

Russian pronouns with particles *-to, -nibud', -libo, кое-, не-* (and their synonyms), which are traditionally called INDEFINITE, were intensively studied in the recent two or three decades. Pronouns expressing LACK OF KNOWLEDGE (indefinite *sensu stricto*, such as in *ktoto*) were distinguished from pronouns expressing NON-REFERENTIALITY (such as *kto-nibud'*), cf. FREE CHOICE indefinites in Haspelmath 1996. This difference roughly corresponds to specific vs. non-specific indefiniteness in English terminology. The class of NON-VERIDICAL (or assertion-suspending) CONTEXTS was also explored, i.e. contexts licensing non-referential NPs; the term assertion-suspense, *снятая утвердительность*, goes back to Weinreich 1963 and is the Russian equivalent for non-veridicality, see Падучева 1985: 33, 94, 215- 220). The distinction between indefiniteness and WEAK DEFINITENESS (as in *Я тебе кое-что скажу; Это сделал один мой знакомый*) was also described in details. Still there remain indefinite NPs that deserve attention. Two types of indefinite NPs are discussed in this paper:

- NPs of the type «*такой X, как Y*» (where Y is a definite NP), section 1;
- Singular indefinite NPs lacking explicit reference marker (“bare singulars”), section 2.
- Section 3 deals with the opposition definite – indefinite in non-referential contexts.

1. NPs of the type «*такой X, как Y*»

Let us look at NPs with the pattern «*такой X, как Y*», where X is a common noun (or NP) in the singular and Y is a proper name: (1.1) Возможно, беда Хаккинена в том, что у него никогда не было *такого менеджера, как Вилли Веббер*. [= ‘no X with properties of Y’] [This example, as well as some others, was taken from the National corpus of Russian, sight in the Internet www.ruscorpora.ru] In its primary meaning such an NP can be paraphrased as ‘an object of the class X having some properties of Y’. As a rule, properties of Y that the speaker has in mind do not isolate one single object in the class X. Thus, an NP with *такой, как* behaves like a COMMON NOUN and is at place in predicative or existential contexts. In these contexts *takoj* has a PROPROPERTY meaning. Still NPs with this structure may be also used to refer not to properties of Y, but to Y itself. For example, in (1.2)–(1.4) the NP as a whole refers directly to Y, while the head noun or NP X only adds some attribute of Y (e.g., in (1.2) the attribute is *znatok* = ‘connoisseur’): (1.2) воспоминания известных литераторов <...> придавали <...> идее впечатляющую достоверность, что и было по достоинству оценено *таким знатоком, как Брыгин*. (1.3) в ней <команде> почти не осталось игроков, способных пасовать, а конструировать игру и забивать голы одновременно не сможет даже *такой игрок, как Баллак*. (1.4) У человека, к которому приставили *такого крупного работника, как Костырев*, были большие шансы попасть на Дальний Восток [Н.Мандельштам. Воспоминания] Reference to Y is possible for NPs in which X is an evaluational epithet (explicit as in (1.2) or implicit as in (1.3)) or expresses a graduated property, as in (1.4). In this context *takoj* is said to have a SCALAR meaning (Landman, Morzycki 2003). Scalar NPs are wholly acceptable in referential contexts. For NPs with *takoj* in the PROPROPERTY meaning the use in referential contexts is limited but not wholly excluded: in referential context pro-property *takoj* may acquire what can be called a *for-example* interpretation. In the non-referential context of (1.5b) the NP *takoj politik kak Cherchil*, with *takoj* in the pro-property meaning, has two interpretations, both with and without reference to Y. In the referential context of (1.5a) this NP has a *for-example* interpretation: *This work was supported by National Science Foundation, Grant No. BCS-0418311 to B.Partee and V.Borschev. Some ideas implemented in this paper were encouraged by the seminar on formal semantics led by Vladimir Borschev and Barbara Partee in VINITI RAN, Moscow. I am grateful to participants of this seminar – Vladimir Borschev, Barbara Partee, Katja Rakxilina, Jakov Testelec, Igor Yanovich for helpful comments.

(1.5) а. Решил для себя эту проблему *такой политик, как Черчилль*. б. Мог ли решить эту проблему *такой политик, как Черчилль*? In (1.6) this implicit ‘for example’ appears on the surface: (1.6) С этим связан <...> общий упадок московской литературы, отмеченный, например, *таким исследователем, как Буслаев*. [А.В. Исаченко]
Explicit and implicit *for example* cancel the exhaustive list interpretation natural for proper names.

2. NPs with formally unexpressed indefiniteness

Sentences of the type (2.1) were considered in Borschev, Partee 2007: (2.1) Во дворе *сторожевая собака*. (Following V.Borschev and B.Partee, I call the two semantic arguments of *быть* in existential and locative meaning Thing and Location.) It is natural to treat sentence (2.1), in spite of the inverted word order, as locative; in fact, 1) it has the null form of *быт*’ (and not *ест*’ as in existential sentences; 2) the NP Thing is indefinite singular, while in prototypical existential sentences Thing is non-referential. Although locative in its form, semantically sentence (2.1) is hardly distinguishable from existential (2.2): (2.2) Во дворе *есть сторожевая собака*. The reason is that the meaning of (2.2) is not purely existential; (2.2) expresses AVAILABILITY – ‘existence at somebody’s disposal’ (in Russian this meaning is unambiguously expressed by the verb *иметься*, Paducheva 2004: 433). This meaning is engendered by the fact that Thing in (2.1) has inherent semantics of FUNCTION or INTENDED USE. Hence the idea that Thing is USEFUL, and useful FOR SOMEBODY. This semantics is inherent not only in (2.2), but also in (2.1). Hence the quasi-synonymy of (2.2) and (2.1). In fact, the locative sentence (2.3) with a Thing having no useful function in this context is not synonymous to (2.4) – the meaning of which, it should be added, is cloudy: (2.3) В огороде *свинья*; (2.4) В огороде *есть свинья*. (example from Paducheva 2004: 436)

3. Definite NP in locative and existential sentences

In Borschev, Partee 2007 existential sentences with a definite Thing are acknowledged as acceptable: (3.1) В Лондоне *есть Коля*. To say the least, sentence (3.1), in order to be comprehensible, should be immersed into a “thick” context: the function of the Thing is to be explicated (for existential sentences with a referential Location are mostly sentences of availability). More than that, the Beneficiary of the Benefit should be included in the conceptualization of the situation. Thus, sentences (3.2), (3.3) and many others may serve as possible meaning explications of (3.1): (3.2) В Лондоне у нас *есть в качестве агента Коля*; (3.3) В Лондоне у нас *есть в качестве помощника Коля*, etc. But in the context of sentences (3.2), (3.3) the NP Thing is not a proper name any more – semantically, it is an NP of the type «*такой X, как Y*», analyzed in Section 1. In fact, (3.3) is synonymous to (3.4), and negation of (3.3) is (3.5): (3.4) В Лондоне у нас *есть такой помощник, как Коля*; (3.5) В Лондоне у нас *нет такого помощника, как Коля*. But sentences (3.2), (3.3), etc. are not exactly existential – they have combined existential and possessive structure. They can even be called simply possessive, for argument Location is not essential for their structure: if we omit it, the grammaticality of the sentence is not damaged. Thus, definite NPs cannot occupy the position of the Thing in existential sentences without changing their referential status, and NPs of the type «*такой X, как Y*» demonstrate one way of breaching the bastion of definiteness.