

## THE CP-TOPIC PARAMETER AND RUSSIAN WH-MOVEMENT

Since Rudin (1988) it has been standardly assumed that the Slavic languages that show multiple wh-fronting (MWF) fall into two types: MWF with multiply-filled specifiers [+MFS] such as Bulgarian; and [-MFS] languages – such as Serbian/Croatian (Bo\_kovi\_ 1996, 1997; Lambova 1999), and Polish (\_itko 1996), in which only the first wh-phrase is in SpecCP, the others are IP-adjoined. In this paper I show that when properly analyzed Russian patterns with [+MFS] multiple wh-fronting languages, contra Stepanov (1998) and Strahov (2000), who argue that Russian is not a wh-fronting language at all. Further, I show that there are two distinct dialects with regard to wh-movement in Russian. These dialects differ *not* with respect to wh-movement *per se*, but rather with respect to the availability of a CP-external topic position.

The paper is organized as follows: First, I show that Russian is *not* a wh-*in-situ* language: overt wh-movement is obligatory in Russian and all wh-phrases belong in CP. This is explicitly illustrated in embedded clauses in examples (1a) where the wh-phrase is fronted and (1b) with no wh-movement, which is ungrammatical.

- (1) a. Ja ne znaju, **kogo** Mi\_a videl?  
 I NEG know who Misha saw  
 “I don’t know who Misha saw?”
- b. \*Ja ne znaju, Mi\_a videl **kogo**  
 I NEG know Misha saw who  
 “I don’t know who Misha saw?”

Secondly, I claim that Russian has diglossic differences in wh-constructions: standard contemporary Russian (SCR) and colloquial informal Russian (CIR). Consider (2) and (3).

SCR:  
 (2) **\_to<sub>i</sub>** Ivan delaet t<sub>i</sub>?  
 Ivan.Acc you do.3<sup>rd</sup>.Pres  
 “What does Ivan do?”

CIR:  
 (3) Ivan **\_to<sub>i</sub>** delaet t<sub>i</sub>?  
 Ivan what.Acc do.3<sup>rd</sup>.Pres  
 “What does Ivan do?”

In SCR wh-phrases undergo standard wh-raising and appear in the first position as in (2). In the CIR example (3), the wh-word appears in a non-initial position. I argue that the raised wh-phrase in *both* (2) and (3) is in [Spec, CP] and not in a Focus phrase, contra Stepanov (1998). The CP-adjunction analysis predicts that in embedded constructions, even in CIR, the occurrence of the wh-phrase in second position is impossible, as confirmed in (4).

- (4) a. \*Ma\_a znaet, Ivan **\_to<sub>i</sub>** delaet t<sub>i</sub> (CIR)  
 Ma\_a knows Ivan what.Acc do.2<sup>nd</sup>.Pres  
 “Masha knows what Ivan does.”

CIR multiple wh-constructions differ from SCR in several other ways. Multiple wh-fronting in CIR does not obey superiority as opposed to SCR (Rudin, 1988; Bo\_kovi\_, 1996). Consider (5a, b) vs. (6a, b). Further, in CIR it is possible to leave one wh-phrase *in-situ* (6c) vs. (5c). The raised phrase in such cases must be the structurally superior one (6d).

(5) SCR:

- a. Kto kogo videl?  
who whom saw
- b. \*Kogo kto videl?  
whom who saw
- c. \*Kto videl kogo?  
who saw whom  
"Who saw whom?"

(6) CIR:

- a. Kto kogo videl?  
who whom saw
- b. Kogo kto videl?  
whom who saw
- c. Kto videl kogo?  
who saw whom
- d. \*Kogo videl kto?  
whom saw who  
"Who saw whom?"

The main claim of this paper is that the differences between SCR and CIR can be accounted for uniformly where the variation occurs only with respect to one parameter: the availability of a left-adjoined higher TopicP position, adjoined to SpecCP, which is "activated" in CIR (Rudin 1986; Müller and Sternefeld 1993). This entails an analysis of 'Ivan' in (3) in [Spec, TopP] position, adjoined to CP. Thus, the question in (3) can be represented as in (7):

(7) [<sub>TOPP</sub> Ivan<sub>j</sub> [<sub>CP</sub> to<sub>i</sub> [<sub>C</sub> t<sub>j</sub> [<sub>IP</sub> delaet t<sub>i</sub>]]]]

The proposed account is able to handle the differences illustrated in (5) and (6). For instance, in such cases as 6(c), the Q-operator in TopP' position binds the lower wh-phrase (Aoun and Li 1993). The existence of this null Q-operator requires superiority to hold; thus, the ungrammaticality of (6d).

Considering topicalization within the paradigms of wh-movement is not new; however, I suggest that topicalization happens not in place of true wh-fronting but rather in addition to it. The availability of the Topic Position as an independent category as described in Müller and Sternefeld (1993) permits a resolution of the asymmetry between scrambling and wh-behavior in Russian. Moreover, the presence of this position allows me to provide a unified analysis of two registers. Therefore, a seemingly non-uniform phenomenon becomes elegantly simple.