

ICHEU 2021
International Conference «Humanity in the Era of Uncertainty»

**INTERACTION OF CATEGORIES OF UNCERTAINTY AND
EXTREME**

Elena. P. Ivanyan (a), Alena. M. Klyushina (b)*
Corresponding author

(a) Samara State University of Social Sciences and Education, 65/67 M. Gorkogo Street, Samara, Russia,
ivanyan@pgsga.ru

(b) Samara State University of Social Sciences and Education, 65/67 M. Gorkogo Street, Samara, Russia,
klyushina@pgsga.ru

Abstract

The specifics of the Russian category of uncertainty is considered by comparing its constituents with the one of the functional-semantic categories of extreme. The novelty and relevance of the research are due to both the low level of knowledge of the category of extreme in the Russian language and the actual formulation of the problem of the interaction of these categories. The research methodology is based on the idea of the field organisation of the language and its elements, the descriptive method, component analysis and statistical processing of the material. The constituents' interaction zone of these categories in the indefinite pronouns phrases with the affix *-nibud'* (rus. *-нибудь* [some-]) and the particle *hot'* (rus. *хоть* [just, if only, at least]) is analysed for the first time with the novel "Crime and Punishment" by Fyodor Dostoevsky as a basis. The pronouns included in the intersection zone are defined and characterised in a descending order of frequency. The frequency denotations of the categories marked with the categories of uncertainty and extreme are described. The method of repeating the entire combination, its part, or semantic repetition of the utterance actualises the significance in the literary text. The method of "context guidance", that is, the method of strengthening the semantics of the extreme, is presented in the immediate context (the extreme results from poverty, need, the emotion of despair). The method of submission through "half-words" that replaces the direct presentation of information with indirect one through descriptive turns of speech, indefinite-pronominal words (pronouns and adverbs with the affix *-nibud'* is revealed in the paper.

2357-1330 © 2021 Published by European Publisher.

Keywords: Category of uncertainty, functional-semantic category of extreme, text



1. Introduction

Uncertainty is a category relevant to different sciences, various research paradigms, and social practices. The study of uncertainty as a category has a philosophical basis, and its state as infinity, endlessness, formlessness was already realised by Greek natural philosophers (Struk, 2011). Modern scientists are guided by the methodology of cognition of the "infinite by the ultimate" through the construction of theoretical schemes (forms) and types of empirical verification (Gerasimova, 2019). In psychology, the concept of uncertainty becomes relevant in the applied aspect in connection with the study of interaction in the "subject-object" system (Alishev, 2009); the identification of the quality of endurance in modern adolescents (Andronnikova, 2021). In psychology, sociocultural and personal predispositions are identified that determine the modern variety of subjective uncertainty and ambiguity manifestations. The tasks of fine-tuning the relationship between the resourceful and psychopathological aspects of the phenomenon of ambiguity and the cultural environment, considering the manifestations of manipulative media technologies, and exploring the status of the pervasive idea of "deconstruction" (Sokolova, 2013) are set. Scientists note that, in general, attention to subject-subject-object methodologies is increasing due to the increasing complexity of communication interactions in science and society in the digital age (Gerasimova, 2019).

2. Problem Statement

In linguistics, the category of uncertainty is associated with the presence of the article in the language. This category has a grammatical means of expression in article languages and is represented by the definite article – indefinite article opposition. In non-articular languages, there is no grammatical indicator, and the category of uncertainty is represented here by other means of expression. Thus, in Russian, the category of uncertainty is represented at different language levels (Sannikov, 1987). Modern studies consider the issue of the representation of uncertainty by pronouns lacking uncertainty markers (Tretyakova, 2009). The question is raised about the more complex structure of indefinite pronouns (IP) compared to interrogative ones (Haspelmath, 1997). Based on the material of scientific discourse, the phenomenon of the representation of the category of certainty/uncertainty in the aspect of authorisation is investigated. Discursive analysis shows that unauthorised statements without demonstrating certainty concerning the source of information are also less certain in relation to the proposition (Grichin, 2016).

In a literary text, researchers attach particular importance to the means of expressing the semantics of uncertainty. Vinogradov (1959) pointed out the purpose of IP (from now on, we consider indefinite pronouns and adverbs creating "... an atmosphere of mysterious uncertainty" (p. 248). Literary critics note the concept of "semantic cluster" in relation to fiction. Thus, Osip Mandelstam's poetics represents semantic clusters that include not just binary oppositions ('good-evil' opposition and similar ones) but ternary structures that lead the reader into the realm of semantic uncertainty (Kondakov, 2018).

In a literary text, the presence of IP is an indicator of the verbal weakness of the author's style or indicates the use of these units as means of expression. Arutyunova (2005) divides the writers into those who use these means of expression and those who consciously avoid words with the semantics of uncertainty. The scientist gives an example of how Maksim Gorky, while editing Garshin's manuscript,

consistently deleted IPs from the literary text (Arutyunova, 2005). Scientists refer Nikolai Gogol, Fyodor Dostoevsky, Mikhail Bulgakov, Boris Zaitsev, Andrei Platonov to the masters of the artistic word, tending to this means of expression (Arutyunova, 2005; Karaulov, 1987).

3. Research Questions

The object of this study was IPs with the affix – *nibud'*, identified by the method of continuous sampling from the “Crime and Punishment” novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The subject of the study is IP - *нибудь* in combination with a bounding particle *hot'* (*hotya*).

As noted above, Fyodor Dostoevsky is one of the writers using words with the semantics of uncertainty as a means of expression. The language material of the study was the text of the novel “Crime and Punishment” by Fyodor Dostoevsky. The small volume of the novel contributes to the visibility of the results obtained. The researchers note that the author tended to manifest extremes in artistic creativity. Thus, Shestov (2001) noted that no one neither before Fyodor Dostoevsky nor after him portrayed the painful groundlessness, uncertainty, fluctuations of the mind, leading to despair and recklessness with such tedious, soul-exhausting thoroughness and boldness (Senchikhina, 2009). Reference to the history of philosophy shows that the measure in the ancient philosophy of the pre-Socratics was interpreted as the middle edge, the core of the extreme values of the phenomenon (Struk, 2011). Ancient scientists interpreted the absence of measure as an abyss, chaos, threat, misfortune, vice, lawlessness, madness, and irrationality (Struk, 2011). Limit and extreme are phenomena included in the same list. In linguistics, the functional-semantic category of extreme (FSCE) is not sufficiently described. There is lack of monographic studies on this topic. Some aspects were studied in (Ivanyan, 2015; Klyushina, 2020). The initial feature of FSCE is researched in the paper (Nikolaeva, 1982), which shows that in the figurative, secondary uses of IP (sometimes accompanied with a special emphasis), the semantics of the extreme, in particular, its meaning of minimality, arises.

The theoretical and methodological basis of the study is the doctrine of semantic fields of Y. Trier, A.V. Bondarko and others; ideas of functional linguistics of the scientific school of grammar P. A. Lekant; the study by T. M. Nikolaeva on the semantics of the extreme in the Russian language; the research of N. D. Arutyunova and Yu.N. Karaulov, indicating the abundance of IP in the works of Fyodor Dostoevsky as a particular semantic and stylistic device.

4. Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to characterise the specifics of the interaction of the category of uncertainty with the category of extreme in the field of a literary text, which will be covered by the material of the Russian classic novel “Crime and Punishment”.

5. Research Methods

The leading research method is a descriptive one, using the methods of component analysis, linguistic observation, continuous sampling and the method of statistical processing of results. The

language material consisted of 171 uses of IP, identified from the “Crime and Punishment” novel, as well as 32 combinations of IP - nibud' + hot' and 6 uses of the word *krajinost'* [extreme, outrance].

6. Findings

I. As the analysis of the identified language material has shown, the FSCE and the category of uncertainty are overlapping concepts, which is manifested in several features. FSCE is hierarchically organized, and represented at different levels of the language: 1) intonation, special accentuation (see the example by T. M. Nikolaeva: *hot' chto-nibud' dajte, hot' kakoj-nibud' edy dajte!* [Give me something, give me some food!]; 2) lexical level, phraseological units *kidat'sja iz odnoj krajnosti v druguju; dojti do krajnosti* [rush from one extreme to another; come to a fine pass]; 3) grammatical (morphological) level (IP -nibud' + hot'/hotja; 4) a combination of the above-mentioned constituents.

The category of uncertainty in the Russian language is hierarchically organised and presented at different levels of language (word order, special intonation, lexical item *неопределенный* and its derivatives, idioms like *ni to ni sjo, ni ryba ni mjaso* [between hay and grass, neither fish nor flesh], IPs, secondary use of words *odin, nekotoryj* [one, some], special syntactic constructions (*neizvestno po kakoj prichine* [unknown for what reason]) and others. At the same time, an IP -nibud' acquires the semantics of the extreme in the cases of a) an exceptional excretory intonation; b) as part of a combination with a particle *hot'*. The zone of the existence of the FSCE at the intersection with the category of uncertainty, taking into account the distribution by IP, is shown in Figure 1.

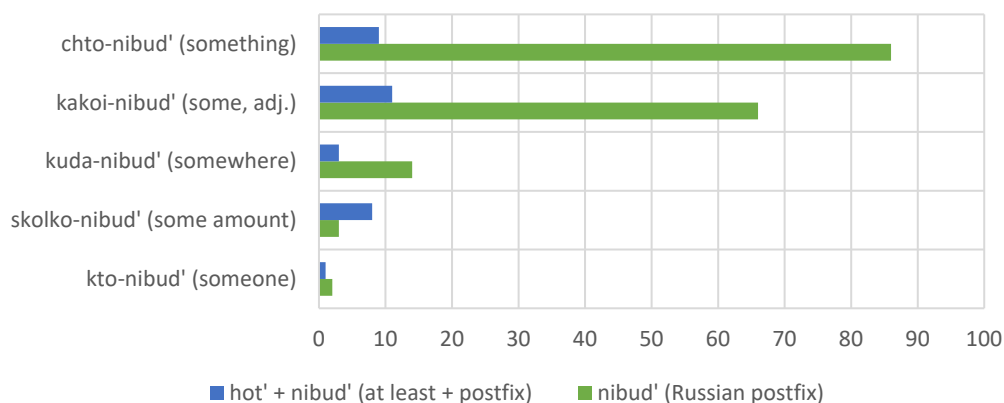


Figure 1. The existence of the functional-semantic category of extreme (blue) with the category of uncertainty (green)

Figure 1 does not indicate the insignificant amount of means of expression of the FSCE in “Crime and Punishment”, but rather the complex and continuous field feature of the existence of the FSCE constituents in the artistic space of the analysed novel. Figure 1 also represents a list of all the IPs that exist in the novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky as a means of transmitting the FSCE: *chto-nibud'* [something], *kakoi-nibud'* [any], *skol'ko-nibud'* [some], *kuda-nibud'* [somewhere], *kto-nibud'* [somebody], given in a descending order of frequency.

II. The list of denotations marked in the analysed novel by the constituents of the FSCE is of interest. The combination with an abstract noun such as *trevoga*, *vnimanie*, *sily*, *rassuzhdenie*, *mechta* [anxiety, attention, strength, reasoning, dream], and adjective-based substantive *novoe*, *podozrenija*, *vzglyad*, *nadezhda* [new, suspicion, sight, hope] dominate. Hyperonyms (факт) are also added to the list. The next in frequency are constructions with actually lack of specific objects of speech, for example: On [Svidrigajlov] lezhal i slovno grezil: mysl' smenjajas' mysl'ju, kazalos', emu ochen' by hotelos' hot' k chemu-nibud' osobenno pricepit'sja voobrazheniem [He [Svidrigailov] lay and seemed to be dreaming: thought gave way to thought, it seemed that he would very much like at least something especially to attach his imagination to] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 478). Sometimes the constituent of uncertainty and the FSCE are marked with the nomination of a person (*konvojnyj*, *slushatel'* [escort, listener]), for example: < ... > < ... > no hot' pered kem-nibud' pogordit'sja zahotelos' i soobshhit' o schastlivyh minuvshih dnjah [but at least in front of someone I wanted to be proud and report happy days gone by] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 18).

III. As for the content characteristics of the combination of IP *-нибудь + хоть*, the significant indicators are the following: 1) 15 % of the identified language material reveal tabooization of the subject of speech, as a planned, and then committed and concealed crime is meant. The example is *Jasno, chto teper' nado bylo ne toskovat', ne stradat' passivno, odnimi rassuzhdenijami o tom, chto voprosy nerazreshimy, a nepremenno chto-nibud' sdelat', i sejchas zhe, i poskoree. Vo chto by to ni stalo nado reshit'sja, hot' na chto-nibud', ili...*[It is clear that now it was necessary not to grieve, not to suffer passively, only by reasoning that the questions are insoluble, but certainly to do something, and now, and as soon as possible. By all means, one must decide, at least for something, or.] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 46).

2) In addition, the means of updating significant information in the combinations analysed in the paper is repetition, accounting for 20% of the total number of the examples. Thus, *Marmeladov* has two exclamations in the novel. The first one is *Ved' nadobno zhe, chtoby vsjakomu cheloveku hot' kuda-nibud' mozžno bylo pojti. Ibo byvaet takoe vremja, kogda nepremenno nado hot' kuda-nibud' da pojti!* [After all, it is necessary that every person should be able to go at least somewhere. For there is a time when one must certainly go somewhere!] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 16). The second is *Ponimaete li, ponimaete li vy, milostivij gosudar', chto znachit, kogda uzhe nekuda bol'she idti? – vdrug pripomnilsja emu vcherashnij vopros Marmeladova, - ibo nado, chtoby vsjakomu cheloveku hot' kuda-nibud' mozžno bylo pojti...* [Do you understand, do you understand, my dear sir, what it means when there is nowhere else to go? - he suddenly remembered Marmeladov's yesterday's question, - for it is necessary that every person at least somewhere could go ...]. (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 46). The repetition may be contained within the utterance: *- - Ja uveren, chto vy ob jetom gospodine Luzhine, moem po zhene rodstvennike, uzhe sostavili vashe mnenie, esli ego hot' polchasa videli ili hot' chto-nibud' ob nem verno i točno slyshali. Avdot'e Romanovne on ne para* [- I am sure that you have already formed your opinion about this Mr. Luzhin, my wife's relative, if you have seen him for at least half an hour, or if you have heard anything about him correctly and for sure. Avdotya Romanovna he is not a couple] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 273). Not only the particle *хоть*, but also the IP can be repeated: *Bespokojnym i podozritel'nyim vzglyadom sledil on krugom sebja, vysmatrivaja: net li okolo nego hot' kakogo-nibud' konvojnogo, kakogo-nibud' tainstvennogo vzglyada, naznachennogo ego sterech', chtob on kuda ne ushel?* [With a restless and suspicious gaze, he watched around him, looking

out: was there not at least some kind of escort, some mysterious look, appointed to guard him, so that he would not go where?] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 313).

3) In 7% of the analysed combinations, the semantics of the extreme are emphasized by the context: Dver' na lestnicu byla otvorena, chtoby hot' skol'ko-nibud' zashhitit'sja ot voln tabachnogo dyma, vryvavshih'sja iz drugih komnat i pomnutno zastavljavshih dolgo i muchitel'no kashljat' bednuju chahotochnuju [The door to the staircase was open to somehow protect herself from the waves of tobacco smoke rushing in from other rooms and making the poor consumptive cough for a long time and painfully] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 169). The context aggravates the description due to the phrase bednuju chahotochnuju [the poor consumptive]. See also: Jetim poslednim, otchajannym vzgljadom ona hotela vysmotret' i ulovit' hot' kakuju-nibud' poslednjuju sebe nadezhdu [With this last, desperate look, she wanted to spy out and catch at least some last hope for herself.] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 389). The extreme situation is emphasized by the word form poslednjuju [last].

4) The content characteristic of the analysed combinations should include the presence of so-called "half-words" in their context (see Arutyunova, 2005), artistic omissions that strengthen the reader's anticipation and make the text deep and meaningful: Porfirij pochti vsju igru svoju pokazal; konechno, risknul, no pokazal, i (vsjo kazalos' Raskol'nikovu) esli by dejstvitel'no u Porfirija bylo chto-nibud' bolee, to on pokazal by i to Chto takoe jetot «sjurpriz»? Nasmeshka, chto li? Znachilo jeto chto-nibud' ili net? Moglo li pod jetim skryvat'sja hot' chto-nibud' pohozhee na fakt, na polozhitel'noe obvinenie?[Porfiry showed almost his entire game; Of course, he took a chance, but he showed it, and (everything seemed to Raskolnikov) if Porfiry really had something more, he would have shown what is this "surprise"? A mockery, or what? Did it mean anything or not? Could there be at least something similar to a fact, to a positive accusation under this?] (Dostoevsky, 1989, p. 337).

5) The results obtained are vital in terms of identifying the composition and structure of the constituents of the FSCE. In particular, it is interesting to compare the constituents with IP nibud' with the constituents containing the lexeme krainost' in the analysed novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky, which is reflected in Figure 2.

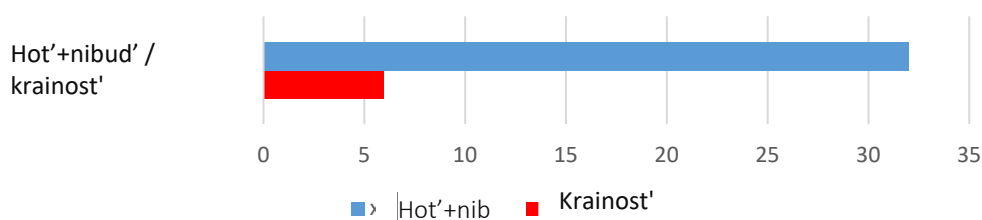


Figure 2. The existence of IP - *nibud'* with the semantics of the extreme (blue) and the lexeme *krainost'* (red)

Synoptic graph 3 shows the real zones of both intersection and independent existence of IP - *nibud'* with the semantics of uncertainty or the semantics of uncertainty with the semantics of extreme in the novel under study. Figure 3 shows the frequency of use of IP - *nibud'* (green), *hot' + - nibud'* (blue) and the word *krainost'* (red).

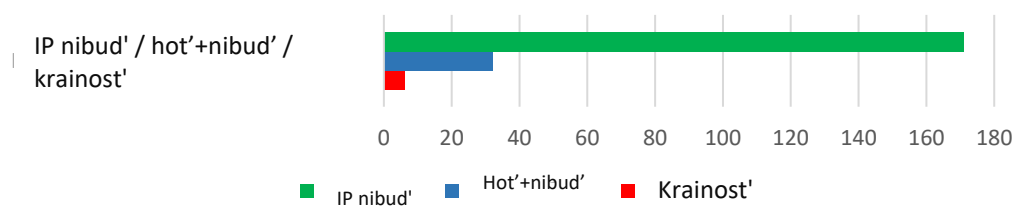


Figure 3. The existence of the studied lexical units

7. Conclusion

The field nature of the FSCE and the uncertainty category predetermined the intersection zone of their constituents in the IP – *nibud'* + *hot'* section. Dostoevsky is a great master of writing. He magnificently describes the confusion of the human soul, its going from one extreme to the other. The writer uses various means of the FSCE expression, among which units of indefinite semantics occupy not the last place. In the artistic space of this novel, the content characteristic of the combination of IP - *nibud'* + *hot'* reveals the presence of a taboo subject of speech (due to the specifics of the subject). It also reveals repetition to actualise its significance, the reception of "context guidance" of the semantics of extreme (need, despair, etc.), the reception of the information presentation in an indirect way with the help of "half-words".

The extrapolation of the research results to other novels, and the work of Fyodor Dostoevsky as a whole, as well as a comparison of the results obtained with possible studies of those writers, who tend to use IPs, for example, A. Platonov are promising.

References

- Alishev, B. S. (2009). The psyche and Overcoming Uncertainty. *Psychology. Journal of the Higher School of Economics*, 6(3), 3-26.
- Andronnikova, O. (2021). On the relationship between uncertainty tolerance and hardiness in adolescents. *Journal of the Siberian Federal University. Humanities*, 14(3), 320-326.
- Arutyunova, N. D. (2005). "A Double-edged Sword": on the Problem of Semantic Reduction in Dostoevsky's Texts. *Izvestiya of RAS. Literature and Language Series*, 64(2), 3-14.
- Dostoevsky, F. M. (1989). *Crime and Punishment. Dostoevsky F. M. Collected works in 15 volumes*. Nauka. Leningrad Branch.
- Gerasimova, I. A. (2019). Uncertainty in Cognition and Social Practices. *Epistemology & Philosophy of Science*, 56(4), 8-20.
- Grichin, S. V. (2016). The Category of Certainty/Uncertainty in the Authorisation Aspect. *Siberian Philological Journal*, 2, 144-156.
- Haspelmath, M. (1997). *Indefinite pronouns*. Oxford.
- Ivanyan, E. P. (2015). *Semantika umolchaniya i sredstva ee vyrazheniya v russkom yazyke* [The semantics of the default and the means of its expression in the Russian language]. FLINTA Publ.
- Karaulov, Yu. N. (1987). *The Russian Language and Language Personality*. Nauka.
- Klyushina, A. M. (2020). The Combination of Particles to Convey the Semantics of the Extreme in the Work of A. Gelasimov. *Semantics. Functioning. Text: interuniversity collection of scientific papers. Kirov: Raduga-PRESS Publishing House, LLC*, 138-144.
- Kondakov, I. V. (2018). Semantic Cluster in Osip Mandelstam's Poetics. *New Philological Bulletin*, 4(47), 16-25.
- Nikolaeva, T. M. (1982). *The semantics of Accentuation*. Nauka Publishing House.

- Sannikov, V. Z. (1987). The Pragmatics of Vague Statements. *Scientific and Technical Information. Series 2, 9*, 32-38.
- Senchikhina, Yu. B. (2009). Apologia of the Unknown: the Concept of Lev Shestov's Creativity. *Bulletin of the Moscow University. Series 7. Philosophy, 3*, 26-37.
- Shestov, L. I. (2001). *The Philosophy of Tragedy*. Kharkiv.
- Sokolova, E. T. (2013). Cultural-psychological and clinical perspectives of research on phenomena of subjective uncertainty and ambiguity. *Psychology in Russia: State of the art, 6(2)*, 78-88.
- Struk, E. N. (2011). The category of "Limit" in modern philosophy: problem statement. *Bulletin of Moscow University. Series 7. Philosophy, 2*, 88-99.
- Tretyakova, O. D. (2009). Functions of indefinite pronouns without the uncertainty index (based on the material of Slavic languages). *Bulletin of Moscow University. Series 9. Philology, 1*, 134-147.
- Vinogradov, V. V. (1959). *On the Language of Fiction*. Goslitizdat. [In Russ.].