A Parameterized Choice Function Approach to "Narrow-Scope" -TO indefinites in Russian

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The most common function of **-to** indefinites in Russian is to refer to "specific" individuals [in contrast with "non-specific" **-nibud'** indefinites (1)]. However, there are contexts where -**to** indefinites seem to receive a narrow-scope reading (2). In this paper, we examine the cases of a (quasi-) narrow-scope interpretation of -**to** indefinites, and argue that they are instances of Parameterized Choice Function (Kratzer, 1998), and can be accounted for by extending the notion of PCF to parameterization by times.

Background. For different languages, indefinites with a "specific" reading are often analyzed as choice functions [see Reinhart (1997) and Kratzer (1998) for English; Allonso-Ovalle & Menendez-Benito (2003) for Spanish; Kratzer and Shimoyana (2002) for German; Mattewson (1999) for Lillooet Salish]. This type of analysis was also proposed for -**to** indefinites in Russian [see Yanovich (2005)]. Cases, where indefinites can be perceived as having both "specific" and "non-specific" reading, are usually described as cases of ambiguity between choice functional and quantificational interpretation [see analysis of *some* in English by Reinhart (1997) and Kratzer (1998)]. Nothing, however, has been said about how the Russian cases of narrow-scope readings of "specific" indefinites should be treated.

The question is whether the different readings of -**to** indefinites are due to ambiguity (and they can be of both choice functional and quantificational nature), or the different interpretations can be obtained for the same, choice functional by nature, indefinite.

Problems with 'ambiguity analysis'. If we assume that -**to** indefinites have a "specific" reading when the indefinite is choice functional and a "non-specific" reading when the indefinite is quantificational, we would expect -**to** indefinites to be able to receive a "non-specific" (narrow scope) interpretation in any context. However, this is not true: -**to** is good in the "specific" scenarios of (1a) and (3a), but is not valid in the "non-specific" cases of (1b) and (3b); -**to** can only be negated under "specific" interpretation (4), while a "non-specific" scenario requires a "negative pronoun" (5); a request for "just any" book does not allow for a -**to** indefinite (6). Thus, -**to** indefinites are not truly quantificational.

Proposal. Russian -**to** indefinites are always "specific" (instances of a Parameterized Choice Function), but can be interpreted as having different scope; the cases of a (quasi-) narrow scope occur when the choice function is parameterized by times (extension of Kratzer's notion of PCF).

For Kratzer (1998), choice function is parameterized when it has an implicit argument (parameter) that can be bound by a quantifier. She uses this hidden parameter to explain the behavior of *a certain* indefinites in English sentences like *Every husband had forgotten a certain date – his wife's birthday*, where the determiner *a certain* is interpreted as a parameterized choice function *f*. Possible values for *f* are functions mapping individuals into CFs (it maps every husband into a choice set of all dates, and picks that man's wife's birthday from that set). If the sentence does not contain a quantifier to bind the hidden parameter, the indefinite receives a referential (wide-scope / "specific") reading as in *Is Richard dating a certain woman?* (Kratzer, 1998).

We assume that -**to** indefinites in Russian are always instances of parameterized CF, and their scope depends on what in the context binds the hidden parameter. The "wide scope" reading is obtained if the context does not provide any binders for the implicit argument; in this case the CF variable has to be parameterized to the speaker. A "narrow-scope" interpretation in cases like (2) occurs when the CF is parameterized by <u>times</u>, as in (7), where 'the students' and 'the books' are some <u>specific</u> students and <u>specific</u> books for "time$_1$", specific students and books for "time$_2$" etc.

The analysis is supported by the contrast between (2) and (8), where limitation on times suppresses the quasi-narrow interpretation only allowing for the "standard" wide-scope reading.

Consequences. This analysis provides a unified account for different usages of -**to** indefinites in Russian (with no need to stipulate the ambiguity). The possibility of "broadening" the Parameterized Choice Function approach to parameterization by times in Russian opens new perspectives for studying choice functional indefinites in other languages. For instance, if English, like Russian, allows parameterization by times, and the cases of "non-specific" usages of *some*-indefinites can be accounted for by this parameterization, it raises the question of whether "quantificational *some*" exists in English.

(1)   (a) *Scenario 1. Masha called me to say that she found a fantastic recipe on-line and she wants to try it today. I am calling my friend inviting her to come to Masha's place tonight. I say:*
        Masha prigotovit chto-**to** / *chto-**nibud'** vkusnoje na uzhin.
        'Masha will cook something delicious for dinner'.

-       (b) *Scenario 2. Masha is my roommate. We cook in turns. Masha is a good cook. It's her turn to make dinner tonight. I call my friend and I say:*
        Masha prigotovit chto-**nibud'** / *chto-**to** vkusnoje na uzhin.
        'Masha will cook something delicious for dinner'.

(2)   On ochen' obshitel'nyj chelovek, on (vsegda) priglashajet **kakix-to studentov**,
                                        oni vmeste chitajut **kakije-to knigi**.
        'He is a very sociable person, he (always) invites some (*possibly different*) students,
                                        they read some (*possibly different*) books together.

(3)   (a) Ty nashel **chto-to interesnoje**?
        Did you find something interesting? *(In a bookstore, your friend has something in his hands).*

        (b) Ty nashel ***chto-to/chto-nibud' interesnoje**?
        Did you find anything interesting? *(Asking your friend about his visit to a new bookstore).*

(4)   *My friend complains that his family thinks he is a liar. He says, once he failed to tell something important to someone, and since then they don't trust him anymore. My friend says:*

        Ja **komu-to chto-to** ne skazal.
        'I did not say something to someone'.

(5)   Ja **nikomu nichego** ne skazal.
        'I didn't say anything to anyone'. *Literally*: 'I didn't say no one nothing'.

(6)   # Daj mne **kakuju-to knigu.**
        'Give me some book'.

(7)   (a)   … on priglashajet **kakix-to studentov** …
                '… he invites some students…
                CH(f) ∧ ∀t [he invites f_t(students)]
        (b)   … oni chitajut **kakije-to knigi**
                '… they read some books'
                CH(g) ∧ ∀t [they read g_t(books)]

(8)   **Vchera** on priglasil **kakix-to studentov**, oni vmeste chitali **kakije-to knigi**.
        '**Yesterday**, he invited some (specific) students; they read some (specific) books together.

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