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On Alleged Wh-Scope Marking in Russian

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1. Introduction

Russian has a construction that consists of two interrogative clauses, a *kak*-clause with the fronted *wh*-adverbial *kak* ‘how’ and a *wh*-clause with a fronted *wh*-phrase. I will call it the *kak*-construction:

- (1) **kak** vy schita-ete, pochemu liud-i ed-iat mias-o?
how you_{PL.NOM} consider-2_{PL.PRES} why people-_{PL.NOM} eat-3_{PL.PRES} meat-_{SG.ACC}
‘What do you think, why do people eat meat?’; lit. How you consider why people eat meat?’
- (2) **kak** ty дума-esh, chj-i et-o stix-i?
how you._{NOM} think-2_{SG.PRES} whose-_{NOM.PL} this-_{N.SG.NOM} poem-_{NOM.PL}
‘What do you think, whose verses are these?’; lit. How you think whose verses these are?’

The above sentences may seem to be structural variants of long extraction, exemplified below:¹

- (3) **pochemu** vy schita-ete [liud-i ed-iat mias-o]?
why you(pl)._{NOM} consider-2_{PL.PRES} people-_{PL.NOM} eat-3_{PL.PRES} meat-_{SG.ACC}
‘Why do you think people eat meat?’
- (4) **chj-i** ty дума-esh [et-o stix-i]?
you._{NOM} think-2_{SG.PRES} whose-_{NOM.PL} this-_{N.SG.NOM} poem-_{NOM.PL}
‘Whose verses do you think these are?’

This apparent similarity gave rise to analyses of the *kak*-construction as an instance of Wh-Scope Marking, or Partial Wh-Movement (Stepanov (2000), Fanselow (2006)).

The goal of this paper is twofold. First, I claim that Russian has no *wh*-scope marking and argue against a scope marking analysis of the *kak*-construction. I show that this construction exhibits a range of restrictions and properties that are not typically found in *wh*-scope marking. To name a few, it is limited to a small set of predicates, cannot be embedded to form an indirect question and allows for a relaxed mutual order between the two clauses.

Second, I propose an alternative approach, wherein the *kak*-clause is a parenthetical. The idea I aim to elaborate was first sketched by Khomitsevich (2008:154-159), however, no analysis was fleshed out. Syntactically, neither of the clauses is subordinate, rather they are linked via a paratactic relation. Semantically, the *kak*-clause should be analyzed as triggering a Pottsian conventional implicature (Potts (2005), (2007)) that does not contribute to the main assertion but rather conveys additional not-at-issue meaning. Relaxed linear order and lexical restrictions, as well as other peculiarities of the construction, follow naturally under this approach.

The roadmap is as follows. Section 2 discusses what *wh*-scope marking is, its realization in different languages and major theories that address the phenomenon. In 3, I look at Russian in the context of other *wh*-scope marking languages and highlight why it does not fit particularly well into this typology. In 4, I

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¹ Russian fronts *wh*-phrases obligatorily.

present my approach and its advantages. I demonstrate how my analysis helps to neatly explain syntactic and semantic idiosyncrasies of the *kak*-construction. In 5, I refute an alternative but similar approach suggested by van Gelderen (2001) in the spirit of (Reis, 2000). Under van Gelderen's approach, the *kak*-clause is an integrated parenthetical, a special sort of parentheticals. I point out properties of the entire construction that are incompatible with this treatment. Section 6 contains conclusions.

2. Wh-Scope Marking Across Languages

The term **Wh-Scope Marking**, or **Partial Movement** covers an array of phenomena in various languages such as Romani (McDaniel, 1989), Bahasa Indonesian, Hindi, Hungarian, German, Malay (Lutz et al., 2000), Warlpiri (Legate, 2002) and Passamaquoddy (Bruening, 2004). All of these constructions exhibit a minimally bi-clausal structure, with the subordinate clause containing a *wh*-phrase that takes scope over the entire complex sentence. It is this *wh*-phrase that determines what the whole question is about. The other clause might (or might not) contain a meaningless *wh*-phrase that is called *scope marker*. This is exactly what Russian *kak*-construction looks like.

For instance, (1) basically seeks an answer to the superficially embedded question 'Why do people eat meat?'. If questions denote sets of possible answers (as in Hamblin or Groenendijk-Stokhofian semantics) then (1) denotes possible reasons of meat-eating:²

- (5) {Meat is tasty, People are cruel, People do not know how to cook vegetables, ...}

This is parallel to answers sought by question in (3).

Below I briefly outline major commonalities of these constructions and theories developed to account for them.

2.1. A Brief Typology

Wh-scope marking exhibits many similarities across languages. Below I list some prominent properties of a construction with an overt scope marker shared across languages (Lutz et al., 2000).

A. **Any *wh*-phrase** should be able to participate in the *wh*-scope marking construction.

B. **Locality**: In a configuration with more than two clauses the scope marker and the real *wh*-phrase should be found in adjacent clauses. This is maintained either by repeating the scope marker in the intermediate clause(s) or by moving the *wh*-phrase further.

C. **Antilocality**: The scope marker and the real *wh*-phrase are never clausemates (Müller, 1997).

D. Scope marking is **ungrammatical across negation** or a negative quantifier in the matrix clause:

- (6) *koi bhii nahii **kyaa** soctaa thaā ki kon aayegaa?
no.one what thinks be.PST that who come.FUT
'Who did no one think that will come?' Hindi (Mahajan, 2000:321)

E. **Binding is possible** between the two clauses:

- (7) **mit** nem hisz *senki_i*, hogy milyen törtéteket terjeszt *róla_i* a
what-ACC not believe no.one-NOM that what stories-ACC spreads about-him the
felesége?
wife-his-NOM
'What stories doesn't *anyone_i* believe that *his_i* wife spreads about *him_i*?' Hungarian (Horvath, 1997:515)

F. It is **possible to embed** the scope marking construction further to form an indirect question:

- (8) ich weiss nicht **was** hans glaubt mit wem jakob jetzt spricht
I.NOM know.1SG.PRES not what Hans think.3SG.PRES with who.DAT Jakob now talk.3SG.PRES
'I don't know with whom Hans thinks Jakob is now talking.' German (McDaniel, 1989:6)

² I omit the semantic contribution of 'What do you think' part to emphasize that reasons of carnivorousness are the main point of the whole question, by virtue of 'why' being the meaningful *wh*-phrase.

G. **Any predicate** can appear in the matrix clause except for the question-selecting ones (such as *ask* and *wonder*).

H. In German and Hungarian, the lower clause cannot be a polar question. In Hindi, it can.

2.2. Theories in a Nutshell

The phenomenon received great attention in the literature, and it is debated whether or not similarity of these constructions across languages comes from the same structural source.

One family of approaches is **Direct Dependency** (DDA) (van Riemsdijk (1982), McDaniel (1989)). The basic idea of this approach is that *wh*-phrase in the subordinate clause only moves to the specifier of its own clause on the surface, raising to scope over the entire clause (as with long movement) only at LF. In the surface syntax its scope in the higher clause is marked by a *wh*-expletive that forms an A'-chain with the actual *wh*-phrase:

- (9) **was** denkst du, wo das wort herkommt?
what think.2SG.PRES you.NOM where DEF.NOM.SG.N word come.3SG.PRES
'What do you think, where does the word come from?' German (from Google)

Under this analysis, semantically empty *was* 'what' is replaced by the contentful *wo* 'where' at LF.

The next family of approaches is **Indirect Dependency** (IDA) proposed by Dayal (1994) for Hindi (see also Dayal 1996, 2000). She claims that scope marking is not a structural variant of long movement. Both clauses are treated as regular questions within Hamblin semantics. The scope marker in the higher clause is coindexed with the whole embedded CP and functions as an existential quantifier over propositions whose interpretation is restricted by the *wh*-clause:

- (10) jaun **kyaa** soctaa hai meri kahaaN jaayegii?
John what think be.3SG.PRES Mary where go.FUT.F
'What does John think, where will Mary go?' Hindi (Dayal, 1994:4)

Here, the question seeks an answer of a form 'John thinks that *p*' with *p* being restricted by Mary's possible destinations so that 'John thinks that Mary will go to Alaska' is included in the set of answers and 'John thinks that Alaska is gorgeous' is not.

Another prominent approach, arguably (Dayal, 2000) reducible to the previous two, is the clausal pied-piping account proposed by Horvath (1997, 2000) for Hungarian and Mahajan (2000) for Hindi and German. The scope marker is treated as a sentential expletive coindexed with the entire *wh*-clause. At LF, this embedded CP moves to the matrix SpecCP, which yields the correct interpretation.

3. Russian in the Big Picture

Scope marking is subject to cross-linguistic variation but still shares many features across languages. I move on to compare Russian to Hindi, Hungarian and German (Beck & Berman (2000), Horvath (1997, 2000), other papers in Lutz et al. (2000)).³

3.1. Russian and Properties of Canonical Scope Marking

A. No restrictions with respect to the choice of *wh*-phrase, shown by examples throughout the paper.

B. **Locality** holds, with adjacency maintained by moving the contentful *wh*-phrase further:

- (11) *[**kak** tebe kazhetsia, [Petia duma-et, [kto prid-iot]]]?
how you.DAT seem.3SG.PRES Peter.NOM think-3SG.PRES who.NOM come-3SG.FUT
lit. '[How it seems to you [Peter thinks [who will come]]]?'

³ For the sake of space I included only three most-studied scope marking languages.

- (12) [kak tebe kazhetsia, [kto Petia duma-et, [(chto) pridiot]]]?
lit. '[How it seems to you [who Peter thinks [(that) will come]]]?'
Intended in all cases: 'Who does it seem to you that Peter thinks will come?'

The option to repeat *kak* for the sake of locality is ruled out:

- (13) #[kak tebe kazhetsia, [**kak** Petia duma-et, [kto prid-iot]]]?
lit. '[How it seems to you [how Peter thinks [who will come]]]?'

C. **Antilocality** holds:

- (14) ***kak** chto u menia v karman-e?
how what.NOM by I.GEN in pocket-PREP.SG
Intended: 'What's in my pocket?'

D. The *kak*-construction is **ungrammatical with negation** in the *kak*-clause:

- (15) ***kak** tebe ne kazhetsia, kto prid-iot?
how you.DAT neg seem.3SG.PRES who.NOM come-3SG.FUT
Intended: 'Who it does not seem to you that will come?'

Russian displays multiple similarities with canonical scope marking but nonetheless lacks several expected properties and shows restrictions that are hard to handle under a scope marking approach.

E. Availability of variable binding in German, Hindi and Hungarian scope marking constructions clearly indicates a subordinate structure. This test seems to fail for Russian as examples of this sort are typically judged as degraded to ungrammatical (Stepanov (2000:4) cites the below example as one that proves his hypothesis):

- (16) ??/***kak** schita-et [kazhd-yj iz student-ov]_i kuda ego_i mog-ut
how consider-3SG.PRES every-NOM.SG.M from student-GEN.PL where he can3PL.PRES
otpravi-t'?
send-INF
'Where does [every student]_i think that they can send him_i?'

Absence of reliable bound variable reading shows that the *wh*-clause does not have to be subordinate. Moreover, Russian speakers generally dislike quantified NPs in the *kak*-clause:

- (17) ??**kak** duma-et kazhd-yj rossijanin, kto
how think-3SG.PRES every-M.NOM.SG Russian.citizen.NOM.SG who.NOM
stan-et prezident-om?
become-3SG.FUT president-INS.SG
Intended: 'What does each Russian citizen think, who will become the president?'

Furthermore, third person subjects are less frequent and often awkward in the *kak*-clause:

- (18) ?**kak** duma-et denis, kto stan-et prezident-om?
how think-3SG.PRES Denis.NOM who.NOM become-3SG.FUT president-INS.SG
Intended: 'What does Denis think, who will become the president?'

F. The next core property that Russian **lacks** is **the ability to embed the scope marking construction** yielding an indirect question as in the German example in (8):

- (19) *mam-a sprashiva-et, **kak** vam kazhetsia, kogo najm-ut.
mom-NOM.SG ask-3SG.PRES how you(pl).DAT seem.3SG.PRES who.ACC hire-3PL.FUT
Intended: 'Mom is asking who it seems to you will be hired.'

The above sentence is acceptable as a quotative only. Its long movement counterpart is good, however.

G. The *kak*-clause is **highly restricted** in terms of **predicates** that can occur in it. There are only five, two of them related derivationally: *kazatsia* 'seem', *dumat* 'think', *polagat* 'assume', *predpolagat*

‘suppose’, *schitat* ‘consider’. Syntactically, this is a proper subset of bridge verbs. Consider the following minimal pair, with long movement possible but ‘partial’ blocked:

- (20) kto ty ver-ish polete-l na mars?
 who.NOM you.NOM believe-2SG.PRES fly-M.SG.PST to Mars-ACC
 ‘Who do you believe flew to Mars?’
- (21) ***kak** ty ver-ish, kto polete-l na mars?
 how you.NOM believe-2SG.PRES who.NOM fly-M.SG.PST to Mars-ACC

Semantically, these predicates are similar and all belong to verbs of thinking but do not constitute a natural class. Stepanov claims that they form a small but open class of non-case marking verbs that take clausal complements. However, such verbs as *chudit’sia* ‘appear’ and *mereschit’sia* ‘fancy’ clearly pattern with *kazat’sia* ‘seem’ both semantically and syntactically (no case marking) but nevertheless cannot be used in the *kak*-construction:

- (22) **kak** tebe kazhetsia / *mereshitsia / *chuditsia, kto
 how you.DAT seem.3SG.PRES / appear.3SG.PRES / fancy.3SG.PRES who.NOM
 stuch-it v dver’?
 knock-3SG.PRES in door.ACC
 ‘What does it seem to you, who is knocking at the door?’

H. Like Hindi, Russian allows the *kak*-construction with polar questions. Examples below illustrate two strategies to form a polar question, a question particle and rising intonation:

- (23) vertitsia li zeml-ia? // zeml-ia vertitsia?
 turn-3SG.PRES Q earth-NOM.SG // earth-NOM.SG turn-3SG.PRES
 ‘Is the Earth turning?’

Both of them can occur in the construction:

- (24) **kak** tebe kazhetsia, vertitsia li zeml-ia? // zeml-ia vertitsia?
 how you.DAT seem.3SG.PRES turn-3SG.PRES Q earth-NOM.SG // earth-NOM.SG turn-3SG.PRES
 ‘What does it seem to you, is the Earth turning?’

Stepanov argues that the *kak*-construction looks similar enough to its German, Hindi and Hungarian counterparts to be treated roughly in the same way. Even though in his analysis of the Russian *kak*-construction he modifies existing approaches to scope marking and marries Indirect Dependency with the clausal pied-piping, he still treats it as scope marking. I argue that Russian is different enough to demand some other analysis. Properties E-G show that Russian does not completely pattern with other languages, and a comparison chart below highlights these differences.

	Hungarian	German	Hindi	Russian
A. any <i>wh</i> -phrase	✓	✓	✓	✓
B. locality	✓	✓	✓	✓
C. antilocality	✓	✓	✓	✓
D. ungrammaticality across negation	✓	✓	✓	✓
E. binding relations between clauses	✓	✓	✓	NO
F. further embedding	✓	✓	✓	NO
G. any [- <i>wh</i>]complement-taking predicate	✓	✓	✓	NO
H. scope marking over polar questions	no	no	✓	✓

3.2. Other Properties of the Russian Construction

Besides the fact that the *kak*-construction does not exhibit several expected properties it also has some puzzling features that present additional evidence against the scope marking analysis.

I. If the *kak*-construction is a subordinate structure, there must be some restrictions to the mutual linear order of clauses. Russian, however, allows for almost any linear position of the *kak*-clause:

- (25) **kak ty schita-esh,** kogo on-a liub-it?
 how you.NOM consider-2SG.PRES who.ACC she-NOM love-3SG.PRES
 ‘What do you think, whom does she love?’
- (26) kogo, **kak ty schita-esh,** ona liub-it?
- (27) kogo ona, **kak ty schita-esh,** liub-it?
- (28) kogo ona liub-it, **kak ty schita-esh?**

J. There exists a strong preference towards present tense in the *kak*-clause:

- (29) **kak ty schita-esh** / #schita-la / *bud-esh schita-t’, kto
 how you.NOM consider-2SG.PRES / consider-2SG.F.PST / be-2SG.FUT consider-INF who.NOM
 pobedi-t?
 win-3SG.FUT
 ‘What do you think / did you think / will you think, who will win?’

K. In addition to a significantly lesser frequency of third person subjects in the *kak*-clause, first person subjects are banned (unlike, say, German):

- (30) **kak vy duma-ete** / *my duma-em, gde on-a?
 how you.PL.NOM think-2PL.PRES / we.NOM think-1PL.PRES where she-NOM
 ‘What do you think / do we think, where is she?’

L. There is a tendency to have only *kak*, the subject and the predicate in the *kak*-clause. The restriction might be rooted in phonology as particles and short adverbials like *sejchas* ‘now’ are allowed.

A scope marking analysis does not straightforwardly account for linear order flexibility (I) and restrictions in J-L so all these properties look ad hoc. Even Dayal’s account that is powerful enough as it puts cross-linguistic variation in syntax while providing a unified semantics for all scope marking constructions, be it extraction, adjunction or sequential questions, is unable to explain these restrictions. E.g. the choice of predicates does not follow from any syntactic constraints on clausal complements so the locus of variation should be shifted to semantics. I argue that the Russian construction is not an instance of canonical scope marking and demands an alternative analysis.

4. A Parenthetical

4.1. Proposal

I propose to treat the *kak*-construction in Russian as a full-fledged parenthetical. But what is a parenthetical?

Primary attribute of parentheticals seems to be their structural independence (Huddleston & Pullum, 2002:25), (Dehé & Kavalova, 2007). Brinton (2008:1.5.1, 7-9) uses ‘**lack of syntactic connection** with the clause to which there are attached (“anchor”; see Huddleston & Pullum (2002:1351n))’ as a determining characteristic of parentheticals.

This lack of syntactic connection gives rise to 1) **positional mobility**, that is relative freedom of linear order: a parenthetical may occupy almost any linear position with respect to its anchor, and 2) **comma intonation**, that is prosodic separation from the anchor: often a parenthetical clause has its own Focus-Background structure and is surrounded by pauses. Finally, parentheticals are **independent semantically** via carrying less prominent information and being non-truth-conditional.

Potts (2005, 2007) models this non-truth-conditionality⁴ within multi-dimensional semantics and sets forth a definition of Conventional Implicature (CI). CIs are discourse-new meanings that are not part of main assertion and that do not interact with the truth-conditional meaning of a sentence and propositional operators. Within Potts’s framework, parentheticals constitute just one class of expressions

⁴ Non-truth-conditional, and its effects, is not unique to conventional implicatures. This is one of the core attributes of a family of meanings that includes, but is not limited to, CIs. These meanings, characterized by surviving under different operators, are called not-at-issue, or projective content (Simons et al., 2010), or ‘anti-matter’ (Beaver, 2012). For a detailed discussion and typology of ‘anti-matter’ see (Tonhauser et al., in preparation), with diagnostics provided to recognize these meanings and to distinguish between them.

triggering CIs, along with non-restrictive relative clauses, appositives and expressives. I will not delve any further into the exact implementation of multi-dimensionality for the sake of space and simplicity, except for one detail that will be relevant for Russian. Potts shows that only those appositives and As-parentheticals (Potts, 2002) that are separated from their anchor by commas or hyphens when written and by comma intonation when uttered trigger conventional implicatures. He incorporates the semantic import of commas as a COMMA operator that performs shift to the CI dimension. This shows that comma intonation and its reflexes in punctuation signal not-at-issue meanings.

I propose an analysis of the Russian *kak*-construction within Potts's system. I analyze semantics of the sentence containing the *kak*-clause as consisting of two components:

1. **semantics of an at-issue question**
2. and a CI **'The speaker wants to know the addressee's opinion about that question'.**

4.2. Details and Troubleshooting

As mentioned in the section 3, certain properties of the Russian construction seem to confirm the scope marking hypothesis. I argue that there are ways to explain them under my approach as well.

The fact that the *kak*-clause can attach to a sentence with any *wh*-phrase (property A in 3.1) and to a polar question (property H) is due to the ability of a parenthetical clause to attach to any interrogative sentence.

Antilocality (property C in 3.1), which is inability of *kak* to appear in the same clause with a *wh*-phrase, is natural. *Kak* cannot stand alone since it does not mean anything without its clause.

Scope marking predicts badness with negation, and the *kak*-construction has it (property D in 3.1). However, such badness is by no means intrinsic to scope marking. First, inability to interact with various operators such as negation is a characteristic of CIs (and, broadly, not-at-issue content). Second, parentheticals, however they are treated, are known to avoid negation, so there is no need to postulate scope marking.

Another property that the *kak*-construction has and that is attributed to its scope marking status is locality (Property B in 3.1). Clauses with a real *wh*-phrase and with a scope marker should be adjacent as predicted by **any** scope marking approach. As mentioned in 2.1, there are two options to maintain adjacency of the *wh*-phrase and the scope marker in structures with three clauses: repeat the scope marker in the intermediate clause or move the *wh*-phrase further.

Consider the following examples ((11)-(13) from 3.1 are of the same sort):

- (31) ***[kak tebe kazhetsia, [Petia duma-et, [cto ja kupl-iu]]]**?
 how you.DAT seem.3SG.PRES Peter.NOM think-3SG.PRES what.ACC I.NOM buy.1SG.FUT
 lit. '[How it seems to you [Peter thinks [what I will buy]]]?'
- (32) **#[kak tebe kazhetsia, [kak Petia duma-et, [cto ja kupl-iu]]]**?
 lit. '[How it seems to you [how Peter thinks [what I will buy]]]?'
- (33) **[kak tebe kazhetsia, [cto Petia duma-et, [ja kupl-iu]]]**?
 lit. '[How it seems to you [what Peter thinks [I will buy]]]?'
 Intended in (31)-(33): 'What does it seem to you that Peter thinks I will buy?'

The scope marking hypothesis explains these facts as follows. (31) is ruled out by virtue of *kak* and *wh*-phrase being in non-adjacent clauses. In this approach, Russian solves this non-adjacency by moving the *wh*-phrase further (33) and does not allow to repeat the scope marker in the intermediate clause (32).

However, the parenthetical approach does not exclude the above ungrammaticality either. It predicts that in (33) the *kak*-clause attaches to the sentence with long movement yielding the meaning: 'What, according to your opinion, Peter thinks that I will buy?'. Stacking of *kak*-clauses is not allowed and (31) is ungrammatical since the structure with a *wh*-phrase in embedded clause taking scope higher is impossible due to the obligatory status of *wh*-fronting:

- (34) ***[Petia duma-et, [cto ja kupl-iu]]?**
 Peter.NOM think-3SG.PRES what.ACC I.NOM buy.1SG.FUT
 Intended: '[What does Peter think [that I will buy]]?'

In other words, the sentence in (31) would be as ungrammatical without the parenthetical clause so its addition can't improve anything.⁵

I show that my approach is compliant with seemingly scope marking properties of the construction. It also makes those properties that are troublesome for the scope marking analysis more expected.

Languages are likely to have lexical idiosyncrasies with parentheticals. If the *kak*-clause is a parenthetical, the fact that only a few predicates are possible in the *kak*-clause (property G in 3.1) is expected. And even though scope marking might be lexically restricted, too (Reis, 2000), the amount of predicates is not as limited as in the Russian *kak*-construction. Moreover, restrictions present in other languages can be formulated in terms of natural classes of predicates, which is not as easy for Russian.

Flexibility of linear order (I in 3.2) is a defining property of parenthetical constructions.

The *kak*-parenthetical triggers a conventional implicature. In general, CIs are scopeless and it is hard to embed them, which explains impossibility of further embedding of the *kak*-construction (F in 3.1). Even if embedded, they remain speaker-oriented, which is exactly the reason of quotative interpretation of otherwise ungrammatical (19): quotatives do not involve proper subordination and without it, the embedded question is interpreted addressee-oriented.

As I discuss in 3.1, property E, third person subjects are typically bad in the *kak*-clause (18). I should note that sentences with quantified NPs (17) and with bound variables (16) are even worse. This increased badness might be due to the general impossibility of binding relations between the at-issue content and CI content (according to Potts, quantifiers are remarkably bad in English appositives).

Finally, the *kak*-clause has a clear-cut comma intonation and is surrounded by commas when written. This is a hallmark of parenthetical constructions and one of their most characteristic traits (Dehé & Kavalova (2007), Brinton (2008)). This intonation creates a separate prosodic domain and indicates not-at-issue content. This is not unique to Russian, of course. As I mention above, English CI and non-CI *As*-parentheticals are distinguished on the basis of intonation.

Extra empirical support for my analysis comes from the following fact. *Kak* is the most common way to introduce parentheticals throughout the language:

- (35) pushkin, **kak** izvestn-o, rost-om byl nevelik
 Pushkin.NOM how known-NOM.SG.N height-INS.SG be.3SG.PST small.M.SG
 'Pushkin, as it is known, was of small height.' (Daniil Kharm's "Incident")

This is reminiscent of English *As* and indeed, distribution of *kak* and *as* overlaps, for instance, besides parentheticals, both are used in various equative and simulative constructions.

4.3. Loose Ends and Indexicality

So far, I did not address one mysterious property of the *kak*-construction: restriction of the *kak*-clause to present tense and second person subjects.

Kak-parentheticals outside of interrogatives, as in (35), are not limited to any particular predicate, subject, tense, or length. So why are these *kak*-clauses so restricted in questions?

When the speaker asks a question, a cooperative Gricean addressee is supposed to base the reply upon the best information that is currently available to him/her. And unless the source of information is overtly specified in the question, it does not necessarily have to be addressee's knowledge, it might be his/her belief state. Consider the question 'What is the weather tomorrow?'. Inquiring this, I do not expect my interlocutor to be a weather authority. Neither do I expect him/her to consult with meteorologists in order to respond. I just want to hear his/her opinion.

This assumption, that the addressee might not have a necessarily correct answer and the speaker still

⁵ Sometimes (van Gelderen, 2001) such sentences are mistaken for a *wh*-scope marking without any overt scope marker. Allegedly grammatical examples like (i) are only possible when the intonation contour is very different from regular questions and the *wh*-phrase is stressed. The entire sentence thus gets highly marked semantically:

- (i) [Petia duma-et, [CHTO ja kupl-iu]]?
 Peter.NOM think-3SG.PRES what.ACC I.NOM buy.1SG.FUT
 Intended: '[What does Peter think [that I will buy]]?'

asks this question, is often present covertly. But sometimes the speaker may explicitly signal that assumption by a parenthetical *kak*-clause featuring a predicate of thinking. Present tense and second person in the *kak*-clause overtly indicate what is always inquired by any plain question, namely, that the speaker asks the addressee, hence the second person, about his current belief state, hence the present tense.

In principle, speakers might be inquiring about non-current belief states or belief states of third parties. In fact, they do—with long movement, e.g. ‘*What did the students think Rilke wrote?*’. But it is typical of parenthetical constructions to be restricted. I suggest that Russian *kak*-parenthetical grammaticizes one narrow class of questions frequently met in discourse. Absence of restrictions on tense, person and predicates would result in a further departure from the initial question allowing for more elaborated inquiries. This would add significantly more information to the question conveyed by the *wh*-clause, and is ruled out or at least less preferred. In a sense, CI-content of the *kak*-clause should be “bleached”: part of what it encodes is already there.⁶

A similar restriction on person and tense is observed in a subclass of English *Slifting* constructions (Ross (1973), Stowell (2005)):

(36) Alaska is gorgeous, I think / #John thinks / # I thought.

Lau & Rooryck (2012) name them evidential parentheticals, as opposed to quotative parentheticals as in ‘*Alaska is gorgeous, Robyn concluded quietly*’. The former can only be anchored to declaratives and ban subject other than first person and tense other than present. Russian seems to be an interrogative counterpart of English: if declarative switches to interrogative, the speaker switches to the addressee. This might indicate that Russian and English parentheticals are incarnations of the same phenomenon.

This, in turn, is reminiscent of the ‘interrogative flip’ (Speas & Tenny, 2003), specific behaviour of evidential markers in questions. Evidentials denote someone’s source of information. In declaratives evidence holder is typically the speaker or subject of the attitude verb. In many languages, e.g. Cheyenne and Cuzco Quechua, when used in questions, evidential markers indicate that the speaker wants the addressee to respond with a certain type of evidence. Murray (2012) parallels this behaviour of evidential markers with pure indexicals such as *I, you, here, now*, which are always anchored to the speech event, and introduces a new type of anaphoric indexicals. Russian parentheticals are like an interrogative flip of English ones, the parallel being incomplete as Russian has only interrogative parentheticals with these restrictions and English only has declarative. However, such parentheticals in both languages might involve a similar mechanism, with the restriction to second person (and possibly present tense) arising from their indexical nature.

5. An Integrated Parenthetical?

Van Gelderen (2001) sketches an analysis of the *kak*-construction that seems similar to one that I advocate here. Building upon Reis (2000) for German, she claims that this construction is an Integrated Parenthetical (IP).

IPs are a special type of parenthetical constructions, introduced by Reis (2000, 2002). She shows that German has two types of scope-marking-like constructions. One instantiates genuine scope marking, with expected properties from the section 2, while another is an IP. My discussion of parenthetical constructions in 4.1 does not fully apply to IPs, their main characteristic, according to Reis, being prosodic and pragmatic integration while structural independence and syntactic features of regular parentheticals is preserved (though Steinbach (2007) argues for their overall integratedness). Lack of prosodic autonomy, a defining property of IPs, is the key reason why van Gelderen’s analysis should be refuted for the Russian *kak*-construction. As I discussed above, the *kak*-clause has a comma intonation, hence is prosodically autonomous and cannot be regarded as an IP.

Reis mentions other formal properties that help to identify IPs (Reis (2000:364-367), Reis (2002:5-14)). In particular, an IP clause cannot contain main clause material such as modal particles and it is possible to have several IP clauses in one sentence. Russian does not share these properties.

⁶ This, by the way, explains impossibility of *chudit’sia* ‘appear’ and *mereschit’sia* ‘fancy’ in the *kak*-construction, illustrated in (22). These predicates belong to verbs of seeming but their semantics is more complex. While the general verb for ‘seem’ *kasat’sia* in this construction means roughly ‘What do you think?’, either of the two would add significantly more to this question and hence they are ruled out.

Modal particles are legal in the *kak*-clause:

- (37) tak kak **zhe** vy polaga-ete, kto ja takoj, durak
so how ZHE you(pl).NOM assume-2PL.PRES who.NOM I.NOM such.M.NOM.SG fool.NOM.SG
ili negodiaj?
or villain.NOM.SG
'So finally who do you assume I am, a fool or a villain?' (National Corpus of Russian Language)

Multiple *kak*-clauses are not allowed in one sentence whereas German IPs can be stacked:

- (38) #**kak** tebe kazhetsia, **kak** ty duma-esh, zeml-ia vertitsia?
how you.DAT seem.3SG.PRES how you.NOM think-2SG.PRES earth-NOM.SG turn-3SG.PRES
Intended: 'What do you think, what does it seem to you, is the Earth turning'?

Russian does share *some* properties with German IPs. For instance, the *kak*-clause has a flexible linear order (25)-(28) and can be attached to polar questions (24). But these properties are not unique to IPs and the Reis-style analysis for the Russian *kak*-construction is not needed to explain them.

6. Conclusions

In this paper I discuss the Russian two-clausal construction that was previously analyzed as an instance of *wh*-scope marking. I present arguments against the scope marking analysis and show dissimilarities between the Russian *kak*-construction and actual scope marking constructions from other languages. This makes the typology of scope marking and similar looking phenomena even broader than discussed in (Lutz et al., 2000). I propose that Russian construction is a parenthetical introducing a Pottsian CI, which nicely explains its unexpected properties and sheds light on its semantics.

'How' used as a scope marker is a typological rarity,⁷ most languages, including German, Hindi and Hungarian, use 'what'. Nonetheless, Stepanov parallels Slavic *kak* / *jak* (Russian / Polish) to German *was*, Hindi *kyaa*, Hungarian *mit*. In this paper, I argue that Russian *kak* is not a scope marker and that the *kak*-construction is a parenthetical. Lubanska (2005:Ch. 3)⁸ comes to a similar conclusion with regard to the Polish *jak...wh*-construction. While maintaining Dayal's indirect dependency semantics, she argues for a parenthetical syntax of the construction, reminiscent of German integrated parentheticals discussed by Reis.

In Dayal's system, the scope marker functions as a quantifier over propositions. But in Russian (as well as in Polish) it does not have this function outside of the *jak/kak*-construction. To ask 'What do you think?' these two languages use 'what', not 'how', while 'what' cannot be used in the *jak/kak*-construction in *jak/kak*'s stead. Stepanov links this distribution of 'how' vs. 'what' as quantifiers over propositions to selection and ends up concluding that 'how' selects for questions. But I have shown that *kak* 'how' is common in declarative parentheticals, which is also true of Polish.

Jak/kak-constructions are common in Slavic languages, and one of the most intriguing issues is semantics of the Panslavic 'how' in synchronic and diachronic perspective in and outside these constructions. What allows this 'how' to be used both in declarative and interrogative parentheticals and why (and where) are English 'as' and 'how' different? I leave it for future research.

Abbreviations

1,2,3 person, ACC accusative case, DAT dative case, DEF definite determiner, F feminine, FUT future tense, GEN genitive case, INF infinitive, INS instrumental case, M masculine, N neuter, NOM nominative case, PL plural, PREP prepositional case, PRES present tense, PST past tense, Q question, SG singular.

⁷ 'How' has this function in Warlpiri (Legate, 2002) and allegedly in Slavic.

⁸ Thanks to Basia Tomaszewicz for bringing this work to my attention.

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