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КАК..., ТАК I: Syntactic Description of Binary Conjunctions in Russian

Дорогой друг Витя,
Твои юбилеи догоняют меня с гораздо большей скоростью, чем я успеваю писать статьи в юбилейные сборники. Поэтому не мог ли бы ты попридержать бег времени? Пусть тебе еще по крайней мере лет сто будет 85, а? Мы бы оба выиграли...
Твой Игорь

1. The Problem and the Solution

1.1. The Problem: The Binary Conjunction ESLI—TO, What Syntactic Structure?

The object of this paper is the set of binary subordinating and coordinating conjunctions (Rus. *parnye podčinitel'nye i sočinitel'nye sojuzy*), or correlative subordinators/coordinators, as they are known in the English-language literature [Quirk et al. 1991: 935–941, 999–1001]. The typical example is the Russian binary subordinating conjunction ESLI..., TO... 'if..., then...'. The question asked is as follows:

|| What is the syntactic structure of a complex sentence including this conjunction?

For instance:

- (1) *Esli ty←somnevaeš'sja, to ja←mogu→proverit'*
 'If you doubt, then I can verify.'
-

All syntactic links in sentence (1) are obvious, except for the particle TO, the second component of the binary conjunction under analysis. The problem stems from the fact that this particle cannot be used alone—without ESLI ‘if’ (unlike the English THEN in IF..., THEN...). As a result, the first idea that comes to mind is to make it dependent on ESLI: ESLI–*r*→TO; all the more so, because TO is linearly positioned necessarily after ESLI. Then the binary conjunction ESLI..., TO... can be stored in the lexicon exactly in the form of this syntactic subtree. Such a description—launched, probably, by myself—has been tacitly accepted and applied for almost half a century:

- In [Mel'čuk 1974: 231, No. 31], (e), the surface-syntactic relation [SSyntRel] *r* between ESLI and TO was called “**1st auxiliary**”.
- In [Mel'čuk, Pertsov 1987: 331, No. 19.1], it was rebaptized “**binary-junctive**”.
- In [Iomdin 2010: 43, 1.2.4.5], it appears under the name of “**correlative SSyntRel**”.
- In [Mel'čuk 2012: 143, No. 51], it is “**correlative-auxiliary**”.

The name of this SSyntRel is less important: what really matters is the dependency of TO on ESLI.

However, this description contradicts the definition of syntactic dependency! More precisely, I am referring to the definition of surface-syntactic relation that was advanced in [Mel'čuk 1988: 130–144] and has been used as such since; see its formulations in [Mel'čuk 2009: 25–40] and [Mel'čuk 2015b: 411–433]. For the ease of reading, I will reproduce here the first part of this definition: Criterion A of the presence of a syntactic dependency between two lexemes in a sentence. (Criteria B and C are not relevant to the present discussion.)

1.2. Criterion A: Presence of a Surface-Syntactic Relation between Lexemes L_1 and L_2

For there to be a SSyntRel between lexemes L_1 and L_2 in a given utterance **U**, Criterion A in the definition of SSyntRel requires two things:

1) The configuration L_1 –**synt**– L_2 must form or be able to form a prosodic unit, that is, a phrase of language **L** (not necessarily in the utterance **U** itself, but in **L** in general).

2) The linear position of one of the lexemes L_1 and L_2 in the utterance **U** must be determined by the other.

NB: A phrase is an utterance that can be pronounced and understood outside of any particular context; it is perceived by speakers as existing in their language.

Prosodic unity and linear arrangement in the configuration L_1 –**synt**– L_2

In a given utterance **U** of **L**, the lexemes L_1 and L_2 can have a direct Synt-dependency link, that is, they can form a configuration L_1 –**synt**– L_2 , if and only if both of Conditions 1 and 2 are simultaneously satisfied:

Condition 1

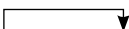
(a) General case

L_1 and L_2 can form a phrase of **L**, such as

N—V, V—N, ADJ—N, PREP—N, ADV—ADJ, NUM—N,
etc.

(b) Special case

L_1 and L_2 cannot form a phrase of **L**, but the lexemes L_1 , L_2 and configurations of lexemes of the set $\{L_i\}$ appearing in the same utterance can, such that the following are phrases of **L**:



- $L_1 \rightarrow \{L_{i-1}\}$ $L_2 \rightarrow \{L_{i-2}\}$
- $L_1 \rightarrow \{L_{i-1}\}$
- $L_2 \rightarrow \{L_{i-2}\}$

Condition 2

The linear position of one of the lexemes L_1 and L_2 in the utterance **U** must be specified with respect to the other.

Examples

The Case (b) covers configurations of two types:

- (i) $L_1 \rightarrow L_{2(\text{PREP})} \rightarrow L_{3(\text{N})}$, as in *one* _{L_1} *of* _{L_2} *them* _{$\{L_3\}$} . Here, **one*→*of* is not a phrase, while the utterances *of*→*them* and *one*→*of*→*them* are

phrases, having, respectively, *of* and *one* as their heads; consequently, the configuration *one*→*of* is allowed for.

- (ii) $L_1 \rightarrow \{L_{\{i-1\}}\} L_{2(\text{CONJ})} \rightarrow \{L_{\{i-2\}}\}$, as in *It became*_{L₁}→{*obvious*}_{{L_{i-1}}} *that*_{L₂}→{*he wasn't there*}_{{L_{i-2}}}.

Here, **became*→*that* cannot be a phrase, while *became*→*obvious* and *that he wasn't there* are phrases, with *became* and *that* as their heads, so that the configuration *became*→*that* is accepted as legitimate.

1.3. The Solution

ESLI Y, TO X:

- The expression **ESLI TO* is not and cannot be a phrase; Condition 1 does not allow for the configuration **ESLI*→*TO*.
- *ESLI*_{L₂} forms a phrase with the subordinate clause *Y*_{{L_{i-2}}}, and *TO*, with the superordinate clause *X*_{{L_{i-1}}}.
- *ESLI*_{L₂} syntactically subordinates the Main Verb of *Y*_{{L_{i-2}}} and is itself subordinated to the Main Verb_{L₁} of *X*_{{L_{i-1}}}: *MV(X)*_{L₁}→*ESLI*_{L₂}→*MV(Y)*_{{L_{i-2}}}.
- *TO* is syntactically subordinated to the Main Verb of *X*.

As a result, we have the following SSynt-structure: *esli*→*Y*, *to*←*X*.

For readers acquainted with the dependency syntactic descriptions in the Meaning-Text framework the proposed updating must seem quite natural. (What is surprising is the fact that it took so long to see the problem.) I am correcting a mistake that has been being perpetrated for many years; it concerns all the binary conjunctions and a motley set of expression similar to them.

2. Conjunctions: A Small Typology

Before I can offer a list of Russian binary conjunctions, I need to sketch a typology of conjunctions—in order to give the discussion a certain depth.

- According to their meaning / function, conjunctions are divided in two major families: subordinating vs. coordinating.
- According to their form, conjunctions are classified along two independent axes:
 - the number of components: single (just one component) vs. binary (two components) vs. repeated (built by a theoretically unlimited repetition of the second component);
 - the structure of components: simple (all its components are monolexemic) vs. compound (at least one component is plurilexemic).

A binary or repeated conjunction is necessarily discontinuous: its components cannot be in linear contact within an utterance.

Since repeated conjunctions can be only coordinating, there are 10 logically possible classes of conjunctions, exemplified in the following table:

		simple: monolexemic components		compound: plurilexemic components	
		subordinating	coordinating	subordinating	coordinating
single	1	ESLI 'if', RAZ '≈ if'	2 I 'and', A '≈ and'	3 KAK TOL'KO 'as well as'	4 TO EST' 'that is'
		KOGDA 'when'	ILI 'or', LIBO 'or [exclusive]'	POTOMU ČTO 'because'	A TAKŽE 'as well as'
binary	5	XOTJA 'although'	NO 'but'	TÁK KÁK 'since'	
		ESLI..., (TO)... 'if..., (then)...	6 I..., I... lit. 'and..., and...'	KAK TOL'KO..., (TÁK)... 'as soon as...'	8 KAK..., TÁK I... 'both..., and...'
repeated	9	EDVA..., (KÁK)... 'no sooner..., than...'	ILI..., ILI... lit. 'or..., or...'		NE STOL'KO (<i>shyšimye</i>), SKOL'KO (<i>ugadyvaemye</i>) 'not as much (heard), but rather (guessed)'
		XOTJA..., (NO)... 'although..., but ...'	NI..., NI... lit. 'nor..., nor...'		10 TO LI..., TO LI..., TO LI... 'whether..., or..., or...'
					NE TO..., NE TO... 'maybe..., or..., or ...'

syntactically subordinated to the head of the first coordinated phrase by the **restrictive** SSyntRel:

- (4) a. $\overbrace{Ja\ ne\ xoču\ ni\ \leftarrow\ restr-est'}^{\text{restrictive SSyntRel}}, -\text{coordinative} \rightarrow ni\ \text{coord-conjunct}$
 $\rightarrow pit'$
 lit. 'I don't want neither eat nor drink.'
- b. $\overbrace{Ja\ xoču\ to\ li\ \leftarrow\ restr-est'}^{\text{restrictive SSyntRel}}, -\text{coordinative} \rightarrow to\ li\ \text{coord-conjunct}$
 $\rightarrow pit'$
 lit. 'I want or.maybe eat or.maybe drink.'

Similarly, the second component of a binary subordinating conjunction is not a conjunction, either, but also a particle:

- (5) a. $\overbrace{Edva\ ja\ priotkryl\ dver'}^{\text{subord-conjunctional}}, (\mathbf{kak})\ \overbrace{kot\ vyskočil\ na\ ploščadku}^{\text{auxiliary}}$
 lit. 'No.sooner I had.slightly.opened the.door than.the.cat jumped onto the.landing.'
- b. $\overbrace{Esli\ ja\ uedu, (to)\ kto\ budet\ polivat' cvety?}^{\text{subord-conjunctional}}, \overbrace{}^{\text{auxiliary}_1}$
 'If I leave, (then) who will water the.plants?'

NB: The **auxiliary** SSyntRel links the second component of a binary subordinating conjunction—in this case, KAK and TO—to the syntactic head of the superordinate clause

3. Russian has syntactic constructions that express the conjunction-like meaning 'as soon as...'/ 'no sooner..., that...' and play the role of binary conjunctions:

- STÓIT/STÓILO X-u Y_{INF, PERF} KAK... (*Stoilo mne pojavit'sja, kak Ivan uxodil* 'As soon as I appeared, Ivan would leave.')
- NE USPEL_{ASP} X Y_{INF, ASP} KAK... (*Ne uspela ja pojavit'sja, kak Ivan ušel* 'As soon as I [female] appeared, Ivan left.')

For simplicity's sake, I ignore these constructions here, since they do not add any theoretical difficulty. (At the deep-syntactic level, such constructions are represented by fictitious lexemes, see [Mel'čuk 2013: 37–42].)

3. Binary Conjunctions in Russian

Here is a list of Russian binary conjunctions (probably, incomplete):

1. 'ČEMII — TEM' 'the A₁_{COMPAR} ..., the A₂_{COMPAR} ...'
2. EDVA — (KĀK) 'no sooner..., than...'
3. ESLI — (TO)/(TĀK) 'if..., then...'
4. 'KAK — TAK I¹ 'both... and...'
5. 'KAK — TAK I² ≈ 'from the moment that..., then...'
6. KAK TOL'KO — (TĀK) 'as soon..., then...'
7. KOGDA — (TO) 'when..., then...'
8. 'NE STOL'KO — SKOL'KO' 'not as much..., as...'
9. NE TOL'KO — NO I 'not only..., but also...'
10. RAZ — (TO)/(TĀK) ≈ 'if..., then...'
11. 'TAK KAK' — (TO) 'since..., then...'
12. TOL'KO — (KĀK) 'as soon..., then...'
13. XOTJA — (NO) 'although..., but...'

NB: KĀK and TĀK stand for unaccented particles.

A couple of examples will be helpful.

'ČEMII — TEM' (subordinating conjunction; ČEMI is a comparative conjunction meaning 'than')

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- (6) a. *Čem bol'she my uglubljaemsja v prošloe, tem ← žěstče ← stanovitsja granica mužskogo i ženskogo mirov.*
lit. 'The more we go deeper into past, the rigider becomes the border [between] male and female worlds.'

It is worthwhile to see the same SSyntS for this sentence, but with a different ordering of the superordinate and subordinate clauses:

b. *Granica muškogo i ženskogo mirov*

\uparrow comparative \downarrow \uparrow subord-conjunctive \downarrow
stanovitsja tem ← restr-žestče, čem bol'se my uglubljaemsja
v prošloe.

lit. 'The border [between] male and female worlds becomes the rigerid the more we go deeper into past.'

Unlike other Russian binary conjunctions, 'ČEMII — TEM' allows both for the anteposition and the postposition of the subordinate clause.

'NE STOL'KO — SKOL'KO' (coordinating conjunction)

(7) *On ne stol'ko ← sražalsja, — coord → skol'ko — coord-conjunctive → byl sražae.*

lit. 'He not as.much was.fighting, as was being.fought.'

Here the second component, which corresponds to the interrogative / relative pronominal adverb meaning 'how much', is a coordinating conjunction; cf.:

ne ← sražalsja, — coord → a — coord-conjunctive → byl sražae
 lit. 'not was.fighting, but was being.fought'

Several expressions are often listed among binary conjunctions, while in fact they are not. For instance. NE TO (NE TAK, NE SKAZAT') ČTOBY lit. 'not this (not so, not say) that' — A (NO) 'but' is not a binary because it is not a conjunction at all. Its first component is an idiom 'NE TO (NE TAK, NE SKAZAT') ČTOBY' ≈ 'not quite', syntactically a dependent particle that can appear alone, without the second component; while the second component is a simple coordinating conjunction, which can also appear alone:

(8) $\overline{\downarrow}$
Ne to čto by ja ustal(, → a prosto vremja isteklo).
 lit. 'Not this that I got.tired(, but simply time ran.out).'

4. Phraseological Nature of Binary Conjunctions

A binary conjunction is by its very nature a plurilexemic expression that is not free: it is a phraseme [Mel'čuk 2015b: 263–362]. However, it is quite an uncommon phraseme: its components are not syntactically linked in a direct way. As far as I know, such syntactically discontinuous phrasemes have not been considered before. Indeed, a phraseme is “a phrase that...,” while ESLI — TO or EDVA — KAK are obviously not phrases of Russian. The solution to this difficulty is simple: one has to consider these expressions together with their actantial variables: ESLI Y, TO X and EDVA Y, KAK X are *bona fide* phrases. It is under this form that they must be stored in a dictionary.

Now, if binary conjunctions are phrasemes, what type of phraseme are they?

Five of Russian binary conjunctions—‘ČEMII Y, TEM X’ ‘the — the’, ‘NE STOL'KO — SKOL'KO’ ‘not as.much..., as...’, ‘KAK Y, TAK I X’^{1/2} ‘both — and’/≈ ‘from the moment that..., then...’ and ‘TAK KAK’ — TO ‘since..., then...’ are idioms, since they are non-compositional (for the idioms ‘KAK Y, TAK I X’^{1/2}, see [Mel'čuk 2017]).

The binary coordinating conjunction NE TOL'KO — NO I ‘not only..., but also...’ (*Dlja ètogo važny ne tol'ko finansy, no i političeskaja volja* lit. ‘For this [are] important not only finances, but also political will.’) belongs to formulemes (a subclass of clichés; see [Mel'čuk 2015a]), since it is compositional, but fixed: there is no **ne liš'* — *a takže*, where each component is substituted by its synonym.

All the other Russian binary conjunctions are collocations, although of an unusual type: there is no direct syntactic link between the base and the collocater. The base is the first component, which controls the use of the second component (collocater); the latter is optional, must follow the base and occupies the initial linear position in the superordinate clause.

As for a repeated conjunction, only its initial component shows any specificity (see Section 2, Comment 2): it is syntactically not a conjunction,

but a particle depending on the syntactic head of the first coordinated phrase and signaling the beginning of a repeated conjunction. Thus:

- (9) $\begin{array}{c} \text{restrictive} \\ \downarrow \\ \text{razrabotat' ili naděžnyj fil'tr; -coord} \rightarrow \text{ili novuju krasku, -coord} \rightarrow \\ \text{coord-conj} \\ \downarrow \\ \text{ili xorošee ograždenie} \\ \text{'develop either a reliable filter, or a new paint, or a good fence'} \end{array}$

The second component of a repeated conjunction forms a collocation with the first one; the second component is the base, the first being its collocate, while the third, the fourth, etc. components are free repetitions of the second one.

Binary conjunctions are characterized by their “discontinuous” character: they form phrases only together with their actants, since their own components are syntactically not directly linked. In this, they are unlike almost all other phrasemes. However, they share this feature with a few idioms, which I would like to quote here:

$\begin{array}{c} \text{PRI VSĚM} \leftarrow X\text{-e} \\ \downarrow \\ \text{pri vsĕm ego talante} \\ \text{'despite [lit. with all] his talent'} \end{array}$

$\begin{array}{c} \text{TO_LI EŠĆĚ} \leftarrow X_{(V)} \\ \downarrow \\ \text{To li ty togda eščĕ uvidiš'!} \\ \text{'I signal that you will then see something very bad [lit. That whether you then still will see].'} \end{array}$

$\begin{array}{c} \text{NOTHING} \rightarrow \text{IF NOT} \leftarrow X_{(ADJ)} \\ \downarrow \\ \text{Barbara was nothing if not feminine.} \end{array}$

$\begin{array}{c} \text{EN TOUT} \leftarrow X_{(N)} \\ \downarrow \\ \text{Tu le feras en toute liberté.} \\ \text{'You will.do this while being completely free [lit. in all freedom].'} \end{array}$

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