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Dissertation

**COLLOQUIAL RUSSIAN PARTICLES –*TO*, *ŽE*, AND *VED'*
AS SET-GENERATING (“KONTRASTIVE”) MARKERS:
A UNIFYING ANALYSIS**

by

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**COLLOQUIAL RUSSIAN PARTICLES *-TO*, *ŽE*, AND *VED'* AS SET-
GENERATING (“KONTRASTIVE”) MARKERS: A UNIFYING ANALYSIS**

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ABSTRACT

Linguistic theory has thus far been unable to adequately provide a unifying account of a set of phenomena described as “emphatic,” “contrastive,” “intensifying,” *inter alia*. In this dissertation three colloquial Russian particles of this type are given a unifying analysis that integrates the theory of “kontrast” (i.e., the ability of certain linguistic expressions to generate a set; Vallduví and Vilkuna 1998), cognitive statuses of referents in discourse (Yokoyama 1986, Gundel, Hedberg, and Zacharski 1993), information packaging on the clausal level (Vallduví 1992), and hierarchical organization of discourse (Büiring 2000).

Using a variety of colloquial Russian texts as naturally occurring data, the particles *-to*, *že*, and *ved'* are analyzed as lexemes which mark kontrast (“kontrastive markers,” “k-markers”). Each particle is described with respect to the type of set it generates and the type of membership within this set, the cognitive status of the referents marked by it, the way its instructions are encoded on the clausal level, and its role in the organization of discourse.

Thus, the kontrastive particle *-to* marks a set of sets of propositions (equivalently, a set of questions), marks referents known to the hearer but not currently activated in the discourse, is an enclitic to a kontrastive element, usually the “link/topic,” and generates a discourse tree, the branches of which are “sisters” dominated by the same question under discussion.

The kontrastive particle *že* marks a set of mutually exclusive propositions (which differ from each other in the value of at least one kontrastive term), one of which is activated in discourse, is an enclitic to the (first phonological word within the) kontrastive element it marks, and refers back to either the established center of discourse or an unresolved question.

The kontrastive particle *ved'* marks a set of propositions (which have the illocutionary force of assertions), marks information known to the hearer but not activated, is either a proclitic or an enclitic to the kontrastive element within the clause, and relates two propositions in discourse by building a super-question above them.

This analysis can be extended to other discourse markers, semantic operators, and other contrastive linguistic expressions crosslinguistically.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviations used in glossing the data:

PART	particle
NOM	nominative
GEN	genitive
DAT	dative
ACC	accusative
INSTR	instrumental
LOC	locative
SG	singular
PL	plural
INF	infinitive
DIM	diminutive

Notations:

[+K ...]	scope of kontrastive element
[+K/+Rh...]	scope of kontrastive rheme (“contrastive focus”)
[+K/-Rh...]	scope of kontrastive link (“contrastive topic”)

GLOSSARY¹

A, B: speaker's (A) and hearer's (B) knowledge sets.

$A \cap B$: the intersection of the interlocutors' knowledge sets; alternatively referred to as information known to both the speaker and the hearer but not necessarily activated in their minds at the time of the utterance.

C_a, C_b : speaker's (A) and hearer's (B) sets of matters of current concern.

$C_a \cap C_b$: the intersection of the speaker's (A) and hearer's (B) sets of matters of current concern, or a set of shared matters of current concern, i.e., the information that is activated in both the speaker's and the hearer's minds; the center of this set is distinguished from its periphery.

$C_a \cap (B - C_b)$: the intersection of the speaker's (A) set of matters of current concern with the subset of the hearer's (B) knowledge set which excludes the hearer's set of matters of current concern; i.e., information which the speaker is currently concerned with and which is assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer but not currently activated in the hearer's mind.

***Discourse Tree*, or *D-Tree*:** discourse structure viewed as a hierarchy of semantically related questions, or *Super-* and *Sub-Questions*.

***kontrast*:** the ability of certain linguistic expressions to generate a set of alternatives; (marked as [+K ...]).

***kontrastive*:** used synonymously with *set-generating* and *set-evoking*.

***kontrastive marker*, or *k-marker*:** a linguistic expression – syntactic, morphological, prosodic, or lexical – that signals *kontrast*; or, in other words, causes the hearer/reader to evoke a membership set which the *kontrastively* marked element belongs to, and treat this element as a member of this set.

***link*:** points to a specific file card for the entry of *rheme*; either opens an existing file card or creates a new, blank file card; *link* is identical to the concept of a sentential *topic* in the topic-comment articulation; (marked as [-Rh ...]).

***rheme*:** an informative, news-bearing, dominant, or contrary-to-expectation part that is to be added to the discourse or the hearer's mental world; (marked as [+Rh ...]).

***Question Under Discussion*, or *QUD*:** some explicit or implicit question which each discourse utterance addresses.

¹ For a more detailed description of these terms and the rationale in choosing them see chapters 2 and 3, especially section 3.5.1 (*Terminology*), p. 66 ff.