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TITLE: 'The High Low.'

Abstract:

In this paper, I discuss the distribution of the Russian *-nibud'*-series of indefinite pronouns. These pronouns are ungrammatical in factual sentences describing single events (1a) and grammatical in weak NPI and FCI licensing contexts (1b). At the same time, they are grammatical in a number of contexts that do not license NPIs and/ or FCIs (1c). Previous studies of *–nibud'*-pronouns include Yanovich (2005) and Pereltsvaig (2008), (2000).

(1) a.   (Yesterday I saw how…)

     *kto-nibud' kupil   moroženoe.

     who-*nibud'* bought ice-cream

     „Someone or other bought ice-cream.“

   b.   On tebja s   **kem-nibud'**   poznakomil?

      he you   with who-*nibud*' introduced

      „Has he introduced you to anyone?“

   c.   (I know for sure that …)

     Nekotoryje   mal"čiki **čto-nibud'** pročitali.

     Some.of   boys   what-*nibud'* read

     „Some of the boys read something or other.“

 I show that these pronouns face a syntax-semantics interface problem: syntactically, they are high in the structure (TP-adjoined or in Spec, AgrsP); semantically, they require to be in the scope of their licenser. It is, then, not surprising that *-nibud'*-pronouns are licensed by quantificational elements that are in the CP domain at LF, such as, for example, the interrogative operator (1b). I go on to characterize quantificational NP licensers of *–nibud'* as a natural class and argue that they are inherently presuppositional quantifiers (1c). I propose that in the presence of *–nibud'* these inherently presuppositional quantifiers are forced to move to the CP domain at LF.

References:

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