The Winner Gets it All: *Strategies for Object Naming in Russian*

Tatiana Yu. Sazonova
TSazonova@gmail.com
Northern Illinois University (USA)
Kursk State University (Russia)

The paper is dedicated to the memory of outstanding scientist Elizabeth Bates, the initiator and the head of the International Picture Naming Project in Center for Research in Language at UCSD (USA), who rendered me the facilities and help in my research.

The data collected in the object-naming experiment for 520 black-and-white line drawings were analyzed to examine the universal and language-specific processes that ensure lexical recognition and guide word meaning access. Depending on the formal and/or semantic cues competing to trigger a word for naming, the following naming strategies were brought to light:

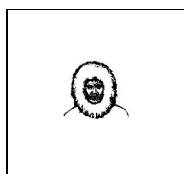*Categorization strategy* (presenting all levels of categorization)

most (10) – "bridge"
Golden Gate Bridge

statuya (7) – "statue"
Venera Milosskaya (4)
Venera – "Vinus"

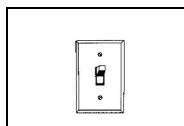*Strategy of naming by synonymous word* (synonyms and similars considered)

eskimos (5) – "Eskimo"
chukcha (2) – "Chukchi man"
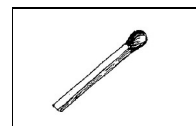nenetz, - "Nents"
polyarnyi zhitel – "Polar inhabitant"

palatka (5) – "tent"
shalash (4) – "shelter of branches"
yurta (3) – "normad's tent"
chum – "chukchi man's tent"

Strategy of naming in accordance with formally identified features

vyklyuchatel' (11) – "switch"
dver' – "door"
seif – "safe"

spichka (10) – "match"
papirosa – "sigarette"
kistochka – "brush"

Word-formation strategy, mostly represented by target word derivatives.

The central ideas of Competition Model [Bates & MacWhinney 1989] were expanded to account for the results.The discussion of the naming strategies is carried out within the suggested word identification model framework [Sazonova 2000]. It is an interactive model which treats mental lexicon as a dynamic functional system and an integral part of human cognitive abilities. The items in the mental lexicon are viewed as products of a complex interaction of perceptual, cognitive, emotional, and verbal experience stored in one's memory and simultaneously utilized at different levels of consciousness when a word provides access to interconnected fragments of the personal knowledge. Within this framework picture naming process is studied as the phenomena of "natural semiosis". Naming is viewed as a process which occurs «here and now» and largely depends upon the features recognized in the picture as well as on the wider context of all mental processes participating in maintenance of successful lexical access.