

Wh-words and the indefinite particle *-to* in Russian

A b s t r a c t

Within a minimalist framework of sound-meaning correlation with a central role of the lexicon, the morpho-syntax, semantics and pragmatics of Russian wh-words (= k-words) and the indefinite particle *-to* will be considered.

The contribution bases on Zimmermann's (2000, to appear) assumption that wh-words – basically – constitute predicate expressions (NPs or APs), which can be embedded in DPs and PPs with zero-heads and corresponding semantics. Our analysis argues for a unified combination of indefinite particles like *-to* with wh-words regardless of their function.

The morpho-syntactic, semantic and pragmatic structure and the lexical entries will be given for wh-expressions with *-to* as in (1a)-(4a). The syntactic structure of the respective constituents containing a wh-word with *-to* is shown in (1b)-(4b).

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| (1) a. <i>Kakoj-to</i> rebenok plačet. | b. [DP \emptyset_D [NP[_{AP} <i>kakoj-to</i>]] [NP rebenok]]] |
| (2) a. Priexal <i>kto-to</i> iz Moskvy. | b. [DP \emptyset_D [NP[_{NP} <i>kto-to</i>]] iz Moskvy]] |
| (3) a. Orkestr vystupil <i>gde-to</i> v Pariže. | b. [PP \emptyset_P [DP \emptyset_D [NP[_{NP} <i>gde-to</i>]] v Pariže]]] |
| (4) a. Boris stal <i>kakim-to</i> vračom. | b. [NP [AP <i>kakim-to</i>]] [NP vračom]] |

Whereas in (1) and (4) the wh-word combined with *-to* is an adjective it is a noun in (2) and (3). It figures in referential expressions in (1)-(3) and occurs in a predicative phrase in (4). We will show that the particle *-to* in all cases introduces a pragmatic implicature related to epistemic mental models of the interlocutors.

The proposed analysis can be regarded as valid not only for Russian, but for other slavonic and non-slavonic languages as well.

References

- Zimmermann, Ilse. (2000) "Die Analysierbarkeit von Pronomen und Proadverbialia". Bittner, Andreas, Dagmar Bittner and Klaus-Michael Köpcke, eds. *Angemessene Strukturen: Systemorganisation in Phonologie, Morphologie und Syntax*. Hildesheim, Zürich, New York: Olms, 261-282.
- _____. (to appear) „On the syntax and semantics of *kakoj* and *čto za* in Russian“. To appear in JSL 16.2.