

Subject, Topic, and Control in Russian

Author(s): Johanna Nichols, Gilbert Rappaport, and Alan Timberlake
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Johanna Nichols

University of California, Berkeley

Gilbert Rappaport

University of Texas, Austin

Alan Timberlake

University of California, Los Angeles

1. Introduction. Despite recent progress in functionalism and in relational grammar, no study to date has seriously considered the interaction of functional roles and grammatical relations in the control of syntactic processes such as agreement. Studies in relational grammar in practice discuss control exclusively in terms of grammatical relations, and leave the impression that functional roles are irrelevant to control. Functionalist studies argue that syntactic processes cannot be described adequately without reference to functional roles, but are generally unclear about the status of grammatical relations; these studies seem to suggest that grammatical relations are irrelevant, or that they can be reduced to functional roles.

This paper considers the interaction of grammatical and functional relations in the control of four different syntactic processes in Russian: number agreement in predicates; deletion/interpretation of subjects of adverbial participles; case agreement in predicate nominals; and reflexivization. The argument takes the following form. Control of these processes is determined primarily by grammatical relations, but it is also affected by the functional role of topic; specifically, a topic is a stronger controller than a nontopic. This paper is devoted primarily to establishing that descriptive observation about control strength. From this observation it follows that both grammatical and functional relations are essential to an adequate description of control in Russian and, further, neither can be reduced to the other. We suggest that grammatical and functional relations are represented on distinct *axes*; the fact that subject (as opposed to object) and topic (as opposed to nontopic) both favor control is explicable if each is assumed to be the relation of prominence on a distinct axis of representation.

At the risk of lengthening the preliminaries, we will mention four sets of assumptions. The first concerns rules. We assume that syntactic rules refer in their operation to a complex of distinct conditions, which break down into the following classes: rule conditions, including conditions of control strength and target accessibility; propositional conditions, including conditions of tense, aspect, mood, and reference; stylistic conditions; and occasionally morphological conditions (see Nichols 1980, Timberlake 1980b). Control and target conditions seem to be generalizable across all control rules, while other conditions are much more rule-specific. Since we are investigating only control strength here, we attempt to hold all other conditions constant. In particular, we have not investigated how topicality affects the accessibility of targets.¹

For three of the four processes there is a choice between two logically possible morphological forms, where one form reflects the operation of the rule and the other the failure of the rule to apply. On the assumption that rules apply in proportion to the strength of the controller, one form can be taken to reflect a strong controller and the other a weak controller. We claim that the rules under investigation apply better when the controller is topic than when it is nontopic. (For the fourth process the issue is whether a single,

morphologically invariant form can be controlled at all by a given constituent, so the test for control strength is obvious.)

Second, grammatical relations. Consistent with relational grammar, we assume that grammatical relations are primitive concepts, although there clearly exist implicational relationships between the semantics of predicates and grammatical relations. The rules discussed here are preferentially or exclusively controlled by subjects and, further, subjects at the final level of derivation, so the grammatical relation of final subject is the most important for the discussion. One type of controller that is not a final subject does deserve to be mentioned, however: datives (and sometimes other obliques) with a range of stative 'inverse' predicates; these include modals, experientials, evidentials, quantifiers, and existentials. For the purposes of this paper we remain neutral on the issue of why these datives and other obliques can function as controllers (for three different views, see Chvany 1975, Perlmutter 1978, 1979, Timberlake 1980a).

Third, functional relations. We limit the discussion to the functional relation of topic, defined operationally by word order: a constituent is topic if it is preverbal, nontopic if it is postverbal. It is well known that this difference in word order in Russian is correlated with some difference (or differences) in functional value, but the difference is not easy to define consistently for all cases. It is important to mention that topic in Russian does not necessarily correspond exactly to topic as it is used elsewhere (e.g. in Chafe 1976), and it does not correspond exactly to other functional relations like given, presupposed, empathy focus, theme (e.g. in Babby 1980), and so on, although it may well represent an abstraction over some or all of these.

Our operational definition is an attempt to give precise formal content to a relation whose existence is well established in the literature (see Adamec 1966, Kovtunova 1976). That literature is in large part devoted to giving a substantive characterization to the notion of topic. We assume, in contrast, that a substantive characterization is premature at present. At the same time, however, we assume it is possible to identify topics and register in detail what topicality does in a grammar without being able to say precisely what it is. Our strictly operational criterion has the advantage that it allows us to avoid circularity in the definition of topic.

We assume that in the unmarked functional structure the subject is the topic, and objects are part of the comment. In marked functional structures the subject can be detopicalized, or an object topicalized, or both. Three particular cases of marked functional structure could be mentioned here. (In the examples below, the double vertical line marks the division between topic and comment.) First, the clearest cases of marked functional structure are those that correspond to presentational sentences in English, in which a nonreferential subject is detopicalized; the sentence is then topicless ((1)), unless another constituent is topicalized ((2)):

- (1) || Pošel starik v les.
went old man into forest

'There went an old man into the forest.'

- (2) V les || pošel starik.
into forest went old man

'Into the forest there went an old man.'

Such presentational sentences in fact show the clearest reduction in control strength of subjects. Second, the same analysis can be extended to cases of word order inversion with nonpresentational function, such as (3), in which a referential subject is postposed after the predicate. We assume that the subject, by virtue of being to the right of the predicate, is less topical than in the corresponding unmarked word order of (4), although it may well be more topical than the subject of a presentational sentence.

- (3) || Zakazyval ja druguju knigu.
ordered I another book

'And I ordered another book.'

- (4) Ja || zakazyval druguju knigu.
I ordered another book

'I ordered another book.'

In fact, such subjects are intermediate in control strength between topic subjects and nontopic subjects of presentational sentences.² Third, an object can be topicalized without causing subject-predicate inversion, as in (5):

- (5) Druguju knigu ja || zakazyval.
another book I ordered

'Another book I ordered.'

In such cases the subject remains topical (although it is less topical than the preposed object (Adamec 1966, Kovtunova 1976:53)), and remains a strong controller.

Fourth, judgments of speakers. The judgments given below represent the consensus interpretation of at least six³ native speakers of Russian from the Soviet Union, given according to a hierarchy of decreasing acceptability: ⟨no mark⟩ 'acceptable and preferred', ⟨†⟩ 'acceptable but not preferred', ⟨?⟩ 'marginally acceptable', ⟨*⟩ 'unacceptable'. Actual judgments of individual speakers on sentence tokens vary considerably; our claim concerns the relative acceptability of competing forms in minimal or near-minimal pairs. For example, for the pair (22-23) below, ND preferred the nominative for both sentences, but allows instrumental for the nontopic controller; NZ prefers nominative for topic controller and instrumental for nontopic; and VP prefers instrumental for both, but allows nominative for topic controller. Despite differences in absolute preferences, all three speakers find the nominative relatively more acceptable with a topic controller, and the instrumental relatively more acceptable with a nontopic controller. As in the examples above, a double vertical line ⟨||⟩ marks the division of the clause into topic vs. comment. Controllers are italicized; targets for three of the four processes can be identified by alternative morphological forms, separated by slash ⟨/⟩.

2. Subject-predicate agreement. Since control of agreement in the predicate (along with nominative case) is often considered to be definitional of subjecthood at the final level of derivation, it is not immediately obvious how topicality could affect agreement of the predicate with the subject. The effect shows up in at least two contexts in which the subject noun phrase has a complex internal structure.

The first of these is comitative phrases, phrases with a nominative head noun and a dependent noun expressed by the comitative preposition *s* 'with' plus the instrumental case.

When the head noun itself is singular, two agreement patterns are possible in principle. The verb can be singular (and in the past tense, agree in gender with the nominative head); this pattern of agreement with the head noun alone can be characterized as minimal scope of agreement. Or the verb can be plural (with no gender distinctions); this is maximal agreement over the domain of the whole subject noun phrase, including both the head noun and the dependent comitative phrase.

The choice between minimal and maximal scope of agreement is affected by the topicality of the subject noun phrase. When the subject controller is topic, maximal agreement – that is, plural morphology – is preferred for animate nouns ((6)). When the subject is nontopic, minimal agreement – that is, singular – is equal in preference to maximal agreement ((7)):

- (6) *Avdeev so svoim vedomym* || čut' bylo ne otpravili/? otpravil
 with own copilot almost sent
 (pl.) / (sg.)

na tot svet fon Manštejna.
 to other world

'Avdeev with his copilot almost sent Von Mannstein to his grave.' (Krylov, otpravili)

- (7) *Fon Manštejna* || čut' bylo ne otpravili/otpravil na tot svet
 almost sent to other world
 (pl.) /(sg.)

Avdeev so svoim vedomym.
 with own copilot

'It was Von Mannstein who Avdeev with his copilot almost sent to the grave.'

The second context involves quantifier phrases. Again two agreement patterns are possible: the predicate can be singular (and agree in gender with the quantifier in the past tense), or it can be plural. For example, *bol'sinstvo* 'majority' takes neuter singular or plural, *rjad* 'series' takes masculine singular or plural (Crockett 1976: 385-404). The latter example contradicts the traditional view, which interprets the singular pattern as 'nonagreement' (based on the fact that neuter singular in the predicate could be nonagreement instead of agreement with a neuter subject) and the plural pattern as 'agreement in sense'. Consistent with the analysis of comitative phrases, we view the singular pattern as minimal scope of agreement with the quantifier alone, and the plural pattern as maximal scope of agreement with the whole subject noun phrase. In any event, the choice between singular and plural patterns for quantified subject phrases is affected by topicality. With indefinite quantifiers of the type *mnogo* 'many', *nemalo* 'not a few', *bol'sinstvo* 'majority', and the like, the singular and plural patterns are roughly equal in acceptability for a topic (animate) subject phrase, as in (8). The singular pattern is usually preferred for a nontopic quantified subject, as in (9), in which word order inversion has a presentational function:

- (8) *Množestvo žonglerov* || kidajut/kidaet desjatki tysjač šarov.
 number jugglers throw tens thousands balls
 (pl.) /(sg.)

'A number of jugglers are throwing tens of thousands of balls.'
 (De Sent-Ékzjuperi, kidajut)

- (9) V pljasku || ?vstupili/vstupilo množstvo žonglerov.
 into dance entered number jugglers
 (pl.) /(sg.)

'There entered into dance a number of jugglers.' (De Sent-Ėkzjuperi, vstupilo)

The choice between agreement patterns is of course also affected by numerous other factors, including animacy, referentiality, collectivity, and the lexical identity of the quantifier, but word order is consistently mentioned as one of the major conditions governing agreement with quantified subject phrases (see, for example, Švedova 1970:555, Corbett 1979). Yet it is virtually never asked why word order should have an effect on subject-predicate agreement. We suggest that this effect can be interpreted in terms of control strength, as follows.

With both comitative and quantifier phrases a topic controller favors maximal scope of agreement, a nontopic controller favors (relatively speaking) minimal scope of agreement. This suggests that when the subject noun phrase is topic, the dependent constituent – the comitative noun phrase in comitative expressions, or the quantified noun in quantified phrases – is more prominent and is allowed to participate in the control of agreement. Conversely, when the subject noun phrase is nontopic, the dependent constituent is less prominent and is not allowed to participate in control of agreement, so that agreement is restricted to the head of the subject noun phrase. Interpreted in this way, the facts presented above are consistent with the claim that the operation of agreement (in the sense of its maximal application) is favored by topicality, and hence that a topic is a stronger controller than a nontopic.⁴

3. Adverbial Participles. A range of adverbial concepts can be expressed in Russian by nonfinite clauses in which the predicate appears in a nonagreeing form called the adverbial participle (or gerund). The subject of the adverbial participle does not appear on the surface, and the deletion of the subject (or its interpretation) is usually controlled by a constituent of the matrix clause; this is marked in the examples below by Ø. Our discussion, which is limited to so-called detached adverbial participles, takes as its point of departure the analysis in Rappaport (1979).

The natural controller is a consistent subject (subject at initial and final levels). It is possible to some extent to have other controllers, but this depends crucially on the stylistic register. The literary norm is the most restrictive, and in fact allows only consistent subjects to be controllers; it does not allow either promoted final subjects or demoted initial subjects of passives to be controllers. At the opposite extreme, an unrestrictive register allows control by various nonsubjects as long as they qualify as prominent in terms of some functional role like topic, empathy center, hypertheme (of discourse), and so on. Although this register could provide evidence for the effect of topicality on control, the usage of most educated speakers is much closer to that of the literary norm. We use this intermediate register to examine the effect of topic on control of adverbial participles.

In this intermediate register consistent subjects can serve as controllers under virtually all conditions, even when they are not topics, as in (10-11).

- (10) Ø zametiv našu mašinu, nam || stali maxat' kakie-to ljudi.
 noticing our car us began wave some people

'Having noticed our car, there began to wave to us some people.' (Simonov)

- (11) Ø uvidev menja, iz doma vsled za mnoj || vyxodit jugoslav v forme.
 seeing me from house after me exits Yugoslav in uniform

'Having seen me, out of the house following after me comes a Yugoslav officer in uniform.'
 (Simonov)

The fact that consistent subjects can control adverbial participles when they are not topics argues that subjecthood is a more important condition on control than topicality.

For less well established controllers topicality is a necessary condition for control. One imperfect controller is the final (or derived) subject of a passive. Control by a passive final subject is prohibited in the literary norm, but in fact most educated speakers allow this type of control when the controller is the topic, as in (12). They find it unacceptable, however, when the controller is not the topic, as in (13), even if the target clause is postposed, as in (14):

- (12) † Ø vyrvavšis' iz tjur'my, Šimanovskaja || vnov' arestovyvaetsja
 breaking out from prison anew gets arrested

vo Vladivostoke.
 in

'Having broken out of prison, Šimanovskaja again gets arrested in Vladivostok.'
 (cited by Ickovič 1974:88)

- (13) * Ø vyrvavšis' iz tjur'my, vo Vladivostoke || vnov' arestovyvaetsja
 breaking out from prison in anew gets arrested

Šimanovskaja.

'Having broken out of prison, in Vladivostok again gets arrested Šimanovskaja.'

- (14) * Vo Vladivostoke || vnov' arestovyvaetsja Šimanovskaja, vyrvavšis'
 in anew gets arrested breaking out

iz tjur'my.
 from prison

'In Vladivostok again gets arrested Šimanovskaja, after having broken out of prison.'

Another weak controller is a dative associated with an experiential predicate. When the dative controller is the topic, the sentences are basically acceptable to most speakers, although there is some hesitancy about some sentence tokens ((15)). When the dative controller is not the topic, the sentences are unacceptable for all speakers, regardless of the position of the target clause ((16-17)):

- (15) † Ø buduči junošej v armii, mne || pripominalas' melodija babuškina budil'nika
 being youth in army me get remembered melody grandma's clock

v časy toski.
 in hours mood

'Being a youth in the army, to me would come back the melody of my grandma's alarm clock in times of depression.' (adapted from Ickovič 1974:85)

- (16) * Ø buduči junošej v armii, melodija babuškina budil'nika || pripominalas' mne
 being youth in army melody grandma's clock get remembered me

v časy toski.
 in hours mood

'Being a youth in the army, the melody of my grandma's alarm clock would come back to me in times of depression.'

- (17) * Melodija babuškina budil'nika || pripominalas' mne v časy toski, Ø buduči
 melody grandma's clock get remembered me in hours mood being

junošej v armii.
 youth in army

'The melody of my grandma's alarm clock would come back to me in times of depression, being a youth in the army.'

Although both these types of control by controllers other than consistent subjects are proscribed in the literary register, examples are attested in written Russian (Ickovič 1974). Consistent with the claim advanced here, in virtually all such examples this type of controller (when it is an overt constituent) is the topic of its clause (Yokoyama 1978, Rappaport 1979).

4. Case agreement of predicate nominals. Predicate nominals occur in a wide variety of constructions, three of which are exemplified below. Our discussion of predicate nominals is based on the analysis in Nichols (1980). Depending on its part of speech, a predicate nominal may inflect for case. Generally speaking there are two possibilities: a predicate nominal may be in the same case as its controller (often nominative) or in the instrumental. The selection of agreeing case can be assumed to reflect the operation of a rule of case agreement, while the selection of instrumental reflects the failure of this rule to apply. (Agreement for gender and number in adjectives and participles is independent, since it occurs regardless of case agreement.) The rule of case agreement is governed by a wide number and variety of factors, the most important being the construction type and propositional conditions (tense, aspect, mood). Control strength is evidently also a factor, to judge by the fact that case agreement occurs more consistently with subject controllers than with object controllers. Here we will exhibit three construction types to show that topicality also affects control.

The first is the copular construction. Under the right combination of conditions, both agreeing (nominative) and nonagreeing (instrumental) case are possible for the copular construction in the past tense. If the controller is postverbal, as in (19), then the instrumental is slightly preferred.

- (18) *Ona* ne skandal'naja/†skandal'noj || *byla, prosto* šumnaja/†šumnoj.
 she not scandalous was simply loud
 (nom.) / (instr.) (nom.) / (instr.)

'She was not really scandalous, just loud.' (Rasputin, skandal'naja, šumnaja)

- (19) || Byla *ona* na udivlenie †molčalivaja/molčalivoj.
 was she surprisingly untalkative
 (nom.) /(instr.)

'She was surprisingly untalkative.' (adapted from Rasputin, molčalivoj)

A second contrast with a masculine adjective is given in (20-21), in which the nominative and instrumental are equal for a topic controller, but the instrumental is definitely preferred for a nontopic controller. The postverbal order is infrequent in texts, but in the handful of textual examples we have the instrumental is invariably used.

- (20) On || vseгда byl veselyj/veselym i dobryj/dobrym.
 he always was happy and kind
 (nom.)/(instr.)

'He was always happy and kind.'

- (21) || Byl *on* vseгда ?veselyj/veselym i ?dobryj/dobrym.
 was he always happy and kind
 (nom.)/(instr.) (nom.)/(instr.)

'And he was always happy and kind.' (Proskurin, veselym, dobrym)

The second construction type involves a predicate nominal with a verb of motion. With the past tense of the perfective aspect of *vernut'sja* 'to return', the nominative is generally preferred by speakers and predominates in textual usage. This is clear when the controller is the topic, as in (22), when the nominative is unambiguously preferred by speakers. When the controller is nontopic, as in (23), the instrumental becomes a viable option, equal in preference to the nominative.

- (22) Čerez minutu *on* || vernulsja krajne nedovol'nyj/?nedovol'nym.
 after minute he returned very unhappy
 (nom.) / (instr.)

'After a minute he returned very unhappy.' (Arsen'ev, nedovol'nyj)

- (23) Slyšno bylo, čto iz Moskvy || vernulsja *on* ves'ma dovol'nyj/dovol'nym.
 heard was that from Moscow returned he very happy
 (nom.) /(instr.)

'It was said that from Moscow he returned quite satisfied.'

The third context involves an accusative controller of a predicate nominal. This construction generally prefers the nonagreeing (instrumental) case, but sometimes — with feminine adjectives or pronominal controllers — will allow the agreeing case, in this construction the accusative. In (24) below, the accusative controller has been topicalized to preverbal position, and the accusative case is preferred for the predicate nominal. In (25), however, the controller remains in nontopic position, and the instrumental is then preferred:

- (24) Čtoby opredelit' količestvo kamnja, *mašinu* || vzvešivajut snačala pustuju/†pustoj.
 to determine quantity stone vehicle weigh first empty
 (acc.) / (instr.)

'In order to determine the quantity of stone, the vehicle they weigh first empty.'

- (25) ... metod, pri ktorom || vzvešivajut *mašinu* snačala †pustuju/pustoj, ...
 method in which weigh vehicle first empty
 (acc.) /(instr.)

'... this technique, in which they weigh the vehicle first empty, ...'

As a second contrast for the same construction, consider (26-27). In (26) the accusative pronominal controller is topic and the accusative is preferred for the predicate nominal. In (27) the controller is nontopic and instrumental is preferred.

- (26) Potom *ego* || posadili gologo/†golym na osla, licom k xvostu.
 then him sat naked on ass face to tail
 (acc.) / (instr.)

'Then him they sat naked on an ass, with his face to the tail.' (Solov'ev, gologo)

- (27) || Posadit' *ego* licom k xvostu †gologo/golym na osla, i vozit' *ego*
 sit him face to tail naked on ass and take him
 (acc.) /(instr.)

po gorodu.
 around city

'(We should) sit him with his face to the tail naked on an ass and lead him around the city.' (Solov'ev, gologo)

Thus, in three different types of predicate nominal constructions, topicality of the controller affects choice of case in the predicate nominal: a topic controller favors the selection of agreeing case as compared to a nontopic controller. This is true for both subject and object controllers. On the assumption that agreeing case reflects the operation of a rule of case assignment, it follows that a topic is a stronger controller than a nontopic. Further evidence comes from topicless presentational sentences, in which no participant can control any kind of predicate nominal at all (Nichols 1980: § 1.4.4).

5. Reflexivization. There are two closely related processes of reflexivization in Russian: *Sebja* Reflexivization ('himself', etc., in which the target is the head of its noun phrase) and *Svoj* Reflexivization ('his own', etc., in which the target is a possessive adjective). Parallel to the choice between agreeing and nonagreeing case for predicate nominals, the choice of the reflexive form can be assumed to reflect the operation of the rule of reflexivization, while choice of the ordinary nonreflexive personal pronoun reflects the failure of the rule to apply; the nonreflexive personal form appears under the 'elsewhere' condition, when the necessary conditions of control strength, target accessibility, or reference are not met. The discussion here is based on Timberlake (1979, 1980a, 1980b).

The preferred controller is a consistent (initial and final) subject. For such controllers both *Sebja* and *Svoj* Reflexivization of an accessible target is obligatory for 3d persons under the condition of coreference. There are in fact well-attested cases of control by nonsubjects, but all are restricted in some way. Direct objects apparently can control reflexivization only with certain predicates, and then it is not obligatory (Klenin 1974); datives and other obliques can also control reflexivization, but usually only with certain restricted predicates, such as modals, quantifiers, existentials, and so on (see Perlmutter 1978, Timberlake 1980a).

At first glance reflexivization appears to be insensitive to topicality. In (28, 29), for example, the controller is a detopicalized consistent subject, yet *Sebja* and *Svoj* Reflexivization for 3d persons is obligatory:

- (28) Ej bylo stydno, što ee || dolžen nesti na sebe./*nem Volodja.
her was ashamed that her must carry on self him
(rfl.)/(pers.)

'She was ashamed that Volodja had to carry her on himself.' (Proskurin, sebe)

- (29) Tak so svoimi/*s ix orudijami || šxodili na bereg morjaki.
so with own with their weapons went onto shore sailors
(rfl.) / (pers.)

'Thus with their weapons onto the shore went the sailors.' (Krylov, so svoimi)

Conversely, direct objects with predicates that do not regularly allow object control cannot become controllers just by becoming topics:

- (30) Savičeva || lučše by prideržat' i dlja *sebja/nego samogo.
better hold back even for self him emphatic
(rfl.)/(pers.)

'It would have been better to hold Savičev back for the sake of *himself*.'

- (31) Ego || vyzvali v perednjuju *svoej/ego kvartiry.
him called into front room own his apartment
(rfl.)/(pers.)

'Him they called out into the front room of his apartment.' (Bulgakov, ego)

The effect of topicality, however, becomes apparent when the applicability of reflexivization is reduced for other reasons. For *Sebja* Reflexivization a context of reduced application is given by targets isolated in the structure [_{NP} [_{AdjP} Adj [_{PrepP} Prep—]] N]. In this context, first distinguished by Klenin (1974), the reflexive form is used in a little less than fifty percent of the textual examples with 3d person, but is consistently preferred by speakers. This characterization should actually be taken as applying to cases in which the controller is the topic, since virtually all examples, like (32) below, have the controller as topic. The lone textual example in which the controller is not the topic is (33), where the nonreflexive form was used textually and is strongly preferred by speakers.

- (32) Načal'nik || sidel v kresle, v redkom dlja sebja/†nego spokojnom sostojanii.
director sat in chair in rare for self him calm state
(rfl.)/(pers.)

'The director sat in a chair in a rare for him calm state of mind.' (Krelin, sebja)

- (33) || Tak zapomnil na vsju žizn' načal'nik ètu pervuju dlja ?sebja/nego
so remembered for whole life director this first for self him
(rfl.)/(pers.)

nespravedlivost'.
injustice.

'And so committed to memory for all his life the director this first for him injustice.'
(Krelin, nego)

A context of variable application of *Svoj* Reflexivization involves target prepositional phrases that describe properties or characteristics of the subject, such as *on s _____ spokojnoj ironije* 'he with _____ quiet irony'. For reasons that are not clear these targets do not obligatorily undergo *Svoj* Reflexivization even for 3d person subject controllers. As in the cases above, applicability depends in part on the topicality of the controller. When an animate controller is the topic, the reflexive form is usually preferred, as in (34). But the nonreflexive form is slightly preferred when an animate controller is nontopic, as in (35):

- (34) *On so svoim/†s ego spokojstviem || byl ljubimcem otrjada.*
 he with own with his calmness was favorite troop
 (rfl.) /(pers.)

'He with his calmness was the favorite of the troop.' (Simonov, *so svoim*)

- (35) *Mne || očen' nraivsja ètot ÷elovek ?so svoim/s ego umeniem razgovarivat'*
 me very pleasing this man with own with his ability talk
 (rfl.) /(pers.)
s soldatami.
 with soldiers

'To me was very pleasing this man with his ability to talk to soldiers.' (Simonov, *s ego*)

This context occurs frequently enough to allow for an informative statistical count. With topic controllers the reflexive form is used in 73% of the examples (14 of 19), while with nontopic controllers the reflexive form is used in only 42% (8 of 18).

The contexts above are all ones in which the applicability of reflexivization is reduced because the target is in some way inaccessible. Topicality shows the same effect when the strength of the controller is reduced, as it is with oblique controllers. A wide range of oblique constituents can control reflexivization, at least with existential predicates (ones that assert or comment on the existential status of the subject). In the minimal pair (36-37), the controller is a locative with the existential predicate *ostat'sja* 'remain'. The reflexive form is possible when the locative controller is topic ((36)) but impossible when it is nontopic ((37)):

- (36) *U Savičeva || ostalsja neprijatnyj osadok posle †svoego/ego poraženija.*
 chez remained unpleasant taste after own his defeat
 (rfl.) /(pers.)

'With Savičev there remained an unpleasant taste after his defeat.'

- (37) *Neprijatnyj osadok || ostalsja u Savičeva posle *svoego/ego poraženija.*
 unpleasant taste remained chez after own his defeat
 (rfl.) /(pers.)

'An unpleasant taste remained with Savičev after his defeat.'

These three contexts of reduced applicability show that reflexivization is affected by the topicality of the controller in a way that is consistent with other processes: the topic is a stronger controller than the nontopic.

6. Conclusions. The facts presented above lead to two conclusions: first, both grammatical and functional relations are necessary for an adequate description of control; and second, grammatical relations are more important than functional relations in determining strength

of control in Russian.

The fact that it is necessary to invoke both grammatical and functional relations contradicts the meta-assumption implicit in recent relational and functionalist literature; both give the impression that control can be stated exclusively in terms of one or the other type of relation. This at least is the descriptive practice of such studies; in fact, neither tradition explicitly discusses the relationship of grammatical and functional relations in control.

A representative example of one variety of functionalism is Kuno and Kaburaki 1977, which argues that "many of the phenomena that have been given ad hoc or totally inadequate 'syntactic' explanations, as well as many other phenomena not noted before, can be explained naturally by general principles that control the linguistic manifestation of the speaker's empathy" (p. 630). Elsewhere Kuno (1976:118) attempts "to show that wide varieties of linguistic phenomena are in fact controlled primarily by nonsyntactic factors". To the extent that such claims are to be read as an argument for the necessity of including functional relations (such as empathy focus or, by extension, topic) in the description of syntax, it is supported by the facts presented here. One gets the feeling, however, that the functionalist principles are supposed to supersede any other 'syntactic' principles, perhaps including grammatical relations. This claim is made more explicit in Yokoyama 1978, which claims that control of adverbial participles can be stated exclusively in terms of the functional relation of 'theme'. To the extent that this variety of functionalism intends to claim that functional relations are sufficient for the description of control, or even that they are primary in the description of control in Russian, the claim is not supported for Russian by the facts presented above. This specific claim about the control of adverbial participles in Russian is contradicted by (10, 11) above (Rappaport 1979).

A second variety of functionalism seems to make a different claim. Informally stated, this is the claim that subject is just an 'institutionalized topic' and, accordingly, processes that appear to be subject-controlled are just processes that have institutionalized former topic control. The ultimate consequences of this claim are not made explicit; in the cases where this claim is made (e.g. Givón 1976), it seems to be limited to a claim about the historical development of controlled processes. More generally, though, one gets the impression that the claim is intended to be the claim that grammatical relations (and the grammatical relation of subject in particular) are not primitives, but are derivative of some discourse relations, in particular the relation of topic. Whatever the intent of this variety of functionalism, the facts presented above show that grammatical relations must be rigorously distinguished from the functional relation of topic if one is to have an accurate account of control processes in Russian.

The descriptive practice of orthodox relational grammar comes fairly close to adopting the extreme position that control involves only grammatical relations, although there is no explicit discussion of the role of grammatical and functional relations in control. The formalism of relational grammar does allow for functional roles like topic (termed an 'overlay' relation in Perlmutter and Postal 1978), but this relation is never actually invoked in the corpus of relational description. To the extent that relational grammar claims only that grammatical relations are primary in control, its claim is supported by the facts above. To the extent that it intends to claim that control can be stated exclusively in terms of grammatical relations, then it is not supported by the data given here.

Two examples suffice to show this. First, in verb agreement word order has an effect only for noun phrases with internal structure, such as comitative and quantified noun phrases. It has no effect on ordinary subject noun phrases, which continue to control verb

agreement obligatorily even in postverbal (nontopic) position. This means that verb agreement still must be stated primarily in terms of the grammatical relation of (final) subject; in order to account for the effect of word order on verb agreement for subjects with complex structure, it is necessary to add a second condition involving topicality.

Second, in the control of reflexivization it was noted above that word order ordinarily does not affect control of reflexivization when the target is syntactically accessible. Thus, final subjects control reflexivization of accessible targets obligatorily even when they are postverbal ((28, 29)), and final objects cannot control reflexivization even when they are preverbal ((30, 31)). This means that control of reflexivization still must be stated primarily in terms of subjecthood (with reference to different levels); topicality is basically irrelevant to control, except when the target is isolated, when it becomes a minor condition on control.

In both of these cases, then, it is necessary to distinguish systematically between subjecthood and topicality. Further, in some contexts the statement of control must contain distinct statements about both. That is to say, topicality is evidently a different type of relation from subjecthood.⁵

We conclude, then, that an adequate account of control in Russian must be phrased in terms of at least two distinct kinds of relations. It also turns out that the purely lexical category of animacy/personhood plays a role in control roughly equal to that of topicality. To describe these effects, we suggest that control must be stated in terms of a number of recognizably distinct variables, including grammatical relations, the functional relation of topic, and lexical properties (specifically, animacy/personhood). There are many ways to formalize this; one possibility is to provide each sentence with a number of simultaneous but distinct types of representations, which can be called *axes*. Each axis has a set of relations for nominals, and a nominal is simultaneously characterized by relations on each axis, as listed in (38).

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (38) Conditions on control | |
| metacondition: | prominent \geq nonprominent |
| <hr/> | |
| grammatical: | subject \geq nonsubject |
| functional: | topic \geq nontopic |
| lexical: | animate \geq inanimate |

As the relations are hierarchized in (38), relations on the left favor control while those on the right disfavor control. The similarity among these relations can be expressed by positing a metacategory of 'prominence' (see Klenin 1979, Rappaport 1979). In the most general terms, then, prominence favors control while nonprominence disfavors control.

In concluding, we emphasize that this metacategory is not intended to replace the specific relations of control. As argued above, the specific effect of each axial relation has to be stated in detail in the grammar, potentially individually for each control rule, and with different degrees of effect depending on other conditions such as conditions on target accessibility or propositional conditions.

Notes

¹ It appears that target accessibility is generally the obverse of control strength. For example, animates are less accessible as targets than inanimates (Timberlake 1980b). By analogy, one might expect topics to be less accessible targets than nontopics (because topics are stronger controllers), but the facts at this point are not clear.

² We depart here from the traditional analysis of such sentences, according to which the predicate and subject together are the topic, and the remaining object is the comment (Adamec 1966:52-54, 67, Krylova and Xavronina 1976:81, Kovtunova 1976:39).

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⁴ The facts of agreement are also consistent with two other interpretations. First, when the subject phrase is preverbal, the dependent constituent can be adjacent to the predicate, but when it is postverbal, the quantifier intervenes between the dependent constituent and the predicate. The difference in agreement might be attributed to a difference in proximity, or syntactic distance, between controller and target (see Corbett 1979). Second, the predicate both determines topicality relations and is also the target of the rule. This means that a shift in the relative order of subject phrase and predicate implies a difference in order of controller and target. The difference in agreement might be attributed to a difference in the directionality of rule application, left-to-right for subject-predicate order but right-to-left for predicate-subject. These alternative interpretations are consistent with the facts of verb agreement, but they are contradicted by facts presented below for the other three processes. In particular, they are contradicted by examples in which the target is after the controller and predicate in both sentences of a minimal pair. In such cases a nontopic controller is syntactically closer to the target, but is still a weaker controller than a topic. And in such cases the rule applies left-to-right regardless of the relative order of controller and predicate.

⁵ This fact undermines the argument in Perlmutter (1978, 1979). Perlmutter observes that datives with certain predicates (modals, quantifiers, experientials, and so on) can control adverbial participles and reflexivization. This observation is used to argue that these dative controllers are subjects at an earlier level of derivation. The argument rests on the assumption that the subject relation is the only relation that is sufficient for control. Since relations other than strictly grammatical ones are evidently involved in control, there is no reason to maintain this assumption (see Rappaport 1979). Control by datives with inverse predicates may well be due to some entirely different relation (for one possibility, see Timberlake 1980a).

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