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PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTANCE AND THE CHOICE BETWEEN FULL AND SHORT FORMS OF RUSSIAN PREDICATIVE ADJECTIVES

ПСИХОЛОГИЧЕСКАЯ ДИСТАНЦИЯ КАК ФАКТОР ВЫБОРА ПОЛНОЙ И КРАТКОЙ ФОРМ РУССКИХ ПРЕДИКАТИВНЫХ ПРИЛАГАТЕЛЬНЫХ

Abstract:

The distinction between the full and short forms of Russian predicative adjectives has traditionally been explained in terms of such semantic oppositions as permanence versus temporariness, property versus state, and individual-level versus stage-level predication. The present study explores the possibility that this contrast may also be related to the speaker's management of psychological distance. Drawing on Brown and Levinson's theory of politeness, the study examines discourse examples involving predicative adjectives and suggests that full-form predicates tend to be associated with psychological proximity, emotional involvement, and attention to the interlocutor as an individual, whereas short-form predicates tend to occur in contexts characterized by greater psychological distance and detachment. The study also considers the parenthetical expressions *navernoe* and *naverno*, whose contrast appears to parallel that between the full and short adjectival forms. The data are consistent with the hypothesis that both oppositions reflect different degrees of speaker involvement and interpersonal orientation. Although the evidence is preliminary, the findings suggest that the choice between the full and short forms of Russian predicative adjectives may function not only as a grammatical distinction but also as a pragmatic resource for negotiating psychological distance in discourse.

Keywords: Russian predicative adjectives; full-form adjectives; short-form adjectives; psychological distance; politeness; modality

Аннотация:

Противопоставление полной и краткой форм русских предикативных прилагательных традиционно объясняется через такие семантические оппозиции, как постоянность и временность, свойство и состояние, а также предикаты индивидуального и ситуационного уровней. Настоящее исследование рассматривает возможность того, что данное противопоставление может быть связано также с регулированием говорящим психологической дистанции. Опираясь на теорию вежливости Браун и Левинсона, автор анализирует дискурсивные примеры употребления предикативных прилагательных и предполагает, что полные формы имеют тенденцию ассоциироваться с психологической близостью, эмоциональной вовлечённостью и восприятием собеседника как индивидуальности, тогда как краткие формы чаще встречаются в контекстах, характеризующихся большей психологической дистанцией и отстранённостью. В статье также рассматриваются вводные слова *наверное* и *наверно*, противопоставление которых, по-видимому, параллельно противопоставлению полной и краткой форм прилагательных. Анализируемые данные согласуются с гипотезой о том, что оба противопоставления отражают различную степень вовлечённости говорящего и различную межличностную направленность высказывания. Несмотря на предварительный характер полученных результатов, исследование позволяет предположить, что выбор полной или краткой формы русских предикативных прилагательных представляет собой не только грамматическое различие, но и прагматическое средство регулирования психологической дистанции в дискурсе.

Ключевые слова: русские предикативные прилагательные; полные формы прилагательных; краткие формы прилагательных; психологическая дистанция; вежливость; модальность

1. Introduction

As is well known, human communication serves to convey thoughts and intentions to others. In doing so, speakers employ various linguistic strategies to maintain smooth interpersonal relations and to secure their listeners' cooperation and attention. One such strategy is *politeness*. In this paper, *politeness* is understood not merely as adherence to social etiquette, but as a linguistic strategy through which speakers show consideration for the feelings, intentions, and social standing of others.

This paper focuses on adjectives as a means of exploring how non-native speakers of Russian can communicate appropriately within the cultural context of Russia. Unlike nouns, which primarily denote entities in the external world, adjectives often provide important linguistic resources for expressing evaluation, affect, and stance. Words such as *beautiful*, *pleasant*, and *sad*, for example, reveal aspects of human evaluation and feeling more directly than the objects they describe.

From this perspective, adjectives may be regarded as a grammatical category that reflects a speaker's inner experience. Although verbs can also express human actions and states, adjectives are more directly associated with subjective evaluation and emotional perception. Put differently, if nouns represent "things," adjectives represent "people's attitudes toward things." Consequently, adjectives are more closely connected with the inner world of human experience than with the external world itself.

This characteristic makes adjectives particularly relevant to the study of politeness. Since politeness involves attending to the interlocutor's face and managing interpersonal relationships, linguistic expressions that convey evaluation, attitude, and emotional stance play a crucial role in its realization. Because adjectives provide speakers with important resources for expressing approval, sympathy, consideration, or restraint, they contribute significantly to the construction of polite communication. Therefore, an examination of adjectives offers valuable insights into the linguistic mechanisms through which politeness is realized in Russian.

2. Previous Research

Modern Russian adjectives have two morphological forms: the full form and the short form. The full form can function both attributively and predicatively, whereas the short form is restricted to predicative use. Thus, when an adjective is used as a predicate, either the full form or the short form may occur. We review previous studies concerning the distinction between these two forms.

1) Traditional Grammar

According to V.V. Vinogradov (1947), N.Ju. Shvedova (1960), V.V. Lopatin (1980), N.N. Kokhtev and D.E. Rozental' (1984), and others, the semantic differences between the full and short forms can be summarized as follows. Unless otherwise indicated, all examples are cited from Kokhtev and Rozental' (1984).

Permanence vs. Temporariness

Traditional grammarians maintain that the full form denotes a relatively permanent or inherent characteristic, whereas the short form denotes a temporary condition.

(1) *Ona **bol'naja**.* (full form) 'She is sick.' (*with generally poor health*)

(2) *Ona **bol'na**.* (short form) 'She is sick.' (*unwell at the present moment*)

Absolute vs. Relative Characterization

The full form is also said to express an absolute characteristic, while the short form expresses a characteristic relative to a particular situation or observer.

(3) *Chemodan **tjazhelyj**.* (full form) 'The suitcase is heavy.' (*regardless of who carries it*)

(4) *Chemodan **tjazhel**.* (short form) 'The suitcase is heavy.' (*for a child*)

Stylistic Differences

Traditional descriptions furthermore point to stylistic differences between the two forms. The full form tends to convey a softer or less categorical judgment, whereas the short form expresses the same quality in a more categorical manner.

(5) *Mal'chik **smelyj** i **otvazhnyj**.* (full form) 'The boy is brave and courageous.' (*The quality is expressed in a mitigated manner*.)

(6) *Mal'chik **smel** i **otvazhen**.* (short form) 'The boy is brave and courageous.' (*The quality is expressed more categorically*.)

2) L. H. Babby (1973, 2010), L. Geist (2010), and O. Borik (2014)

Building on earlier semantic distinctions, these studies argue that the contrast is also rooted in differences in syntactic structure and predication. In particular, they argue that the two forms differ fundamentally in their argument structure, and that the distinction should therefore be analyzed in syntactic as well as semantic terms.

3) D. Bikina and J. Martin (2021)

Bikina and Martin analyze the complex behavior of Russian adjectives from both syntactic and semantic perspectives. They argue that neither the full form nor the short form alone determines

interpretation. Rather, Russian adjectives exhibit complex ambiguity, and semantic interpretation is shaped by the interaction between morphological form and syntactic position.

4) T. Nesset and L.A. Janda (2023)

Based on corpus data, Nesset and Janda demonstrate that short-form adjectives are preferred in actual language use. From the perspectives of syntax and information structure, they argue that full-form adjectives typically describe thematic participants in clauses lacking complements. Short-form adjectives, by contrast, may occur with complements and can characterize not only thematic participants but also rhematic participants and situations. When both forms are available, the choice between them is influenced by factors such as subject type, gender and number agreement, and frequency of usage.

Previous studies have examined the distinction between full-form and short-form predicative adjectives from semantic, syntactic, stylistic, and information-structural perspectives. While these approaches have elucidated important aspects of the contrast, no single framework has yet been proposed that comprehensively accounts for the overall distribution and usage of the two forms. The present study seeks to address this gap by exploring the full-form/short-form opposition from a broader and more integrated perspective.

3. Aim of the Present Study

The present study examines the factors governing the choice between the full and short predicative forms of Russian adjectives in contexts where both forms express essentially the same propositional content. Particular attention is paid to the possibility that this choice reflects differences in psychological distance between speaker and hearer. Drawing on politeness theory, the study explores whether the opposition between the two forms may be systematically interpreted as a linguistic resource for managing interpersonal relations.

Before outlining the analytical framework adopted in this study, it is necessary to review major approaches to politeness. Broadly speaking, previous research on politeness can be divided into two strands.

The first approach is represented by P. Brown and S.C. Levinson (1987), who regard politeness as a set of communicative strategies employed by speakers to protect the interlocutor’s face. They distinguish between two major types of politeness: positive politeness and negative politeness. From this perspective, politeness concerns the speaker’s strategic selection of linguistic expressions designed either to enhance solidarity with the hearer or to avoid threatening the hearer’s face.

In contrast, scholars such as Y. Ide (1989), R.J. Watts (2003), S. Mills (2003), and M.A. Locher (2004) argue that politeness cannot be reduced solely to the speaker’s communicative intentions. Rather, it must also be understood in relation to social norms, interpersonal relationships, and the interaction between speaker and hearer.

For the purposes of the present analysis, Brown and Levinson's distinction is reformulated in terms of psychological distance. However, their distinction between positive and negative politeness requires some modification for the purposes of the present analysis. Brown and Levinson characterize positive politeness as a strategy that satisfies the hearer’s positive face by expressing solidarity through such means as compliments, jokes, and references to shared concerns. Negative politeness, by contrast, satisfies the hearer’s negative face by maintaining interpersonal distance through honorific expressions, indirect requests, and mitigating devices.

Nevertheless, interpersonal closeness may at times be perceived not only as friendliness but also as excessive familiarity, and therefore does not always contribute positively to the interlocutor's face. Conversely, maintaining distance may not merely convey respect but may also create an impression of aloofness or emotional detachment. For this reason, the present study reconceptualizes politeness in terms of psychological distance between speaker and hearer.

In the framework adopted here, positive politeness is defined as the speaker's orientation toward reducing psychological distance from the interlocutor. This orientation encompasses both friendliness and familiarity. Negative politeness, by contrast, is defined as the speaker's orientation toward maintaining psychological distance from the interlocutor. This orientation encompasses both respectfulness and emotional detachment.

The central question addressed in this study is how these two dimensions of politeness are reflected in the choice between the full and short predicative forms of Russian adjectives.

4. Analytical Criteria

To examine the distribution of full-form and short-form predicative adjectives, the present study proposes the following three analytical criteria:

1. The relationship between the speaker's psychological stance and the choice of full versus short forms
2. The relationship between the second-person plural pronoun *vy* and the choice of full versus short forms
3. The relationship between parenthetical expressions (*naverno* and *navernoe*) and the choice of full versus short forms

These three criteria will be employed to investigate whether the opposition between full and short predicative forms can be systematically interpreted in terms of politeness and psychological distance.

4.1. The Speaker's Psychological Attitude and the Choice between Full and Short Forms

Human communication involves not only the transmission of information but also the expression of interpersonal attitudes. From this perspective, predicative adjectives provide a useful means of examining how speakers position themselves psychologically in relation to their interlocutors. The present section therefore investigates whether the distribution of full-form and short-form predicative adjectives correlates with differences in psychological distance.

(7) A conversation between two longtime friends of the same age who are nostalgically reflecting on their lives:

– *Znaesh', Ton', ja ved' voobshche ne zavistlivaja, a tebe zaviduju.*

– *Ty* ***schastlivaja*** (full form).

– *A ja optimistka.* (*Moskva slezam ne verit*, 1979)

"Tonya, I never envy others, but you're the exception."

"You're **happy**, aren't you?"

"I'm just an optimist."

In this example, the speaker expresses emotional closeness toward the interlocutor. The use of the full form *schastlivaja* may be interpreted as consistent with a communicative stance characterized by minimal psychological distance.

(8) A conversation in which a factory director issues instructions to a subordinate, who responds cautiously and respectfully:

– *Preodolenie etikh trudnostej – vasha rabota, za vam platjat zarabotnuju platu.*

– ***Strogi*** (short form), no ***spravedlivy*** (short form). (*Moskva slezam ne verit*, 1979)

"Overcoming this difficult situation is your job. That is what you are paid for."

"It is a **tough** point, but you are absolutely **right**."

Here, the subordinate acknowledges the superior's authority while maintaining an appropriate interpersonal distance. The short forms may be interpreted as reflecting such distance.

(9) A conversation in which a man attempts to gain the cooperation of a woman's son before committing a burglary:

– *Terpi. Ty zhe* ***smelyj*** (full form), *ty smozhesh'. Davaj.* (*Vor*, 1997)

"Hang in there. You are **brave.**—I'm sure you can do it. Go ahead, give it a try."

Flattery may be regarded as an attempt to establish psychological proximity and to elicit a favorable response from the interlocutor. A possible explanation is that the full form *smelyj* contributes to the establishment of psychological proximity.

(10) A conversation aboard a space station, where distrust toward an unknown presence has intensified:

– *Snaut, krome nas troikh, na stancii eshche kto-nibud' est'?*

– *Vy videli?*

– *Vy predosteregali menja... ot chego?*

– *Kogo vy videli?*

– *Eto chelovek? Ona* ***real'na*** (short form)? *Do nee mozhno dotronut'sja, mozhno ee ranit'?* (*Soljaris*, 1972)

"Snaut, who else is on this space station besides the three of us?"

"Did you see it?"

"Were you... warning me about something?"

"Who did you see?"

"Is that a human being? Is she **real**? Can she be touched or hurt?"

The speaker is confronted with an unfamiliar and potentially threatening entity. The short form *real'na* occurs in a context characterized by uncertainty, caution, and psychological distance. The occurrence of the short form is consistent with the hypothesis that psychological distance favors short-form predication.

(11) A conversation between Zeniba and Chihiro as the latter prepares to leave:

– *Voobshche-to moe nastojashchee imja – Chihiro.*

– *Chihiro?* ***Krasivoe*** (full form). *Beregi svoe imja.*

– *Horosho.* (*Spirited Away*, 2001)

"My real name is Chihiro."

"Chihiro? It's **beautiful**. Hold on to it dearly." (Zeniba speaking)

"I understand."

Despite the asymmetry in power between the two characters, Zeniba addresses Chihiro affectionately and expresses emotional closeness. The full form *krasivoe* may be regarded as consistent with such an attitude.

(12) A conversation in which Chihiro receives a braided hair tie from Zeniba:

– *Sejchas chut'-chut' podozhdi. Nu vot uzhe gotovo. Podvjazhi-ka volosy.*

– ***Krasiva*** (short form).

– *Eto tvoj amulet.* (*Spirited Away*, 2001)

"Just a moment. There, it's done. (Holding out the cord) Here, to tie up your hair."

"It's beautiful."

"It's an amulet. We all spun and joined the threads together."

In contrast to (11), the speaker here is a young girl addressing a respected and powerful elder. A possible explanation is that the short form reflects a more deferential stance on the part of the speaker.

The foregoing examples suggest that full-form adjectives tend to occur in situations where the speaker seeks to minimize psychological distance from the hearer, whereas short-form adjectives tend to occur where the speaker maintains interpersonal distance.

The examples do not constitute statistical proof; rather, they are presented as illustrative cases consistent with the proposed hypothesis.

Attempts to enter the interlocutor's emotional sphere are frequently accompanied by affective involvement. This characteristic is particularly evident in the adjective *bednyj*. Both the full form *bednyj* and the short form *beden* can denote 'poor' in the economic sense. However, only the full form can convey the meaning 'poor thing' or 'unfortunate', that is, an expression of sympathy.

(13) A conversation between a man who accidentally boards the wrong plane and ends up in an apartment in Leningrad rather than Moscow, and the woman who lives there:

– *Vy namekaete, chto ja v Leningrade?*

– *Vot.*

– *chego "vot"?*

– *V Leningrade.*

– *Kak ja tut okazalsja?*

– ***Bednyj*** (full form). (*Ironija sud'by, ili s ljogkim parom!*, 1975)

"Are you saying I'm in Leningrad?"

"Yes."

"What do you mean, 'yes'?"

"It's Leningrad."

"Why did I end up here?"

"You are **poor**."

The meaning 'poor thing' carries an emotional resonance in which the speaker sympathizes with a person perceived as being in a difficult or unfortunate situation and feels concern for that person. By contrast, 'poor' merely denotes a lack of economic resources and offers an objective description independent of emotional involvement.

This contrast may suggest that the full form, unlike the short form, is capable of expressing a psychological attitude directed toward the interlocutor and facilitating an emotional connection.

4.2. The Pronoun *Vy* and the Choice between Full and Short Forms

One of the most typical linguistic markers of consideration toward the interlocutor in Russian is the second-person plural pronoun *vy*. When used to address a single individual, *vy* functions as an honorific form.

When an adjective in the predicate position agrees with honorific *vy*, full-form adjectives distinguish the biological sex of the referent through their endings:

(14) *Vy krasivyj.* (full form) 'You are handsome.' (male addressee)

(15) *Vy krasivaja.* (full form) 'You are beautiful.' (female addressee)

Short-form adjectives, by contrast, employ the same plural form regardless of whether the addressee is male or female:

(16) *Vy krasivy.* (short form) 'You are handsome.' (male addressee)

(17) *Vy krasivy.* (short form) 'You are beautiful.' (female addressee)

The data are consistent with the hypothesis that the full form highlights individual characteristics of the addressee, whereas the short form favors a more generalized representation.

A possible explanation is that this contrast reflects differences in perceived psychological distance. When speakers perceive themselves as psychologically close to an interlocutor, they can more easily individuate that person and attend to his or her specific attributes. Conversely, when speakers perceive an interlocutor as psychologically distant, they are less inclined to focus on individual characteristics and more likely to treat the interlocutor as part of a broader category.

An analogy may be helpful. Increased perceptual distance generally reduces the salience of individual characteristics and promotes categorization at a higher level of abstraction. At such a distance, their sex and number are readily distinguishable. If the same individuals stand five hundred meters away, however, their individual characteristics become difficult to identify. Although the physical situation remains unchanged, increasing distance reduces the observer's ability to individuate the participants.

A similar phenomenon can be observed in age perception. For an eleven-year-old child, the difference between a twelve-year-old and a twenty-two-year-old appears substantial because both age groups are relatively close to the child's own experience. By contrast, the difference between an eighty-two-year-old and a ninety-two-year-old often appears less salient because both belong to the more general category of "elderly people" from the child's perspective. Perceived distance thus affects the degree of differentiation.

Applying this observation to Russian predicative adjectives, one may hypothesize that when speakers perceive honorific *vy* addressees as psychologically close and seek to establish interpersonal rapport, they are more likely to employ full-form adjectives, whose morphology foregrounds the individuality of the addressee. Conversely, short-form adjectives may signal that the speaker maintains greater psychological distance from the interlocutor.

This tendency may also be reflected in Russian impersonal constructions. In impersonal clauses (*bezlichnoe predlozhenie*), the predicate is often realized by a category-of-state word (*slovo kategorii sostojanija*).

(18) *Segodnja* ***holodno***. 'It is cold today.'

In (18), the experiencer of the sensation is not explicitly identified; instead, the state itself is foregrounded. Historically, category-of-state words derive from neuter short-form adjectives. Such usage appears compatible with the tendency of short forms to background or distance the experiencing subject. Rather than emphasizing an individual participant, the construction presents a state of affairs independently of any clearly specified experiencer.

The relationship between short-form adjectives and the attenuation of subjectivity will be examined further in the following sections.

4.3. Parenthetical expressions (*naverno* and *navernoe*) and the choice of full versus short forms

Parenthetical expressions of conjecture do not indicate the truth value of a proposition itself; rather, they are modal expressions that convey the speaker's epistemic judgment regarding that proposition. As a subtype of epistemic modality, they function to express the degree of probability or certainty that the speaker attributes to the propositional content. Furthermore, because such parenthetical expressions occur in a position that is relatively independent of the syntactic structure of the proposition, and because they add the speaker's meta-level evaluation of that proposition, they are commonly regarded as prototypical markers of subjective modality.

Moreover, the function of parenthetical expressions of conjecture is not limited to the expression of epistemic judgment. From a pragmatic perspective, these expressions also operate as hedges that mitigate the assertiveness of an utterance and thereby reduce potential threats to the hearer's face. As a result, speakers are able to present their judgments not as absolute facts but rather as possibilities or personal assessments. Therefore, parenthetical expressions of conjecture can be viewed not only as devices for expressing epistemic modality but also as one of the politeness strategies employed to maintain and negotiate interpersonal relationships smoothly.

Navernoe (*наверное*) and *naverno* (*наверно*) are among the most frequently used parenthetical markers of epistemic supposition in Russian. While several studies have treated *navernoe* and *naverno* as stylistic variants (V.V. Vinogradov(1947,1950), N.D. Arutyunova (1976), N.Ju. Shvedova(1980), E.M. Wolf (1985), V. V. Kazakovskaja, N. K. Onipenko (2019)

), the present study argues that their distribution cannot be fully explained by stylistic factors alone. Instead, it is hypothesized that the choice between the two forms reflects differences in the degree of speaker subjectivity and in the interpersonal relations established between interlocutors.

Let us examine specific examples in order to see the kinds of situations in which *navernoe* and *naverno* are used.

First, let us consider the contexts in which *navernoe* is employed.

On August 12, 2000, the Russian nuclear submarine *Kursk* sank. The Russian government failed to rescue the crew, and all 118 sailors lost their lives. Example (19) is an utterance made by the mother of one of the crew members during a briefing given by the military officials responsible for the incident.

(19) *Svolochi, voobshche, ja zdes' nichego ne mogu skazat'! Zachem ja ego rastila? Skazhite, u vas est' deti? A? U vas net,* ***navernoe****, detej?*

"Scoundrels! Honestly, I have nothing to say here! Why did I raise my son? Tell me, do you have children? Huh? You **probably** don't have any children, do you?"

Although this woman had lost her only son, whom she had raised with great care and devotion, what further intensified her grief was the insincere manner in which the military authorities treated the bereaved families, including herself. Driven by anger at their conduct, she protested forcefully against the officials. In this context, she used the piercing remark *"U vas net, navernoe, detej?"* ("You probably don't have any children, do you?"), a statement intended to strike directly at the hearts of those responsible. A possible explanation is that the use of *navernoe* reflects an attempt to reach the military officials on a personal level and appeal to their emotions. It suggests an attempt to narrow the emotional distance between speaker and listener and to make the officials confront the human suffering experienced by the victims' families.

Next, let us consider the situations in which *naverno* is used.

Example (20) comes from a response made by a woman to the Kazakh physician, allergist, and immunologist Saltanat Bulatovna Kalimoldaieva, after the physician stated that she could not approve of oral sex (quoted from an Instagram postdated June 30, 2026).

(20) *U vas v Kazakhstane,* ***naverno****, vy vse takie ostalye?*

"In Kazakhstan, **I suppose,** are all of you that backward?"

In Example (20), the speaker appears to adopt a cool and psychologically distant attitude toward Dr. Kalimoldaieva. Her remark implies that opposing oral sex in the present day is excessively old-fashioned. Rather than attempting to establish emotional proximity with the interlocutor, the speaker positions herself at a distance and delivers a critical evaluation. The use of *naverno* may contribute to this effect, conveying a detached and somewhat dismissive stance toward the physician. Thus, whereas *navernoe* in Example (19) reflects an attempt to appeal directly to the listener's feelings and conscience, *naverno* in Example (20) is associated with a more distanced and critical attitude toward the interlocutor.

From a morphological standpoint, the parenthetical forms *navernoe* and *naverno* can be regarded as corresponding to the full-form and short-form adjective forms, respectively.

The data examined in this study suggest that *navernoe* tends to occur in contexts where the speaker seeks to establish emotional proximity with the interlocutor, whereas *naverno* is more frequently associated with contexts characterized by psychological distance, detached evaluation, or criticism. Although further empirical investigation is required, the observed distribution may indicate that the choice between the two forms reflects differences in speaker involvement and interpersonal orientation.

The evidence presented here should be regarded as preliminary and hypothesis-generating rather than conclusive.

5. Conclusion

This study has examined the opposition between the full and short forms of Russian predicative adjectives from the perspective of politeness and psychological distance. Analysis based on three criteria, namely the speaker's psychological stance, the use of the honorific pronoun *vy*, and the distribution of the parenthetical expressions *navernoe* and *naverno*, suggests that the two forms may differ not only semantically but also pragmatically.

Previous studies have explained the distinction primarily in terms of permanence versus temporariness, absoluteness versus relativity, or the opposition between property and state. The present study proposes that these semantic contrasts may be subsumed under a more general opposition between stability and changeability. From this perspective, stability appears to be associated... whereas changeability appears to be associated with uncertainty and reduced predictability.

It is therefore hypothesized that full-form predicative adjectives, which are linked to notions of stability, tend to occur in contexts characterized by reduced psychological distance and greater interpersonal involvement. Short-form adjectives, by contrast, tend to occur in contexts where speakers maintain greater psychological distance and adopt a more cautious or detached stance toward the interlocutor.

While the findings presented here remain exploratory and require verification through larger corpus-based investigations, they suggest that the alternation between full and short predicative adjectives constitutes not only a grammatical distinction but also a pragmatic resource for negotiating interpersonal relationships in discourse.

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