian discursive units: a constructional approach

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Summary: Because different languages often lack semantic equivalents, translation may require looking for other cross-linguistic correlations on the level of the utterance. To find a functional equivalent that is adequate to the translation of a given context, the search should focus on pragmatic correspondences rather than semantic equivalents. The present article examines this phenomenon on the basis of the Russian near-synonymous discursive units with focus-sensitive semantics *imenno* (just/precisely) and *kak raz* (just/precisely). They are important elements of communication but have far not been fully described. Using relevant lexicographic information, text corpora, including parallel corpora, and works of fiction, we are going to show that synonymy of these discursive units is not as complete as it appears at first glance. We will analyze their semantic and pragmatic properties, usage peculiarities as well as systemic and translational equivalents in English, German and Swedish.

Keywords: discursive units, pragmatics, semantics, corpus analysis, constructions

1 Introduction

In the translation of texts from one language into another the paramount role is played not by the semantic equivalence of the individual lexical units and constructions comprising the utterances of the text, but by the functional-pragmatic correspondence between these utterances in the source language L1 and target language L2. Oversimplifying somewhat, it can be said that in translation pragmatics takes precedence over semantics. The translator's task is to achieve the same pragmatic effect as in the utterances of the original text. This is particularly true of discursive units in dialogue, since in translation it is necessary to

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show what sort of relationship exists between the communicants, how they evaluate the events being discussed, etc. The use of parallel corpora makes it possible to quickly assemble a large number of contexts in which discursive units with a very complex semantic structure in one language are adequately translated into other languages. Putting it more precisely, what is adequately translated are not the units themselves, but the utterances of which these units are elements. Here it is important to realize that such translation equivalents are not equivalent in the language system. The semantic structures of the unit components in L1 and L2 often do not coincide. The present article examines this phenomenon on the basis of the Russian near-synonymous discursive units with focus-sensitive semantics *imenno* (just/precisely) and *kak raz* (just/precisely). They are important elements of communication but have thus far not been fully described.

To elucidate the ways in which meanings can be conveyed adequately using the resources of other languages, it is first of all necessary to identify the basic differences between these two Russian discursive units *imenno* and *kak raz*.

They can be distinguished from each other on the basis of semantics, pragmatics, and usage preferences. Often, although not always, pragmatic and/or usual differences are semantically motivated. Syntactic distinctions among near-synonyms, including those in certain syntactic patterns, are also generally motivated by differences in their semantics. In a number of cases the problem is solved through the use of translational equivalents; that is, not on the level of individual lexical units (words and phrasemes) but on that of the entire utterance. Using relevant lexicographic information, text corpora, including parallel corpora, and works of fiction, we shall:

- a) clarify semantic and pragmatic properties as well as usage peculiarities of the focus sensitive discursive units *imenno* and *kak raz*;
- b) analyze their systemic and translational equivalents in English, German and Swedish.

2 Research goals and data

There is a group of discursive units in Russian¹ which have a certain semantic resemblance and common pragmatic features. All of these units are focus-sensitive.

¹ For descriptions of Russian discursive words see especially Baranov et al. (1993), Kiseleva and Paillard (1998, 2003), Kobozeva (2006), Šaronov (2009) which are specifically devoted to this layer of the lexicon.

The group of units considered in the present study includes the particles and constructions *imenno* (just/precisely) and *kak raz* (just/precisely). They are traditionally described as synonyms, for example, in MAS (1985–1988), BTS (2002). Intuitively one senses that despite the similarity in meaning of those described as synonyms, they are not interchangeable in all contexts because each of them has individual characteristics.

The pragmatic function of the units under consideration depends on the dialogic situation and can consist in the expression of agreement, disagreement, doubt, etc. In certain contexts some of these units are interchangeable. Elsewhere, however, they cannot be easily substituted for each other, since their semantic structure contains features that the semantics of the others lacks, and there are also other reasons of a pragmatic and stylistic nature. Obviously, in contexts in which individual semantic features are being profiled, substituting a unit for a near-synonym is impossible.

The pragmatic limitations derive from the specific functional preferences of each of these units. For some of them expressing agreement is more typical, whereas for others it is disagreement. Certain functional peculiarities and distinguishing semantic features have already been described in the literature, especially with reference to *imenno*, *kak raz* and *to-to i ono* on the basis of Russian materials (Dobrovol'skij and Levontina 2012, 2014; Levontina 2004a; Paillard 1998a 1998b) and parallel corpora (Dobrovol'skij and Pöppel 2015, forthcoming) and *eben*, *gerade*, *ausgerechnet* on the basis of a Russian-German and German-Russian parallel corpus (Dobrovol'skij and Šarandin 2013). Using corpus data, including materials of parallel corpora, the present study aims to identify and describe the distinguishing characteristics of the discursive units *imenno* and *kak raz* and their translational equivalents in English, German and Swedish.

Our main working hypotheses are as follows:

a) different languages lack semantic equivalents, they solve the problem on the level of the utterance, where they encounter not systemic equivalents but entirely different parallels – translational equivalents, which are determined by pragmatics to a greater degree than by semantics.

b) Both *imenno* and *kak raz* are used in certain types of lexico-syntactic constructions (for example, with verbs of certain semantic classes and with certain deictic elements, particles, and adverbials). Depending on the construction in which they occur, without in general changing their semantics, they can acquire a completely different pragmatic potential. Thus if we imagine that *imenno* is used in constructions C1, C2, C3, ..., Cn, and *kak raz* in constructions C1, C4, C5, ..., Cn, then according to our hypothesis, in a construction of the type C1 both *imenno* and *kak raz* will be translated the same way and their subtle

semantic differences will be ignored, whereas in constructions C2, C3, C4, C5 they will be rendered differently, regardless of whether the Russian original used *imenno* or *kak raz*. Here we are assuming that in certain contexts that focus the semantic differences between *imenno* and *kak raz*, a good translation will profile precisely these differences.

The analysis is corpus-based. The empirical data has been collected from Sketch Engine (ruTenTen [2011]) as well as the parallel corpora of Sketch Engine and the Russian National Corpus (RNC). All examples were collected between 1 February and 1 March 2015.

3 *Imenno* vs. *kak raz*: semantics

We will compare the discursive units *imenno* and *kak raz* in the function of focus sensitive particles in order to determine their specific semantic and pragmatic properties. As was noted in section 1, in a number of dictionaries such as MAS (I, 661; II 18), BTS (389, 410) *imenno* and *kak raz* are understood to be mutual full synonyms. Following Levontina (2004a), however, we consider that between these discursive units there are substantial semantic and pragmatic differences, and these will be described in the present section.

As a focus particle *imenno* can be described as follows: ‘among a certain number of objects, events, etc. some particular one of them is singled out and focused upon according to the feature that the speaker considers to be decisive, i.e. the most important element of the situation’, cf. (1).

(1) Итак, прокуратор желает знать, кого из двух преступников намерен освободить Синедрион: Вар-раввана или Га-Ноцри? Каифа склонил голову в знак того, что вопрос ему ясен, и ответил: – Синедрион просит отпустить Вар-раввана. Прокуратор хорошо знал, что *именно* так ему ответит первосвященник, но задача его заключалась в том, чтобы показать, что такой ответ вызывает его изумление. (М. А. Булгаков. Мастер и Маргарита (1929–1940))

And so the procurator wished to know which of the two criminals the Sanhedrin intended to set free: Bar-Rabban or Ha-Nozri? Kaifa inclined his head to signify that the question was clear to him, and replied: “The Sanhedrin asks that Bar-Rabban be released.” The procurator knew very well that the high priest would give *precisely* that answer, but his task consisted in showing that this answer provoked his astonishment. (Mikhail Bulgakov. Master and Margarita (Richard Pevear, Larissa Volokhonsky, 1979))

In (1) *imenno* simply performs a focusing function, singling out one component of the utterance, namely that the procurator had foreseen the choice of the Sanhedrin.

The core meaning of *kak raz* is ‘to point out an often random coincidence of two values or parameters’. Unlike *imenno*, *kak raz* focuses on the fact that the choice of an object is random or leads to unpredictable results,² cf. (2).

(2) Тут *как раз* в «Сорбонне» я снова встретился с мерзавцем Воробьяниновым. Я хорошенько отчитал его и его друга, бандита, не пожалел. (И. А. Ильф, Е. П. Петров. Двенадцать стульев (1927))

Then I met that wretch Vorobyeninov in the Sorbonne again. I gave him a good talking to and didn't spare his friend, the thug, either. (Ilya Ilf, Evgeny Petrov. The Twelve Chairs (John Richardson, 1961))

Often what is in the scope of *kak raz* is an event rather than an object, cf. (3).

(3) *Как раз*, когда Аксинья вошла, Липа вынула из кучи ее сорочку и положила в корыто, и уже протянула руку к большому ковшу с кипятком, который стоял на столе... (А. П. Чехов. В овраге (1899))

Just as Aksinya went in Lipa took the former's chemise out of the heap and put it in the trough, and was just stretching out her hand to a big ladle of boiling water which was standing on the table. (Anton Chekhov. In the Ravine (Constance Garnett, 1900–1930))

Here two events happen to coincide in time, so that *kak raz* is more appropriate than *imenno* (cf. Levontina 2004a).

In contexts where the distinctive features are weakened or are not the focus of attention, of course, interchanges are possible, cf. (4).

(4) “Well, in that case, Andrea, you might be just what we need around here. (Lauren Weisberger. The Devil Wears Prada (2003))

– В таком случае, Андреа, возможно, вы *как раз то*, что нам нужно. (Лорен Вайсбергер. Дьявол носит Прада (М. Маяков, Т. Шаббаева, 2006))

Stressed in (4) is the happy coincidence between the action and its result; that is, the search for a candidate ended in the correct choice. Here it is possible to substitute *kak raz* for *imenno*, but in that case the speaker would be focusing another element – the candidate's complete satisfaction of the necessary requirements.

In section 4 we will address in more detail the differences between *imenno* and *kak raz* in the groups we have singled out according to their ability to occur

² For this reason, *imenno* is often used in contexts of identification (on contexts of this type cf. in more detail Padučeva 2014). As for *kak raz*, this discursive unit is more seldom used in such contexts, since the notion of chance coincidence is emphasized in its semantics.

in various lexico-syntactic constructions with a certain semantico-pragmatic potential.

4 *Imenno* vs. *kak raz*: lexico-syntactic constructions

This section examines two groups of constructions – in the first *imenno* and *kak raz* are interchangeable, whereas in the second such an interchange is impossible or severely restricted.

4.1 Constructions in which *imenno* and *kak raz* are interchangeable

4.1.1 *Imenno* and *kak raz* focusing a moment in time

In this group *imenno* and *kak raz* occur in constructions whose general (and accordingly main) function corresponds to the meaning and function of adverbs of time, cf. (5) and (6).³

(5) Старик был в спальне. Он подошел к двери и выглянул в холл *именно* в тот момент, когда мальчик бежал по лестнице? Так? Девятнадцатый раз слышим.

(5a) The old man was in this bedroom here. He says he crossed to the door, walked down the hall, opened the door *just* in time to see the boy running down the stairs. Am I right? That's the story, for the 19th time.

(5b) Gubben var i sitt sovrum här. Han sa att han gick till dörren, längs hallen och öppnade dörren *precis* i tid så han såg pojken springa nerför trappan. Var det så? Så var det, för 19: e gången.

(5c) Der alte Mann war in diesem Zimmer hier. Er sagt, er ist rüber zur Tür, den Flur runter, hat die Tür geöffnet und den Jungen *gerade noch* die Treppe runterrennen sehen. Richtig? So heißt es, zum 19. Mal.

The use of *imenno* in (5) focuses the precise coincidence of two actions – the old man looking into the hall and the boy running down the stairs. The substitution of *kak raz* for *imenno* would emphasize that these actions just happened to coincide.

³ All examples that follow are from Sketch Engine [<https://www.sketchengine.co.uk/xdocumentation/wiki/Corpora/RussianWebCorpus>].

In Russian *imenno v tot moment* focuses the coincidence of two events. In English, Swedish and German the focus is on the notion of ‘just barely managed.’

(6) Надо подумать, последний раз, я помню, видел портсигар, когда я стоял там. Я как раз собирался помочь миссис Вилсон открыть сундук, когда вы вошли.

(6a) Now let me see, the last I remember having the case was when I was there. I was *just* going to open the chest for Mrs Wilson, when you came over.

(6b) Få se nu ... Sista gången jag minns att jag hade cigarettetuiet ... stod jag där. Jag skulle *precis* öppna kistan åt mrs Wilson, när du kom, Brandon.

(6c) Also mal sehen ... Zuletzt hatte ich mein Etui ... Als ich dort stand. Ich wollte die Truhe für Mrs. Wilson öffnen, als du dazukamst.

Kak raz in (6) emphasizes the chance coincidence between the speaker’s intention to open the suitcase and the action of his interlocutor. In contrast to (5), however, substituting *imenno* is hardly possible due to the following restriction. *Kak raz* combines with the verb *sobirat’sia* (be about to, intend), meaning, “to want to do something and be prepared to exert an effort to do it”, (Levontina 2004b), while *imenno* generally combines poorly with *sobirat’sja*. In Russian there is the construction *X kak raz sobiralsja sdelat’ Q, kogda P* with the meaning ‘X wanted to do Q and was prepared to exert an effort to do it when P happened, which was unforeseen from X’s point of view.’ In English, Swedish and German there is no such construction, so that the corresponding equivalents lack the element ‘chance coincidence of events from X’s point of view,’ where *kak raz* expresses this randomness.

4.1.2 The constructions *imenno èto/tak* and *kak raz èto/tak*

The structure of this construction contains the anaphoric element *èto* or *tak*, which points to some concrete component of a situation described earlier and focusing precisely this element, cf. (7) and (8).

(7) – Что ты имеешь в виду? – Конечно, это открытие. Двадцатилетнюю героиню играет актриса, которой двадцать четыре. – Дело не в этом. – Нет, *именно* в этом.

(7a) – What do you mean by that? – It must have been a revelation to have a 24-year-old character played by a 24-year-old actress. – That’s beside the point. – *It is the point*.

(7b) – Vad menar du? – Det måste ha varit en uppenbarelse att en 24-årig rollfigur spelas av en 24-årig skådespelerska. – Det är irrelevant. – *Det är poängen*.

(7c) – Was meinst du? – Es war sicher eine Offenbarung ... wenn eine 24-Jährige auch von einer 24-Jährigen gespielt wird. – Darum geht es nicht. – *Genau* darum geht es!

(8) Я туповата, но упорна, да? А ведь то, что вы сейчас сделали для меня, *как раз это* и нужно для детей!

(8a) Dense, but stubborn, right? Now, see what you just did for me? *That is just what* the kids need.

(8b) Korkad men envis, va? *Det du* just gjorde för mig är *precis* vad barnen behöver.

(8c) Schwer von Begriff, aber hartnäckig. Das ist *genau* das, was die Kinder brauchen.

In both (7) and (8) what is being compared are not two actions but an action and the opinion of the speaker. The absence of the second action weakens the main distinctive feature of *kak raz*, namely a comparison of two actions. In such cases interchange is possible. Accordingly, the use of analogous means is expected in other languages as well, as is shown in (7a), (7b), (7c) and (8a), (8b), and (8c). The English, Swedish and German equivalents generally employ two elements.

4.1.3 The constructions *kak raz to/tot/ta/tak* and *imenno to/tot/ta/tak*

This group of constructions includes the cataphoric element *to/tot/ta/tak*, which points to a component of a situation taken into account in the clause following this construction. Constructions of this group otherwise resemble those in 3.1.2., cf. (9) and (10).

(9) Кто такой Винс Фарадей? Это *именно то*, что хотят узнать участники расследования.

(9a) Who was Vince Faraday? *That's exactly what* investigators want to know.

(9b) Vem var Vince Faraday? *Det är precis vad* utredarna försöker komma på.

(9c) Wer war Vince Faraday? *Genau das* wollen die Ermittler wissen.

(10) Время от времени мэтры от кино и театра уверяют публику, что актеры и актрисы обычные люди. Они забывают о том, что публику больше всего привлекает *как раз то*, что они абсолютно не похожи на обычных людей.

(10a) Elder statesmen of the theatre or cinema assure the public that actors and actresses are just plain folks, ignoring *the fact that* their greatest attraction to the public is their complete lack of resemblance to normal human beings.

(10b) Äldre statsmän i teatern eller biografen försäkrar allmänheten att skådespelare bara är helt vanligt folk, utan att tänka på att *det som* lockar allmänheten mest är deras totala brist på likhet med normala människor.

(10c) Vertreter des Theaters oder des Films ... versichern dem Publikum, Schauspieler seien normale Leute ... und ignorieren dabei, dass die Faszination *darin liegt* ... dass sie menschlichen Wesen in keinsten Weise ähneln.

As in (7) and (8), in (9) and (10) an event is being juxtaposed with an assertion by the speaker that allows *imenno* and *kak raz* to be used interchangeably. As can be seen from the English, Swedish and German examples, the equivalents of *imenno* and *kak raz* in groups 3.1.2 and 3.1.3 are usually the corresponding constructions with or without lexical equivalents. The examples here use the following con-

structions: English *that's... what* (together with *exactly*), *the fact that*; Swedish – *det är.. vad, det som... är*; German *X darin liegt ... dass*.

4.2 Interchange is impossible or severely restricted

4.2.1 *Imenno* focuses one of the actants of a situation

Focusing of the actant is typical of *imenno* but such usage is not typical of *kak raz*, cf. (11).

(11) Доктор Пирс, у меня к вам необычная просьба. Я хочу продать свое тело. Почему вы хотите продать его *именно* мне?

(11a) Dr. Pierce, I have a rather peculiar request to make. I want to sell you my body. Why do you *particularly* want to sell it to me?

(11b) Doktor Pierce, jag har en något besynnerlig önskan. Jag vill sälja min kropp till er. Varför vill ni sälja den till *just* mig?

(11c) Dr. Pierce, ich habe ein ungewöhnliches Anliegen. Ich möchte Ihnen meinen Körper verkaufen. Warum *gerade* mir?

Substituting *kak raz* in (11) is impossible, since the main point is the precise choice of an object, in this case the interlocutor, to whom the speaker wants to sell his body. In other words, the function of *imenno* is to choose from among a potential number of possibilities, rather than to compare two values.

(12) Я не утверждаю, что все Лэрраби были святыми! [...] Но ни один Лэрраби не поступал так, как поступил сегодня Дэвид Лэрраби! В чём *именно* я провинился?

(12a) I'm not saying all Larrabees have been saints. [...] But no Larrabee has behaved as you have behaved tonight! – *Exactly* what have I done?

(12b) Alla Larrabees har inte varit helgon. [...] Men ingen Larrabee har uppfört dig som du. Vad *exakt* har jag gjort?

(12c) Nicht, dass alle Larrabees Heilige waren. [...] Aber kein Larrabee benahm sich je so, wie du heute Abend! – Was *genau* habe ich getan?

Substitution is also impossible in (12), since the speaker wants to learn specifically what it is he is being accused of. As in (11), here it is a question of a choice from among a number, in this case one reason from among all possible ones.

The examples in which *kak raz* focuses one of the actants of a situation were found only in the ruTenTen[2011] corpus,⁴ which is hundreds of times larger than the parallel corpora of Sketch Engine, cf. (13).

⁴ (13) and (14) are translated for the sake of clarity.

(13) Между тем Владимир Шахтин, полагающий, что положительных изменений добиваются *как раз он и его сторонники*, не исключил в беседе с БНКами, что будет оспаривать итоги выборов в суде.

In the meanwhile, Vladimir Šaxtin, who considered that *it was precisely he and his supporters* who would bring about positive changes, did not exclude in his conversation with the BNKomi [Komi News Bureau] the possibility that he would challenge the election results in court.

(14) На следующей неделе я улетаю домой. – Что? – Мне нужна еще одна операция. – Черт, мне жаль. – Ну, ты-то в этом не виноват. – Когда ты уезжаешь? И кто будет менеджером? – Грег постарался не думать о том, что виноват был *как раз он*.

(14) “Next week I’m flying home.” “What?” “I need another operation.” “Damn, I’m sorry.” “Well, it’s not your fault.” “When are you leaving?” And who’s going to be the manager?” Greg tried not to think about the fact that *it was precisely he/he was the one/who* was at fault.

In (13) and (14) *kak raz* and *imenno* are interchangeable. In (13) there is a potential comparison: Šaxtin gets something and his supporters get something: *kak raz* introduces the notion that these two events coincide. In (14) two opinions are compared – *this is not your fault* and *it is he who is at fault*. In the group being considered here the English equivalents of *imenno* are *particularly, exactly, precisely*, in Swedish *just, exakt*, and in German *gerade, genau*.

4.2.2 The construction *kak raz i*

This construction has its own meaning and pragmatics – namely, an element of comparison, since the element *i* included within it has the meaning ‘also’; i.e. it “adds” another event that is compared with the one mentioned earlier. This in turn explains the impossibility of using *imenno* in this construction. The main point is that *kak raz i* is lexicalized in Russian – that is, it is a phraseme – while the word group *imenno i* is not a unit of the Russian lexical system.

(15) Старикам небось и думать не надо. У них день с утра сам катится по заведенному. А может, им *как раз* и отрадно: тянется от утра до темна, и конца нет.

(15a) I guess, old people don’t have to think about anything. Each day for them rolls by itself. Or maybe, *it’s even very comforting* for them: it drags on and on from morn till night, with no end.

(15b) Gamlingar behöver nog inte tänka ens. För dem går dagen som av sig själv. *Det är kanske det* de gläder sig åt: från morgon till kväll, utan slut.

(15c) Gewohnheiten bestimmen Lebensweise. Besonders bei den Alten. Bei denen gleicht ein Tag dem anderen. *Vielleicht* gefällt es ihnen auch. So scheint jeder Tag unendlich zu sein.

In (15) the construction *kak raz* is used together with the adverb *možet*, which additionally emphasizes the chance coincidence of the event and the old people's attitude toward it. The analogous construction in Swedish is *det är ... det*, while in English and German it is *even* and *auch*.

4.2.3 Special questions: *kto imenno?* (who, exactly?); *čto imenno?* (what, exactly?); *kogda imenno?* (when, exactly?)

In special questions the interchange of *imenno* and *kak raz* is not possible. Cf. *kto imenno?* (who, exactly?); *čto imenno?* (what, exactly?); *kogda imenno?* (when, exactly?), etc., where **kto kak raz?* **čto kak raz?* **kogda kak raz?* etc. are clearly impossible.⁵ The prohibition against the use of *kak raz* is understandable, since the gist of such questions is to focus the interrogative word, and it is not possible to take other values into consideration, cf. (16) and (17).

(16) Интересно ... *где именно* он подрабатывает по вечерам? Ну ... Как он говорит ... обычно это разовые работы. Работа разнорабочим ... типа принеси-унеси, наверное так.

(16a) I wonder ... *where exactly* is it he goes to work of evenings. Like he says ... it's mostly odd things he does. Helping- like ... here and there, as it might be.

(16b) Jag undrar ... var det *egentligen* är han arbetar om kvällarna? Som han själv säger ... är det mest tillfälliga saker han gör. Hjälper till... här och där som det kan passa.

(16c) Ich frage mich... wo er abends *immer* arbeitet. Nun, er sagt... er nehme Gelegenheitsarbeiten an. Er helfe... hier und dort, wie es sich eben ergibt.

(17) Кажется, вы говорили, что получили их в наследство. Я... получил, старина, но большинство из них я потерял во время паники на бирже. Паники, связанной с войной. – *Каким именно* бизнесом вы занимаетесь? – Это – моё личное дело. Простите.

(17a) I thought you said you inherited your money. I did, old sport, but I lost most of it in the big panic. In the panic of the war. – What business are you *really* in? – That's my affair. I'm sorry. I'm sorry...

(17b) Du sa ju att du hade ärvt pengarna. Ja, men det mesta försvann i villervallan. Villervallan under kriget. – Vad sysslar du med *egentligen*? – Det är min ensak. Förlåt, förlåt...

(17c) Sagten Sie nicht, Sie hätten Ihr Vermögen geerbt? Ja, Sportsfreund, aber das meiste verlor ich in der Panik. In der Panik des Krieges. – In welcher Branche sind Sie? – Das ist meine Sache. Es tut mir Leid. Es tut mir Leid...

⁵ According to Levontina 2004a, we are dealing with a special reading of *imenno* in this case, namely "*imenno* 1" ≈ 'exactly'.

The exception among special questions is those introduced by *počemu* (why) and its synonyms, cf. (5). The reason this is possible is obvious – why-questions presume an underlying comparison of two different values. That is, the question *počemu X?* (why X?) can also be construed as *počemu X, a ne Y?* (why X but not Y).

4.2.4 *Imenno* as a separate utterance with or without the deictic elements *tak*, *vot*

The difference in the semantics of *imenno* and *kak raz* also motivates their syntactic behavior and pragmatic potential. Unlike *kak raz*, *imenno* can function not only as a focus particle but also as a separate utterance, cf. (18).

- (18) Прокурор совсем не дурак. Он сразу начнёт менять темп допроса. Он будет задавать вопросы, которые вы и предположить не могли. Что мы будем делать? Отвечать только «да» или «нет». *Именно* .
- (18a) This prosecutor is no fool. He' s going to change tempo, attitude, tone of voice. He' s going to come out with questions you never thought of just to screw you up. So what do we do? Yes and no answers. Stay calm. *Exactly*.
- (18b) Åklagaren är inte dum. Han kommer att ändra tempo, inställning, tonfall ... och ställa helt oväntade frågor för att förvirra dig. Vad gör du? Svarar ja eller nej och är lugn. *Precis*.
- (18c) Der Staatsanwalt ist nicht blöd. Er ändert sein Tempo, sein Verhalten, seinen Tonfall. Er stellt unerwartete Fragen, um Sie zu verwirren. Was tun wir also? Ja oder nein antworten. Ruhe bewahren. *Genau*.

As a separate utterance *imenno* focuses what was stated in the preceding utterance. *Kak raz*, on the other hand, always compares two different values, of which at least one must be expressed explicitly.

This is confirmed by the corpus data of the RNC. Cf. table 1.

Table 1: Separate utterances: *imenno* vs. *kak raz*

	RNC	
	<i>imenno</i>	<i>kak raz</i>
ending with a full stop	534	0
ending with an exclamation point	397	0
ending with a dash	557	0
Total	1488	0

As can be seen in table 1, we found 1488 examples in which *imenno* is used as a separate utterance. The corresponding results for *kak raz* are 0 contexts. The corpus data indicate that these discursive units display non-random differences in syntac-

tic behavior, and they corroborate our hypothesis that these syntactic features have a semantic basis.

When *imenno* functions as a separate utterance, it displays the variant *vot imenno*, in which the focusing function is strengthened by the deictic element *vot*,⁶ cf. (6).

(19) Ну, как когда пожилая леди несёт покупки домой, я не понесу её сумки, так далеко я не захожу, но дверь совершенно точно придержу, и пропущу её вперёд. Ага. Да и в любом случае, если бы ты попытался взять её сумки, она бы решила, что ты хочешь их спереть. – Вот *именно*.

(19a) So, like, I believe in trying to lead a good life. Like, if there's an old lady, carrying her shopping home, I don't try and help her carry her shopping, I don't go that far, but I'll certainly hold the door open for her and that, and let her go out before me. Yeah. And anyway, if you tried to help her carry her shopping, she'd probably think you were just trying to nick her shopping. *Exactly*.

(19b) Som att bära en gammal dams varor hem. Inte bära varorna, det gör jag inte – men jag skulle hålla upp dörren och låta henne gå före. Bär du varorna åt henne tror hon att du stjälar nåt. *Sån är världen av idag*.

(19c) Wie, alten Damen die Einkaufstasche tragen? So weit würde ich nicht gehen, ihr die Tasche zu tragen aber ich würde ihr sicher die Tür aufhalten, sie zuerst raus lassen. Ja. Wenn du ihr die Tasche tragen wolltest, hätte sie noch das Gefühl, du würdest ihre Einkäufe klauen. *Genau*.

The pragmatics of *imenno* as a separate utterance is to express agreement with a previously stated or expressed hypothesis or opinion. When used as a separate utterance it often confirms an opinion expressed by the interlocutor, and in such cases the semantic valency normally filled by the focusing element is left unfilled. This unfilled valency is by default filled by an element from the preceding utterance, which in a dialogue is usually the speech of the interlocutor. Thus *imenno* focuses the central element of the interlocutor's utterance, namely the element of the situation that is critical for it to be understood correctly.

5 Conclusion

Our analysis shows that in the discursive examples in Russian considered here, synonymy is not as complete as it appears at first glance. Using examples of synonymous particles and phrasemes, we have demonstrated that seemingly

⁶ The variant *vot imenno* occurs not only as a separate utterance, but – albeit more seldom – in the position of a focus particle within the utterance.

fully synonymous particle *imenno* and phraseme *kak raz* differ with respect to their syntactic use and certain semantic and pragmatic features. In addition, characteristic of each of these units is their use as an element of certain lexico-syntactic constructions that in some instances coincide with *imenno* and *kak raz* (in which case interchange is likely permissible), and in others differ.

Our work with the Russian National Corpus and Sketch Engine indicates that there are some cases in which the use of one near-synonym is correct and another entirely impossible. This concerns especially instances where we have to do with lexicalized constructions. Thus when the discursive unit *kak raz* is used in the construction *kak raz i*, replacing *kak raz* with the near-synonymous *imenno* is entirely impossible. Similarly, *imenno* cannot be replaced with *kak raz* in special questions of the type *kto imenno*. Replacing *kak raz* with *imenno* is greatly restricted in contexts where *imenno* focuses a specific actant. For example, in a question such as *V čem imenno ja provinilsja?* (*What, exactly, am I guilty of?*), replacing *imenno* with *kak raz* is practically impossible. It can only be considered in a rather artificial situation in which the speaker is referring to an utterance by an interlocutor in which *kak raz* was already used: something on the order of *A ty kak raz i vinovat*. Here the use of *kak raz* would be justified by the modality of the quotation.

In the other cases interchanges are permissible, albeit with different frequency and different degrees of cognitive entrenchment. Sometimes substitutions produce slight shifts that are always apparent to a sensitive native speaker. The following assumptions were advanced as working hypotheses of the study:

a) different languages lack semantic equivalents; they solve the problem on the level of the utterance, where they encounter not systemic equivalents but entirely different parallels – translational equivalents, which are determined by pragmatics to a greater degree than by semantics.

b) Both *imenno* and *kak raz* are used in certain types of lexico-syntactic constructions (for example, with the verbs of certain semantic classes, and with certain particles, adverbials, deictic elements). Depending on the type of construction in which they occur, they can, on the whole without changing their semantics, acquire a completely different pragmatic potential that is especially important for translation. Thus if *imenno* is used in the constructions C1, C2, C3, ..., Cn, and *kak raz* in the constructions C1, C4, C5, ..., Cn, then our hypothesis is that in constructions of the type C1 both *imenno* and *kak raz* will be translated the same and their subtle semantic differences ignored, whereas in the constructions C2, C3, C4, C5 they will be translated differently, regardless of whether *imenno* or *kak raz* was used in the Russian original. Here we assume that in certain contexts that focus the semantic differences between *imenno* and *kak raz* a good translation will profile precisely these differences.

The corpus data have confirmed all two hypotheses. As for the first of these, the analysis has shown that in order to find a functional equivalent that can be adequately used in the translation of a given context it is not at all necessary to have an equivalent in the language system. The similarity of the pragmatic function is more important here than similarity in the organization of the semantic structure of the L1 and L2 components. For more detail on this topic and on the semantic peculiarities of Russian discursive words and their equivalents in other languages, cf. (Dobrovolskij and Pöppel 2015, forthcoming).

It is important that the translator preserve the identity of the pragmatic function of an utterance or even a certain fragment of the text. Whether the means by which one or another function is coded are lexical or syntactic is not very important. For that reason studies of interlingual correlations based on the materials of parallel corpora must take into account not only lexis but also syntax. Something encoded lexically in the source language can very well be rendered in the target language through syntactic means.

One of the principal theses of our approach posits the unity of lexis and syntax. Incidentally, this is one of the central postulates of Construction Grammar. Precisely for that reason we take as our initial unit of analysis not simply the discursive unit *imenno* or *kak raz*, but constructions in which these units are a component part.

Immediately connected with this position is our second hypothesis, which is based on the premise that it is the semantics and pragmatics of lexico-syntactic constructions using both *imenno* and *kak raz* that determine how they are translated into other languages.

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