Relative clauses in Russian Sign Language vary a lot in terms of positions of the head and the relative signs, and have no specialized non-manuals

INTRO

- Relative clause (RC) – a dependent clause, connected to main clause (MC) by semantically and syntactically shared pivot constituent (the head)
- The head can be overtly realized inside RC (IHRC), external to RC (EHRC), in both inside and outside of RC (DHRC) or it can be covert (FRC)

METHODS

- 9 participants
- picture-based task
- 88 RCs with different syntactic roles of the head in MC and RC

RESULTS

Position of the head

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>EHRC (1)</th>
<th>IHRC (2)</th>
<th>DHRC (3)</th>
<th>FRC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Options</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Options for relative elements in RSL

- index sign IX agreeing with the head (1)
- sign KOTORYJ with the mouthing of Russian relative pronoun kotoryj (3:4); no agreement with the head
- KOTORYJ and IX frequently appear together (4)
- no overt relative signs (2)

Position of relative signs in RC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>IX</th>
<th>KOTORYJ (+IX)</th>
<th>none</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RC-initial</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RC-final</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Relative signs of different types may be overtly realized in RC-initial, in RC-final or in both positions.

MC-doubling in relative constructions

Doubling of MC after sentence-final RC is found in 24 cases (4).

Non-manual markers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>eye blink</th>
<th>head leans/turns</th>
<th>raised eye brows</th>
<th>squints</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RC</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>28</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Almost all relative constructions are marked by NMM but none of the NMM is specialized for RC

DISCUSSION

- RC in RSL employ all structurally possible positions of the head
- No other SL allows such a variability in the position and double exponence of the relative sign
- Frequency of MC-doubling is a reflection of grammaticalization processes in relative constructions in RSL

RC in RSL fit the same patterns that are found in other spoken and SL but exhibit typologically unusual variability

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