

## 5.5 *Illustrations*

In this section I will provide additional illustrations of how *-to* functions as a kontrastive marker in naturally occurring discourse. First, in sub-section 5.5.1 I will consider the use of *-to* in a short story by Vasilij Šukšin. In the following sub-sections I will discuss the function of *-to* in various constructions of colloquial Russian, the data for which come from a variety of sources.

### 5.5.1 Šukšin

The goal for this section is to provide a detailed analysis of how kontrastive properties of *-to* are utilized in the organization of discourse of a full-length literary work. Another goal is to demonstrate that such functions attributed to *-to* in the linguistic literature as “unexpectedness of addressing a particular topic” (Borisova, Bonnot, Bitextin), which are treated as “exceptional,” can be viewed as a natural consequence of the kontrastive nature of *-to*.

A perfect example of this function of *-to*, i.e., marking the “unexpectedness of addressing a particular topic,” can be found in a short story by Vasilij Šukšin *Zabuksoval* ‘Stuck.’ The set-up is the following: a collective farm mechanical engineer Roman Zvjagin is listening to his son Valerka doing his homework. Valerka is learning by heart an excerpt from Gogol’s classical novel *Mertvye Duši* ‘Dead Souls’. The novel is set in mid-19th century Russia, before serfdom was annulled in 1861. The main character, an adventurer and a scoundrel, Čičikov, is traveling from one nobleman’s estate to another

one trying to buy from them the so-called “dead souls” — the names of serfs who died since the last census but who are still considered alive for tax purposes. Taking advantage of this mishap of Russia’s bureaucratic system, Čičikov intends to get fictitiously rich and obtain the status of a nobleman by buying these “dead souls.” Čičikov’s scheme was also to the advantage of the noblemen who would drop the names of the dead serfs off their tax expenses. The first volume ends up with Čičikov’s escape in order to avoid the scandal and possible prosecution.

Gogol’s novel portrays very colorful types of people and is considered a satire on bureaucratic Russia. The very last pages of the first volume, though, possess a rather nostalgic note. In this last excerpt, usually called *Rus’-Trojka*, Gogol elaborates on the fast pace of a three-horse carriage (*trojka* or *troika* in alternative spellings) which is supposed to symbolize Russia’s fast development and unknown destiny. Here is an excerpt from the end of volume 1 of “Dead Souls,” in English translation by David Magarshack:

...Oh, you *troika*, you bird of a *troika*, who invented you? You could only have been born among a high-spirited people in a land that does not like doing things by halves, but has spread in a vast smooth plain over half the world, and you may count the milestones till your eyes are dizzy...  
 Is it not like that that you, too, Russia, are speeding along like a spirited *troika* that nothing can overtake? The road is like a cloud of smoke under you, the bridges thunder, and everything falls back and is left far behind. The spectator stops dead, struck dumb by the divine miracle: is it not a flash of lightning thrown down by heaven? What is the meaning of this terrifying motion? And what mysterious force is hidden in these horses the like of which the world has never seen?... Russia, where are you flying to? Answer! She gives no answer. The bells fill the air with their wonderful tinkling; the air is torn asunder, it thunders and is transformed into wind; everything on earth is flying past, and, looking askance, other nations and states draw aside and make way for her. <end of volume 1>  
 (Gogol 1961: 258-9; translated by D. Magarshack)

In the Soviet Union schoolchildren were required to learn this excerpt by heart. That is the situation captured in Šukšin's short story *Zabuksoval*: Valerka is learning *Rus'-Trojka* by heart and his father Roman, listening to his son's rote learning, suddenly encounters a challenging idea:

(47) [from Šukšin 1979: 109ff.]

[a] - Ne toropis' [...]  
- Don't hurry.

[b] Slova-**TO** von kakie xorošie [...]  
*Words-TO such good [...]*  
The words(-**TO**) in particular, they sound so nice here [...]

[c] S tolkom nado učit', a u tebjā odna uliča na ume.  
When you learn by heart, do it with sense, and you are only thinking about the outside.

[d] Kuda ona denetsja, tvoja uliča? [...]  
It will still be there, your outside. [...]

[e] Vdrug - s docady, čto li, so zlosti li - Roman podumal:  
Suddenly - either because of being annoyed or maybe angry - Roman stumbled on a thought:

[f] “A kogo vezut-**TO**? [g] Koni-**TO**? [h] Ètogo... Čičikova?” [...]  
*And whom [they]-carry-TO ? Horses-TO ? This ... Čičikov -ACC? [...]*  
“Wait a minute, who in particular is being carried(-**TO**)? As for the horses(-**TO**), [who do they carry]? That Čičikov?” [...]

[i] Ètogo xmyrja vesut, kotoryj mertvyje duši skupal, ezdil po kraju [...]  
That rogue is carried who was buying the dead souls, was roaming around the region [...]

[j] Vot tak troečka!  
It's this kind of a trojka!

- [k] - Valerk! [...] [l] A kto na trojke-**TO** edet?  
*And who on trojka-TO rides?'*  
 - Valerka! [...] As for the trojka(-**TO**), who is riding there?
- [m] - Selifan.  
 - Selifan
- [n] - Selifan-**TO** Selifan! [o] To ž - kučer.  
*Selifan-TO Selifan! That PART coachman.*  
 - Forget about Selifan(-**TO**)! He is the coachman.
- [p] A kogo on vezet-**TO**, Selifan-**TO**?  
*And whom he carries-TO, Selifan-TO?'*  
 The problem is who is he, Selifan(-**TO**), giving(-**TO**) a ride to!
- [q] - Čičikova.  
 - To Čičikov.
- [r] - Tak... Nu? tut - Rus'-trojka... A?  
 -So... Well? Look, here's Russia-the-trojka... Come on?
- [s] - Nu. I čto?  
 - And so what?
- [t] - Kak čto? Kak čto?!  
 - What do you mean so what?!
- [u] Rus'-trojka, vse gremit, vse zalivaetsja, a v trojke — proxindej, šuler...  
 Russia is rushing like the trojka, everything in her way is jingling, everything is singing, while in the trojka there is a swindler, a cheat.”
- “[a]- Don't hurry. [b] The words-**TO**, they sound so nice here [...] [c] When you learn by heart, do it with sense, and you are only thinking of how to get outside. [d] It will still be there, your outside. [...]
- [e] Suddenly - either because of being annoyed or maybe angry - Roman stumbled on a thought:  
 [f]“Wait a minute, who is being carried-**TO**, who? [g] The horses-**TO**, who do they carry?  
 [h] That... Čičikov?” [...] [i] That rogue is being carried who was buying the dead souls, who was roaming around the region [...] [j] It's this kind of a trojka!<sup>36</sup>
- [k] - Valerka! [...] [l] What about the trojka-**TO**, who is riding there?  
 [m] - Selifan.  
 [n] - I know about Selifan-**TO**. [o] But he's the coachman. [p] The problem is who is he, Selifan, giving-**TO** a ride to!

<sup>36</sup>The switch from using quotation marks to not using them possibly indicates the author's intention to distinguish between mental thought and speech (or the character's thinking for himself and thinking aloud).

[q] - To Čičikov.

[r] -So... Well? Look, here's Russia-the-trojka... Come on?

[s] - And so what?

[t] - What do you mean so what?! [u] Russia is rushing like the trojka, everything in her way is jingling, everything is singing, while in the trojka there is a swindler, a cheat.”

This challenging question “Who is in the carriage?” (or, represented in a different way, with a variable to be filled: (*x* is in the carriage) ) and the eye-opening answer to it “Čičikov is riding in the carriage!” (*x* = Čičikov) are repeated in the story numerous times: first, Roman is thinking to himself, then trying to talk to his son, then he is revealing his thoughts to Valerka's teacher, and finally he is left with his thoughts alone again. Particle *-to* accompanies the majority of the linguistic realizations of this idea; it can actually be interesting to list them in the order they are given in the short story to demonstrate that this particle can occur in various types of clauses (statements; wh-, yes-no and rhetorical questions, exclamations, etc.) and can cliticize to various elements within a clause (subject and object noun phrases, verbs, prepositional phrases):

(45) Variations of proposition *The person in the trojka is ČIČIKOV!* marked by *-to*:

- a. **A** kogo vezut-**TO**? Koni-**TO**?  
*And whom [they]-carry-TO? Horses-TO?*  
 ‘And as for the person being carried(-**TO**), who is it? As for the horses(-**TO**)?’
- b. **A** kto na trojke-**TO** edet?  
*And who on trojka-TO goes?’*  
 ‘And as for the person riding in the trojka(-**TO**), who is it?’
- c. **A** kogo on vezet-**TO**, Selifan-**TO**?  
*And whom he carries-TO, Selifan-TO?’*  
 ‘And as for Selifan(-**TO**) and the person whom he is carrying(-**TO**), who is it?’

- d. **A** kto v trojke-**TO**? [...] Kto edet-**TO**? Komu dorogu-**TO**?..  
*And who in trojka-TO? [...] Who is-going-TO? To whom road-ACC-TO?*  
 ‘And as for the person in the trojka(-**TO**), who is he? Who is riding(-**TO**)? To whom the right-away(-**TO**)?’
- e. Tak èto Rus’-**TO** - Čičikova mčít?  
*So this Russia-NOM-TO Čičikov-ACC is-whirling-away?*  
 ‘So as for Russia(-**TO**), this is she that is whirling Čičikov away?’
- f. Tak on **že** edet-**TO**, Čičikov!  
*PART he PART is-going-TO, Čičikov!*  
 ‘So as for the one riding(-**TO**), this is indeed him, Čičikov!’
- g. Da s kakogo [konca] ni zaidi, - v trojke-**TO** Čičikov.  
*PART with what[ever] [end] PART start,- in trojka-TO Čičikov.*  
 ‘But whatever [end] [you] start with, as for the one in the trojka(-**TO**), it is Čičikov
- h. [Gogol’] V trojke ostavil-**TO** [Čičikova], vot čto menja...èto i zaskreblo-**TO**.  
*[Gogol’] In trojka left-TO [Čičikov-ACC] PART what me... this PART upset-TO.*  
 ‘[Gogol’] left(-**TO**) Čičikov in the trojka, that is what ... upset(-**TO**) me.’
- i. Nu, **a** kto edet-**TO**?!  
*Well, and who is-going-TO?!*  
 ‘Well, and as for the one riding(-**TO**), who is it?!’
- j. Vesut-**TO** Čičikova, kakoj **že** vopros?  
*[They]-carry-TO Čičikov-ACC, what PART question?*  
 ‘As for the one being carried(-**TO**), this is Čičikov, is there really any question?’

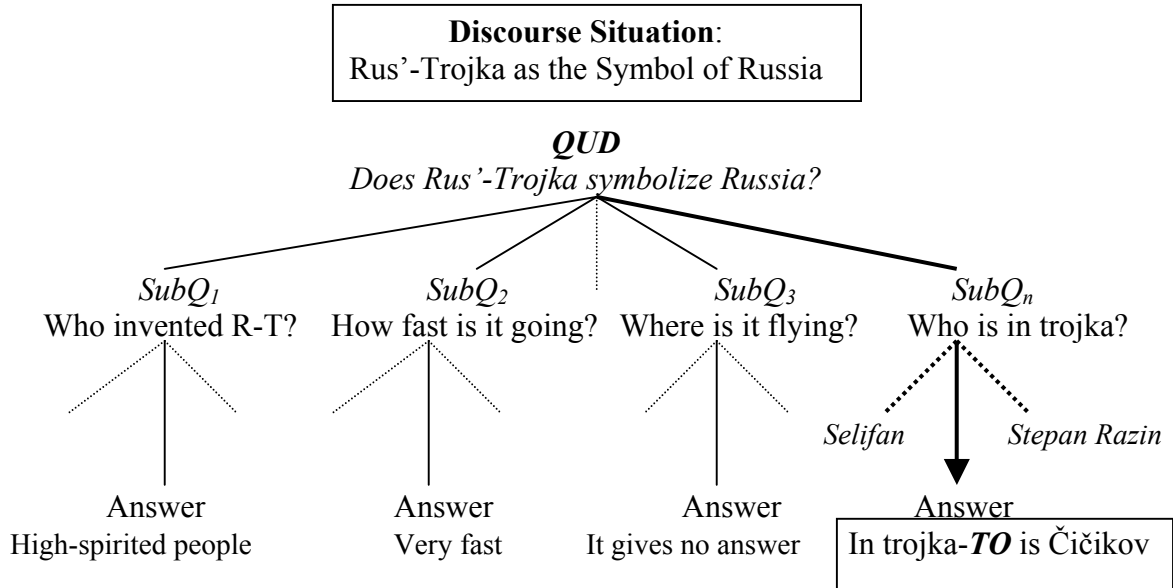
Out of 30 occurrence of particle *–to* in this short story (which is an incredibly high frequency anyway), exactly one half marks variations of the proposition *The person in the trojka is ČIČIKOV!* Why is particle *–to* so important here? The answer to the question *Who is in the trojka?* is not difficult to find: remember that even the boy knows that it is Čičikov who is in the trojka (although the first, incorrect, answer that he gives to his father is “Selifan,” who is the coachman). Also, the teacher gives the correct answer right away, after Roman’s inquiry.

The essence of the story is that Roman considers this question *Who is in the trojka?* as a member of the set of questions addressed in the final excerpt of Gogol's *Dead Souls*, the *Rus'-Trojka* excerpt that Valerka is learning by heart aloud and Roman was doing the same thirty years before. The other questions, such *How fast is the Trojka going?* or *Where is it rushing to?*, are legitimate questions to ask if the question under discussion is whether *Rus'-Trojka* is really the symbol of Russia. And these legitimate questions have answers (explicit or implicit) that support the affirmative answer to the main question: yes, *Rus'-Trojka* IS INDEED the symbol of Russia.<sup>37</sup> So, only as a member of this set of questions, the question *Who is in the trojka?* AND the answer it supplies ("Čičikov") would look absurd, ridiculous, challenging, etc. since Čičikov is a thief, a scoundrel, etc. who cannot be considered as symbolizing the best in Russia. (While talking to the teacher, Roman presents the following argument: *If it had been Sten'ka Razin* [a famous peasant rebel], *then it would make sense!*)

The linguistic element that marks all this set-evoking work is the particle *-to*. Its role in the organization of the main conflict in the short story is to serve as an unambiguous marker of the generated set of questions (or the set of sets of proposition), which is schematically shown in (46):

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<sup>37</sup> Probably, most children in the Soviet Union had to write compositions entitled "Why does *Rus'-Trojka* symbolize Russia?"

(46) Particle *-to* as the organizer of the main conflict in Šukšin's *Zabuksoval*:

So, the function of *-to* described as “unexpectedness of addressing a particular topic” (suggested in the works by Bitextin, Bonnot, Borisova) can be considered as a consequence of the essential property of *-to* as evoking a set of sets of propositions (or a set of questions). Each time the particle *-to* is used to mark a variant of the proposition *It is Čičikov who is in the trojka*, it is evaluated as a misfit in the whole structure shown in (46) above. The “unexpectedness effect,” at least in this case, is the result of this unconventional (however, legitimate) juxtaposition of the members of the set.

There are other interesting uses of *-to* in this remarkable story. I will provide a few more examples from Šukšin's *Zabuksoval* ‘*Stuck*’ to illustrate the cognitive status of the discourse referents marked by particle *-to*.

When Roman comes to the teacher's place, Nikolaj is looking for something in his storage shack. The dialog goes like this:

(47) Roman: "Hello Nikolaj Stepanyč."

Teacher: "Hello Roman Konstantinyč! [I] lost one thing... got myself so dirty."

Roman: "Nikolaj Stepanyč, I was just listening to my son ... [he] is learning "Rus'-Trojka"..."

Teacher: "OK."

Roman: "And somehow I came to a thought [...]"

And Roman starts sharing his thought with the teacher. So, for about a page and a half the discourse topic is Čičikov and the trojka. Finally, the teacher admits that Roman's way of thinking is legitimate, even though it is rather unconventional. After a short pause the teacher asks Roman:

(48) Vy syniške-**TO** skazali ob ètom?

*You to-son-TO told about this?'*

'As for your son, have you told him about this?'

The discourse referent marked here by *-to* is Roman's son: its cognitive status with respect to the hearer is known to the hearer but not activated in the discourse. It also situationally evoked: the relationship between the interlocutors is centered on the boy. Also, this referent has been introduced as a discourse topic by Roman but it was dropped without being developed. Now the teacher returns to this dropped topic and inquires more about it. With respect to hierarchical organization of discourse, the role of *-to* here is to

return to a previously discussed question (within the larger question under discussion; cf. the role of the second occurrence of *-to* in I. Grekova's excerpt above). This is exactly the function of *-to* mentioned by Grenoble (1998:199) as to "track changes in the sentential-level topic when it is still related to the more global discourse topic" and to "establish a topic frame, signaling the selection of one of a number of potential topics as the local-level topic." This function can also be viewed as a consequence of the kontrastive properties of *-to*, and especially, of its essential properties of evoking a set of sets of propositions and being capable of marking referents that are known to the hearer but not activated in the discourse at the moment.

### 5.5.2 Construction "*X-TO X, a ...*"<sup>38</sup>

Particle *-to* is also employed in constructions of the type "*X-to X, a ...*"<sup>39</sup> where X can be practically any kind of phrase (NP, VP, PP, etc.). Šukšin's short story *Zabuksoval* 'Stuck', so rich in *-to*, provides two examples of this construction.

<sup>38</sup> Thanks to Leonard Babby for addressing my attention to this puzzle at FASL6 (May 1997, University of Connecticut).

<sup>39</sup> Particle (or discourse marker, or conjunction) *a* is one of the most frequent conversational elements that contributes to cohesion and coherence of discourse. It has been analyzed as marking turn-taking and bringing up a related discourse topic, especially frequently occurring when followed by a *wh*-word, as in (i), which is an example from Krylova and Khavronina (1988: 144):

- (i) A: Pojdem v kino. 'Let's go the movies.'  
 B: *A* čto idet? 'And what's on?'

As shown by Levin (1970/1975) and Abraham (1979), the function of the discourse marker *a*, in at least one of its functions, is comparable to the English *but* in its concessive meaning as in *On ne xodit, a begaet* 'He does not walk **but** runs' [about an active toddler]. Some researchers (Vasilyeva 1972: 149-152, etc.) analyze *a* as a multifunctional particle and trace some of its meanings to the interjection *a* 'ah' and some to the conjunction *a* 'but/and'. [footnote continues on next page]

(49)

- [a] - Valerk! [...] [b] A kto na trojke-**TO** edet?  
*And who on trojka-TO rides?*  
 - Valerka! [...] As for the trojka(-**TO**), who is riding there?
- [c] - Selifan.  
 - Selifan
- [d] - Selifan-**TO** Selifan! [e] To ž - kučer.  
*Selifan-TO Selifan! That PART coachman.*  
 - Forget about Selifan(-**TO**)! He is the coachman.
- [f] A kogo on vezet-**TO**, Selifan-**TO**?  
*And whom he carries-TO, Selifan-TO?*  
 The problem is who is he, Selifan(-**TO**), giving(-**TO**) a ride to!
- [g] - Čičikova.  
 - To Čičikov
- [h] - Tak... Nu? tut - Rus' -trojka... A?  
 -So... Well? Look, here's Russia-the-trojka... Come on?
- [i] - Nu. I čto?  
 - And so what?
- [j] - Kak čto? Kak čto?!  
 - What do you mean so what?!
- [k] Rus' -trojka, vse gremit, vse zalivaetsja, a v trojke - proxindej, šuler...  
 Russia is rushing like the trojka, everything in her way is jingling, everything is singing, while in the trojka there is a swindler, a cheat."

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[continued from the previous page] Parrott (1997; chapter 2) analyzes the relationship between *a* and the so-called "thematic" *že* (mostly diachronically, but also with reference to their modern uses).

It is possible that *a* can also be reanalyzed as a kontrastive marker; with respect to set-generating properties of *a*, consider the following observation by Yokoyama's (1986):

...two-member sets and multi-member sets behave analogously in Russian as far as the sentential conjunction *a* 'and' is involved: the conjunction *a* is used to conjoin the last sentence based on the referential knowledge of the last member of the given set found in  $C_a \cap C_b$  [=the intersection of the interlocutors' A and B sets of matters of current concern]...(Yokoyama 1986: 314-315)

However, a more detailed analysis of *a*, especially aiming towards a unifying account of its multiple functions, is needed.

[l] Do Valerki vse nikak ne doxodilo — i čto?  
Valerka still couldn't grasp that - so what?

[m] - Da kak **že**?! [...]  
-Can't you get it?!

*[Roman realizes that his son is too young to understand the meaning of his discovery and lets the boy study. Meanwhile, his agitation grows as he is thinking to himself:]*

[n] Vot tak nomer.! [o] Mčitsja, vdoxnovennaja bogom! — a vezet šulera. [...]  
That's amazing! [It] is rushing, inspired by God — and in it there is a cheat. [...]

[p] Tut **že** javnyj nedosmotr.  
That's a sheer oversight.

[q] Mčimsja-TO mčimsja, elki zelenye, a kogo mčim?  
*[We]are-rushing-TO [we]are-rushing , [=damn it] and whom are-we-rushing?*  
As for rushing(-TO), we ARE rushing, but, damn it, WHO are we rushing?

[r] Možno **že** ne tak vse ponjat' ...  
You can easily misinterpret all this.'

'[a] - Valerka! [...] [b] What about the trojka-TO, who is riding there?

[c] - Selifan.

[d] - - Forget about Selifan(-TO)! [e]. He is the coachman. [f] The problem is who is he, Selifan-TO, giving-TO a ride to!

[g] - To Čičikov

[h] -So... Well? Look, here's Russia-the-trojka... Come on?

[i] - And so what?

[j] - What do you mean so what?! [k] Russia is rushing like the trojka, everything in her way is jingling, everything is singing, while in the trojka there is a swindler, a cheat.

[l] Valerka still couldn't grasp that — so what?

[m] -Can't you get it?!

*[Roman realizes that his son is too young to understand the meaning of his discovery and lets the boy study. Meanwhile, his agitation grows as he is thinking to himself:]*

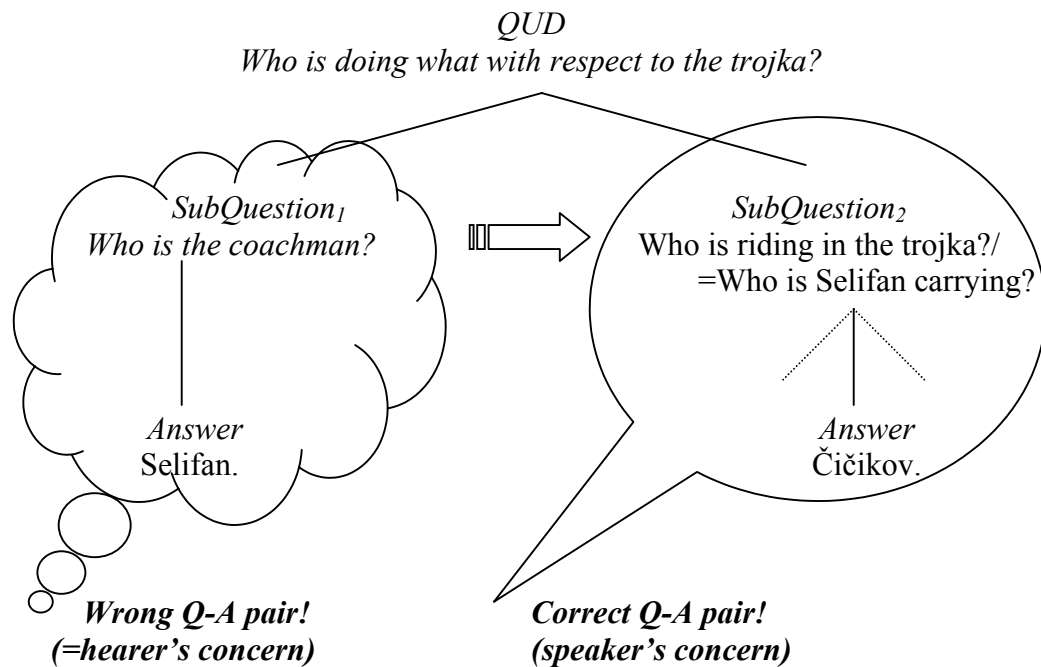
[n] That's amazing! [o] The carriage is rushing, inspired by God - and in it there is a cheat. [...]

[p] That's a sheer oversight. [q] As for rushing(-TO), we ARE rushing, but, damn it, WHO are we rushing? [r] You can easily misinterpret all this.'

In both occurrences of the construction “*X-to X, a...*” in this excerpt there is a sense that the information provided in the previous discourse is somehow not relevant or not quite sufficient enough, even though it can correct. Roman asks his son who is in the carriage and Valerka answers: “Selifan.” The boy’s answer cannot be considered false, since Selifan is the coachman, but that is not what the father was looking for. Roman exclaims: *Selifan-TO Selifan!* ... (see (49d) ), which can be given an interpretative translation as ‘I know about Selifan [being in the carriage], that’s obvious! But that’s not what I am asking for!’ or even ‘Every fool knows that Selifan is there, but can you tell me who else is in the carriage?’ Here the construction has the form “NP-*to* NP;” however the NP represents the full proposition {Selifan is riding in the carriage}, with other terms of the proposition undergoing ellipsis.

If instructions to the hearer encoded in this construction are represented in the form of a discourse tree, the speaker’s view of the discourse situation can be seen as follows: by using construction “*X-to X, a...*,” the speaker points out to the hearer that the hearer has been concerned with a question, which is related to the one the speaker has been concerned with, but not the very same one that the speaker is seeking an answer to. Actually, the relationship between these two questions, i.e., the one that the hearer is concerned with and the one that the speaker is concerned with, is the same one that is characteristic of the k-marker *-to* in general: these two questions are sub-questions dominated by the same question under discussion. The speaker’s use of the construction “*X-to X,*” intended to correct the hearer’s representation of the discourse situation, is shown in (50) for (49d): *Selifan-TO Selifan!* ...

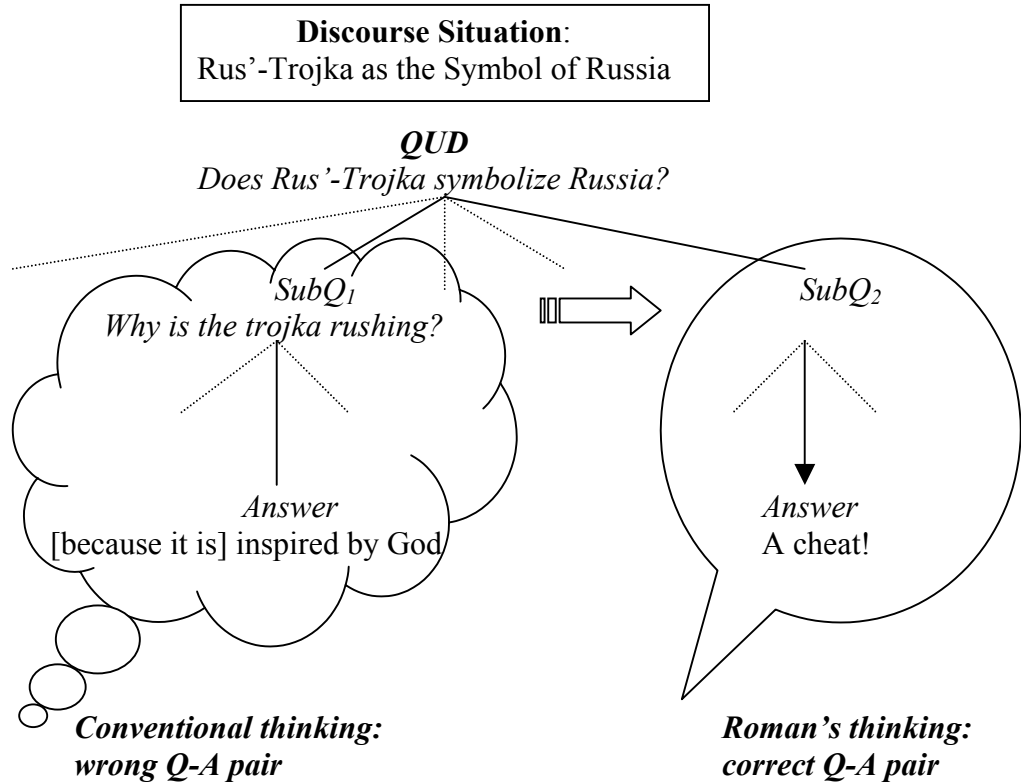
## (50) The Use of Construction “X-to X” in (49d):



Now let us consider the second occurrence of the construction “X-to X, a...” in (49q): *Mčimsja-TO mčimsja* ‘[We] are-rushing-TO [we] are-rushing.’ The only element of the proposition that has not undergone ellipsis here is the verb. It is not as easy to reconstruct the full proposition in this case as it was with the previous example: there it was in the immediately preceding context. Here, however, the potential antecedent is separated by several utterances. Another complicating factor is the shift from character’s speech to narrator’s speech and back. However, we can think of Roman’s thought as circular, returning to the same fixed idea (cf. the title of the short story: *Zabuksoval*, which I translate as ‘Stuck’). I believe that *Mčimsja-TO mčimsja* is related to what Roman’s earlier thought *Mčitsja, vdoxnovennaja bogom! - a vezet šulera* ‘[It] is rushing,

inspired by God - and in it there is a cheat' even though the verb form is not quite the same in these two cases: the change from third person singular to first person plural can be treated as a literary device. So, in this case the full proposition that *-to* marks as irrelevant is *The trojka is rushing, inspired by God* (which is an answer to an implicit question *Why is the trojka rushing?*) and the discourse that follows supplies the question that is more relevant to the discussion *Whom are we rushing?* or *Who is in it?* and the eye-opening answer to it is “a cheat!”

Again, if these two questions with their answers are presented in the form of a discourse tree, the construction “*X-to X, a...*” can be thought of as a way for the speaker to shift the focus from a sub-question that is not that relevant but which represents a conventional belief to a more relevant sub-question, as assessed by the speaker. The two sub-questions are again “sisters” dominated by the same question under discussion: *Does the trojka symbolize Russia?* (cf. (46)). This argument between the conventional thinking and Roman’s unconventional twist to it is graphically represented in (51):

(51) The Use of Construction “*X-to X, a...*” for (49q):

Let us consider another occurrence of the construction “*X-to X, a...*” in connected discourse. The excerpt in (52) is taken from the CHILDES database and the discourse situation is the following: prior to the interaction between Varja, her mother and her grandfather, the mother and Varja rode in a trolleybus and bought a ticket for the ride; now mother is asking Varja whether she wants this ticket (and sure enough, Varja wants it!). Then mother is trying to elicit an answer from Varja to the question ‘Where did we get this ticket?’ in front of the grandfather. Varja, however, seems to be still concerned with replying ‘Thank you’ to the previous question by mother (‘Do you want the ticket?’)

The grandfather, using the “*X-to X, a...*” construction, is trying to re-direct Varja’s attention to the current, still unanswered, question, i.e., ‘Where did you get this ticket?’:

(52) [Varja, mother, and grandfather are talking about the trolleybus ticket that Varja and her mother got for their trolleybus ride earlier that day]

\*MOT: Var'!  
 %eng: Varja!  
 \*MOT: A xochesh' biletik?  
 %eng: Do you want a ticket?  
 \*VAR: Bijetik, bijetik, xaosyj, basoj, basoj.  
 %eng: A ticket, a ticket, a good, a big.  
 \*MOT: Otkuda ètot biletik?  
 %eng: Where is this ticket from?  
 \*MOT: Gde my vzjali ètot biletik?  
 %eng: Where have we got this ticket?  
 \*VAR: /giving the ticket to the grandfather/ Pasiba.  
 %eng: Thank you.  
 \*GRF: **Spasibo-TO spasibo, a** gde vy vzjali ètot biletik?  
 %eng: ok, thank you, but where have you got this ticket from?  
 \*GRF: Mama sprashivaet.  
 %eng: Mummy asks.  
 \*MOT: Gde my s toboj exali, kogda my vzjali ètot biletik?  
 %eng: Where were we going with you, when we've got this ticket?  
 \*VAR: Paje, pajexali.  
 %eng: Go, let's go.  
 \*MOT: My v trollejbuse exali.  
 %eng: By trolleybus we were going.  
 \*MOT: Tam my \_tot biletik vzjali.  
 %eng: We have taken this ticket there.  
 THE SECOND SEANCE - MAY THE 14, 15, 16 1984

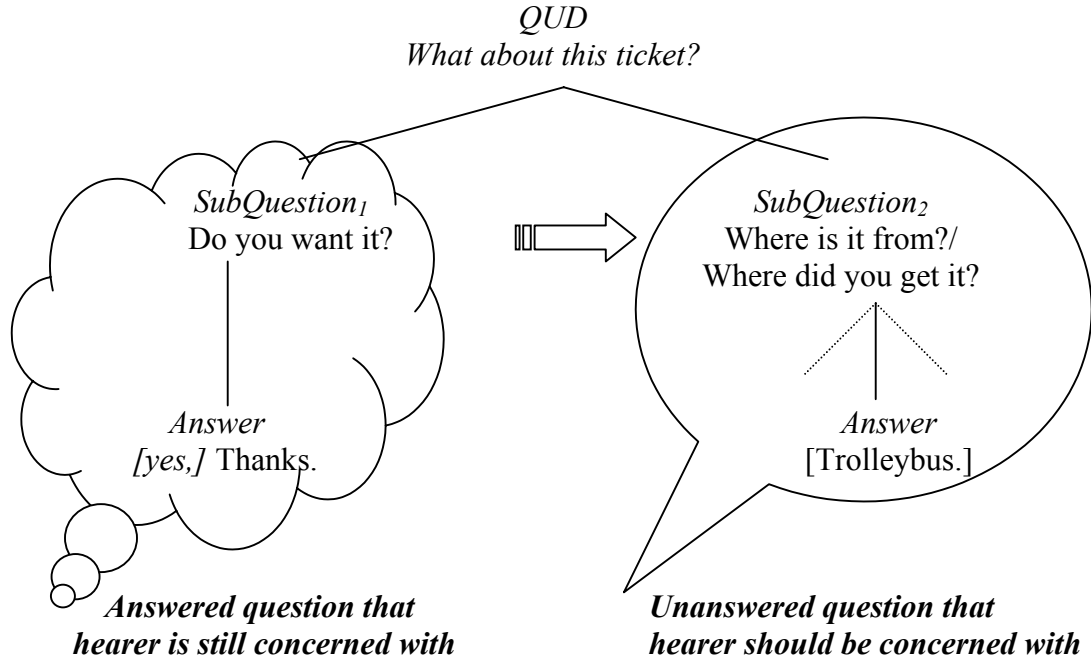
Gloss:

\*GRF: **Spasibo-TO spasibo, a** gde vy vzjali ètot biletik?  
 Thanks-*TO* thanks, but where you-pl. got this ticket

‘“Thanks” is ok, but [you didn’t answer] where you two got this ticket from!’

The grandfather’s correction of Varja’s representation of the discourse situation is graphically represented in (53); he is using the utterance *Spasibo-TO spasibo, a...* to re-direct Varja’s attention from the sub-question that has been resolved to the other one which is still unanswered:

## (53) The Use of Construction “X-to X, a...” in (52):



In all the cases discussed in this section, the speaker’s usage of the construction “X-to X, a...” seems to be aimed at re-directing the hearer’s attention from a rather irrelevant question that the hearer is concerned with to another question, which the speaker perceives as more relevant. These two questions are not unrelated: they are sub-questions answering the same question under discussion, which are centered around a particular discourse entity or entities: thus, in (49d/50), the discourse entities are the *trojka* and the people associated with it; in (49q/51), this is the *trojka* as the symbol of Russia; in (52/53), the central discourse entity is the trolleybus ticket). However, more research needs to be done to pinpoint the exact relationship between the sub-questions that the construction “X-to X, a...” connects.

For now, however, it is important to mention that the property of marking a set of questions (or a set of sets of propositions) characteristic of the particle *-to* in general is preserved in this construction as well. The specific pragmatic meaning encoded in the construction “*X-to X, a...*” is to re-direct the hearer’s attention from one sub-question to another one.<sup>40</sup>

### 5.5.3 Construction *To-TO (i ono)* ‘That’s it’

The pragmatic effects introduced by the colloquial Russian construction *To-TO (i ono)* ‘that’s it’<sup>41</sup> are rather different from those of the construction “*X-to X, a...*” which was discussed above. The pragmatic meaning of this construction can be descriptively rendered as follows: “even though your behavior might have suggested the opposite, you nevertheless provide the answer that I have expected of you.” An example its use in natural language discourse comes from CHILDES and is given in (54). The discourse situation is the following: Varja is getting ready to go to bed but before that the mother promised to her to put a record on. Unexpectedly for the mother, Varja is asking her whether she would be listening to this record in bed. Taking it as a possible, even though

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<sup>40</sup> It was brought to my attention by Enric Vallduví that in other languages (Yiddish, Romance, etc.) there is a construction which is somewhat similar — at least in the form — to the colloquial Russian construction: a copy of the verb (often nonfinite) is “topicalized” and is resumed by the finite form of the verb. However, functionally, this construction appears to be different: in these languages the ostensible function of the construction is to express unambiguously that the rheme is not the lexical verb but rather polarity, tense, aspect or some other semantic category associated with inflection (i.e., *verum focus*). The fronted copy of the verb makes a rhematic interpretation of the predicator impossible. However, the function of the colloquial Russian construction appears to be rather different: the *verum focus* reading does not seem to account for all the implicatures associated with it. I will leave a detailed cross-linguistic comparison for future research.

<sup>41</sup> As reflected in the English translation, the first *to* in this construction is not the particle but the distal deictic, or demonstrative pronoun *to(t)* ‘that’, as opposed to the proximal deictic *èto(t)* ‘this’.

unlikely, hint that Varja wants to listen to the record while already in bed, the mother asks Varja directly if she wants to already be in bed [while listening to the record]. Varja answers this question negatively — and that is exactly the answer that the mother suspected that Varja would provide. The mother comments on it with uttering *To-TO i ono* ‘That’s what I thought’:

(54) [before going to bed and listening to the record about the crawfish]

\*MOT: A my schas s tobój čto obeshchali poslušat'?'  
 \*VAR: Pro raka.  
 \*VAR: V krovatke?  
 \*MOT: Net, eshche ne v krovatke.  
 \*MOT: Ty uzhe by xotela v krovatku?  
 \*VAR: Net.  
 \*MOT: **To-TO i ono.**  
 THE SIXTH SEANCE - FEBRUARY THE 15, 1985

\*MOT: And now what did we promise to listen to about?  
 \*VAR: About the crawfish.  
     In bed?  
 \*MOT: No, not in bed yet.  
     Would you like to be already in bed?  
 \*VAR: No.  
 \*MOT: That’s what I thought.

Gloss:

\*MOT: **To-TO i ono.**  
 That-**TO** PART it.

‘That’s it, exactly!’ or ‘That’s what I thought!’

The discourse properties of this colloquial construction need to be analyzed in more detail: it is unclear whether *-to* marks a set of sets of propositions here. However, *-to* is still kontrastive in this construction: it refers to the set containing (at least) two propositions {*Varja wants to go to bed; Varja does not want to go to bed*} with one of its members foregrounded and the other one being a tangible alternative.

### 5.5.4 Particle Combination *A to* ‘Otherwise’

It seems that particle *-to* retains its kontrastive nature in various colloquial constructions and also when it is combined with other particles or discourse markers. Consider, for example, the combination of *-to* with discourse marker *a*<sup>42</sup> – *a to*, the closest English equivalent of which is ‘otherwise’. An illustration of such combination is given in (55):

(55) [Varja is learning how to lace her shoes]

\*MOT: Ugadaj, v kakuju dyrku polezet.  
 \*MOT: Ugadaj, iz kakoj dyrki.  
 \*VAR: Tashchi!  
 \*MOT: Ugadala?  
 \*MOT: Tashchi, tashchi, tashchi, tashchi.  
 \*VAR: Varja, sam.  
 %com: a childish word instead of "voz'mi"  
 \*MOT: Stop!  
 \*MOT: **A to** vse vytashchish'.  
 \*MOT: teper' davaj ty prosovyvaj.  
 \*VAR: A ja teper' prosovyvaj.  
 \*MOT: Tak, i s ètoj storony xvataj.  
 \*MOT: O, vot umnica, nauchilas', Varja.  
 THE FIFTH SEANCE - OCTOBER 2-3, 1984

\*MOT: Guess which hole it is going to.  
 Guess which one it's coming from.  
 \*VAR: Pull!  
 \*MOT: Did you guess right?  
 Pull, pull, pull, pull.  
 \*VAR: Varja, [my/her]self.  
 %com: a childish word instead of "take"  
 \*MOT: Stop!  
*Otherwise* you'll pull everything through.  
 Now you push it through.  
 \*VAR: And now I push through.  
 \*MOT: This way, grab it from this side.  
 Oh, well done, you've got it, Varja.

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<sup>42</sup> With respect to the meaning of *a* in this combination of particles, see the footnote at the beginning of section 5.5.2 which deals with construction “*X-to X, a...*” The kontrastive properties of *a* require further research.

Gloss:

\*MOT: **A to vse vytashchish'.**

And/but TO everything [you]will-have-pulled-through.

‘*Otherwise* you will/would pull everything through.’

Again, a detailed analysis of this combination is needed. However, it is obvious that the utterance **A to vse vytaščiš'** is kontrastive: the proposition *You will/would pull everything through* is a hypothetical alternative to the preferred course of action.

Particle *-to* also combines with other particles and discourse markers. For a brief discussion of combinations between k-markers *-to*, *že*, and *ved'* see chapter 8.

## 5.6 Summary: -TO as a Kontrastive Marker

In this chapter I have discussed kontrastive properties of particle *-to* in its so-called “non-indefinite meaning:”

- 1) Particle *-to* marks a kontrast set, which is a set of sets of propositions (equivalently, a set of questions), which differ from each other in the value of two kontrasted elements (one in the *link* and the other one in the *rheme*);
- 2) It marks information which is assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer but not necessarily activated in the hearer’s mind at the time of the utterance;
- 3) It encliticizes to an element marked [+kontrast], which is usually the *link*;
- 4) At the discourse level, *-to* instructs the hearer to generate a segment of the discourse tree which corresponds to the set of questions marked by *-to*; these

questions are “sisters” which are dominated by the same question under discussion and each of these questions has a set of alternative answers as well.

Thus, particle *-to* is kontrastive in the way that it requires the presence of a set of alternatives in the discourse, or, in other words, it refers to the kontrast set that should be present in the discourse. In the case when no kontrast set is provided, the phenomenon of accommodation takes place: particle *-to* instructs the hearer to build a set of alternatives from relevant elements in the discourse.

It has been shown that k-marker *-to* retains its kontrastive properties when used in various constructions of colloquial Russian, even though some of them deserve a more detailed analysis.

Moreover, it is possible that kontrastiveness is also present in such separately discussed meaning of *-to* as indefiniteness, disjunction, and even demonstrativeness (or distal deixis). For example, non-specific indefinite pronouns can be thought of in set-evoking terms in the following way: *gde-to* ‘somewhere’ can be viewed as ‘in one (unspecified) location out of a range of possible locations’<sup>43</sup> or *kto-to* ‘someone’ as ‘one (unspecified) person out of a group of people under consideration.’ Similarly, disjunction

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<sup>43</sup> It might be productive to compare the basic meaning of pronominals formed by encliticizing of the “indefinite” *-to* to wh-words with the basic meaning of wh-words per se and also with the combinations of wh-words with other particles in Russian.

Thus, the basic meaning of a wh-word per se, like *gde* ‘where’ is to introduce a set of potential answers: in this case, possible locations. The set of true answers can include all the locations in the set (‘everywhere’), no locations at all (‘nowhere’) or some intermediate value, including *gde-to* ‘**somewhere**’ (which means in ‘one unspecified location out a range of possible locations’). The meaning of *gde-to* differs from the meaning of the base form *gde* in the way that the former presupposes that there is at least one location that is chosen, or true, of something, while the latter lack this presupposition. [footnote continues on next page] [continued from previous page] There are other particles that cliticize to wh-words to form indefinites, each possessing a more narrow meaning than *-to*: *gde-nibud* ‘*anywhere*’ [in any of the possible locations, no matter which one], *koe-gde* ‘*SOMEWHERE*’ ‘in one specific location which the speaker chooses to leave underspecified’. (For ideas on interaction between question particles and indefinites see Hagstrom 1998.)

can be represented through the notion of sets; for example, *to zdes' to tam* 'now here, now there' can be analyzed as having a distributive meaning within a set. Even in its primary function as a demonstrative pronoun or a distal deictic, *to* exhibits set-evoking properties; this is especially clear in sentences containing negation, as in (56):

(56)           Ja vošla ne v *to*           zdanie.  
                   *I entered NEG in DEM/DISTAL building*

                  'I entered the wrong building.' ['I entered not in that building']

A more interpretative translation for (56) would be something like 'I entered not the building that I intended but some other building.' The implication here is that the set of buildings that could have been entered contains at least two members: the one that the speaker intended to enter but did not enter and the one that she unintentionally entered.

Even though the set-generating properties of *to* in such functions as deixis, disjunction, and indefinites have to be examined in more detail, pursuing this avenue seems promising for a unifying analysis of *to* in all of its meanings or functions.<sup>44</sup>

The analysis of *-to* as a k-marker as outlined above makes a prediction that unless its essential properties (such as evoking a set of sets of propositions and marking

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<sup>44</sup> Interesting similarities between the Russian *-to* and the Japanese *wa* (the canonical function of which is a topic marker) can be drawn from the analysis of *wa* presented in Kuno (1972, 1973) and Miyagawa (1987): both can be markers of contrastive topics and have other, non-contrastive, usages. However, the following differences between the two markers can be pointed out:

- 1) according to Kuno 1973, the contrastive *wa* is always stressed while the thematic *wa* is never stressed. Russian particle *-to* is never stressed;
- 2) according to Miyagawa 1987, *wa* can attach to wh-phrases in restricted contexts, which brings him to conclude that it is set-anaphoric. Russian *-to* can also be thought of as set-anaphoric, however, the result of *-to* cliticizing to a wh-word is rather different: it results in wh-indefinites. [footnote continues on next page]

[continued from previous page] Cross-linguistic parallels between the set-anaphoric properties of these two markers and also between the set-creating Russian *že* and Japanese *ga* deserve further investigation.

information known to the hearer but not activated in his/her mind) are satisfied, the utterance containing *-to* would be infelicitous in the discourse. One of such cases has been discussed above with respect to discourse-initial utterances containing *-to*: it is infelicitous in an opening utterance in discourse UNLESS the hearer is capable of evoking the other members of the set of sets of propositions, which, under normal circumstances means that the hearer should be able to evoke the question under discussion and the sub-questions with a set of their alternative answers.

Another prediction that the present analysis makes is that k-marker *-to* is not acceptable in sentences containing certain quantifiers.<sup>45</sup> Thus, k-marker *-to* is not acceptable in a sentence containing the universal quantifier *vse* ‘*all*’,<sup>46</sup> as shown in (57) (the discourse situation for which is the same as for the majority of illustrations in chapter 4: Grandma is waiting for her grandchildren’s greetings on her birthday):

(57) \**Vse vnuki-TO* pozvonili.  
*All grandchildren-TO called*

‘As for all grandchildren, they called.’

The source of ungrammaticality in (57) is the inability of *-to* to mark a set of sets of propositions since the set of grandchildren is exhaustively evoked by being in the scope of the universal quantifier and no other sets are available for computation as a quantificational domain (i.e., here only a set of propositions — and not a set of sets of

<sup>45</sup> Thanks to Regine Eckardt for leading me to think about this.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Büring’s (1997a, 1997b, 2000) treatment of a sentence like *All politicians are not corrupt*.

propositions — is evoked, or there is only a single branching line at the upper part of the tree, with no other alternatives).<sup>47</sup>

Another type of quantifiers that *-to* does not tolerate within the scope of the kontrastive link and the kontrastive rheme is quantifiers like *nekotorye* ‘some’ or *mnogie* ‘many’, the referents of which are indefinites, as shown in (58-60). The source of ungrammaticality here is the cognitive status of the referents evoked by *-to*: they should be known to the hearer (also see section 5.2.1 above for the discussion of Bitextin’s (1994) proposal with respect to having indefinites in the scope of *-to*):

(58) ??*Nekotorye vnuki-TO* pozvonili.  
*Some grandchildren-TO called*

‘As for some grandchildren, they called.’

(59) ??*Mnogie vnuki-TO* pozvonili.  
*Many grandchildren-TO called*

‘As for many grandchildren, they called.’

The sentences in (58-59) become more acceptable when the status of referents in the scope of the quantifiers is changed from indefinites to specific indefinites, i.e., from having an unspecified referents to having an underspecified referent (or definitely known to at least the speaker), as shown in (60):

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<sup>47</sup> However, if another set of referents is introduced in the discourse, for example, if a set of grandchildren is compared to the set of children, the sentence in (57) becomes more acceptable, as in *Vse vnuki-TO pozvonili, a vot deti zabyli* ‘As for all grandchildren, they called, but the children forgot.’

- (60) NEKOTORYE/ koe-kakie vnuki-**TO** pozvonili.  
*SOME grandchildren-TO called*

‘As for SOME grandchildren, they called.’

A more detailed account of interaction between the k-marker *-to* and various quantifiers will have to await future research.

### 5.6.1 K-Marker *-TO*: A Unifying Analysis

In this chapter it has also been shown that kontrastiveness underlies all the functions of *-to* that have been discussed in the literature. Specifically, the following functions have been analyzed as consequences of essential properties of k-marker *-to*:

- *marker of contrast* (Vasilyeva, Bonnot, Rathmayr, and Bitextin):  
 the function of *-to* as a contrast marker (i.e., marker of binary, or “one-to-one” opposition) is subsumed under the analysis of *-to* as a kontrast marker:  
*-to* is always kontrastive, or set-generating, but it is not the case that the set marked by *-to* always consists of two and only two elements  
 (see chapter 2, section 2.2 for discussion of the notions of *kontrast* and *contrast* with respect to the number of elements in the set);
- *marker of emphasis* (Vasilyeva, Bonnot, Rathmayr, and Bitextin):  
 emphasis is possible only with something non-emphasized in the background; cf. a quote from Peškovskij (1925: 84) that “all kinds of emphasis are made visible only in the background of something non-emphasized;”  
 this is basically the function of *-to* as a kontrastive marker: it marks the proposition it occurs in as true against the other propositions (organized in a set of sets of propositions) which are either true or false. These other propositions are alternatives, or background, for the proposition marked by *-to*. Throughout this

chapter, in diagrams, I indicated the special status of the proposition marked by *-to* by using bold face (which is supposed to serve the function of easing the visual perception of it as “emphasized,” “chosen,” foregrounded, true, etc.), while the propositions that form a set of sets of alternatives are visually coded by the use of italics as “non-emphasized,” providing the background for the one with *-to*, not chosen, whose truth value is not asserted by *-to*, etc.

- *theme/topic marker, or marker of the information known to the hearer*

(Bonnot, Grenoble, Bitextin):

this proposed function can be treated as a consequence of the type of information marked by *-to* (known to the hearer but not activated) and the type of set marked by *-to* (a set of sets of propositions, or a set of questions). In order to fulfill its essential function of evoking a set of sets of propositions, as default, *-to* cliticizes to the [+k] element within the *link*; cf. the so called “contrasted topic construction” which is discussed in chapter 2, section 2.2.2 with respect to V&V and in chapter 3, section 3.3.1 with respect to works by Buring.

Throughout the chapter, in diagrams, this function of *-to* is represented by the top layer of branching lines, which correspond to sub-questions dominated by the same question under discussion — these sub-questions differ from each other in the value of the (kontrastive element within the) link;

- *marker of unexpectedness in addressing a topic* (Bonnot, Bitextin):

this is also a consequence of the type of information marked by *-to* (assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer but not necessarily activated in the hearer’s mind), as was demonstrated with examples from Šukšin’s short story *Zabuksoval* ‘Stuck’;

- *implies plurality* (Bonnot):

the set that is being generated contains other members in addition to the one marked by *-to* (i.e., the proposition which contains *-to*).

This is reflected in the diagrams in the following way: the proposition marked by *-to* cannot be a single, non-branching, line in the discourse tree.

This property of *-to* also result in the restricted use of the universal quantifier in the scope of the kontrastive element within the proposition containing *-to*;

- *has an evaluative-expressive meaning* (Vasilyeva):  
this function ascribed to *-to* deals basically with its use in exclamatives;  
it has been shown in section 5.3.1 that the kontrastive properties exhibited by *-to* in exclamatives are the same as in the other pragmatic types of utterances: *-to* marks a set of sets of propositions (equivalently, a set of questions) and it marks information which is assumed by the speaker to be known to the hearer but not activated in the hearer's mind at the time of the utterance.

In the next chapter I will discuss properties of kontrastive marker *že*.