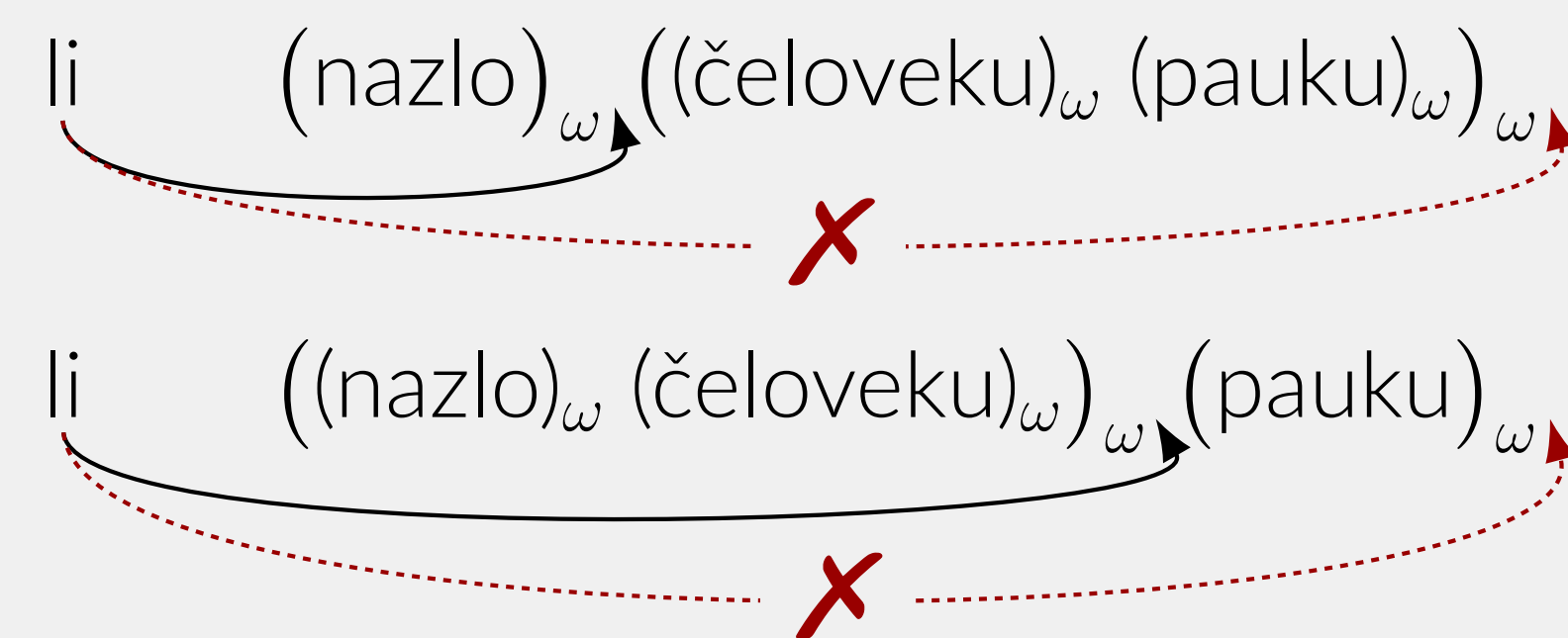




The Prosody



The Analysis

→ The traditional derivational steps, unchanged [5]

- The fronted phrase moves beneath C (see tree).
- *Li* is merged in at C before the tree is shipped off to PF.
- Prosodification happens down to at least the word-level.
- *Li* is inverted with and encliticizes onto the first prosodic word.

→ Novel synthesis with recursive prosodic words

- Ionova [4] shows Russian has three **prosodically distinct preposition types**: light (joins nearest word), intermediate (forms recursive word), and heavy (forms separate word).
- She evidences this from stress, omission in sluicing, position with the reciprocal pronoun, and word-boundary effects.
- Thus, **intermediate P**'s have two spots for *li* to end up in (ex. 6).
- This explains how **focusing P** exclusively **bleeds** an option (ex. 7), as focus is assigned at a prosodic higher level.
- *Li* has the same optionality for **compounds** and **names** (ex. 3, 8), so we propose they have the same prosodic structure.
- Word recursion is binary due to stress [9], which limits the possibilities for compounds in intermediate PPs (see above).

References

- [1] Bošković, Ž. 2001. *On the nature of the syntax-phonology interface: Cliticization and related phenomena*.
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- [3] Halpern, A. 1995. *On the placement and morphology of clitics*.
- [4] Ionova, A. 2019. *The unbearable lightness of clitics*.
- [5] Rudnitskaya, E. 2000. *Yes-no li questions in Russian*.
- [6] Schwabe, K. 2004. *The particle li and the left periphery of slavic yes/no interrogatives*.
- [7] Shushurin, P. 2024. *A head-movement analysis of second position clitics: The case of Russian polar particle li*.
- [8] Stepanov, A. 1998. *On wh-fronting in Russian*.
- [9] Švedova, N. (ed.) *Russian Grammar*.

The Clitic Placement Puzzle

Russian embedded polar questions are formed with the enclitic *li*. *Li* is a second-position clitic, analyzed [5] as 2W via **Prosodic Inversion (PI)** [3]. Later proposals [1, 7] have argued for placing the clitic **narrow-syntactically**. With new data, we argue that the syntactic view fails empirically, unlike our novel PI-based account.

Empirical Background

- (1) Mama sprašivaet, [Anja=*li* prišla].
mom asks Anya=q came
'Mom's asking if it was Anya who came.'
- (2) Mama sprašivaet, [interesnuju=*li* knigu](*=*li*) Anja pročitala.
mom asks interesting=q book=q Anya read
'Mom is asking if it was an interesting book that Anya read.'
- (3) a. Annu Kareninu *li* nam po kostočkam razobrat'? [7]
Anna Karenina q 1pl.dat to bones analyze
'Should we scrutinize Anna Karenina from every angle?'
b. Annu *li* Kareninu nam po kostočkam razobrat'?
Anna q Karenina 1pl.dat to bones analyze

New Data: Split PPs

- (4) Light-P (5) Heavy-P
k(*=*li*) derevu(=*li*) navstreču(=*li*) derevu(*=*li*)
to=q tree.dat=q towards=q tree.dat=q
- (6) Intermediate-P [4]:
okolo(=*li*) dereva(=*li*)
near=q tree.gen=q

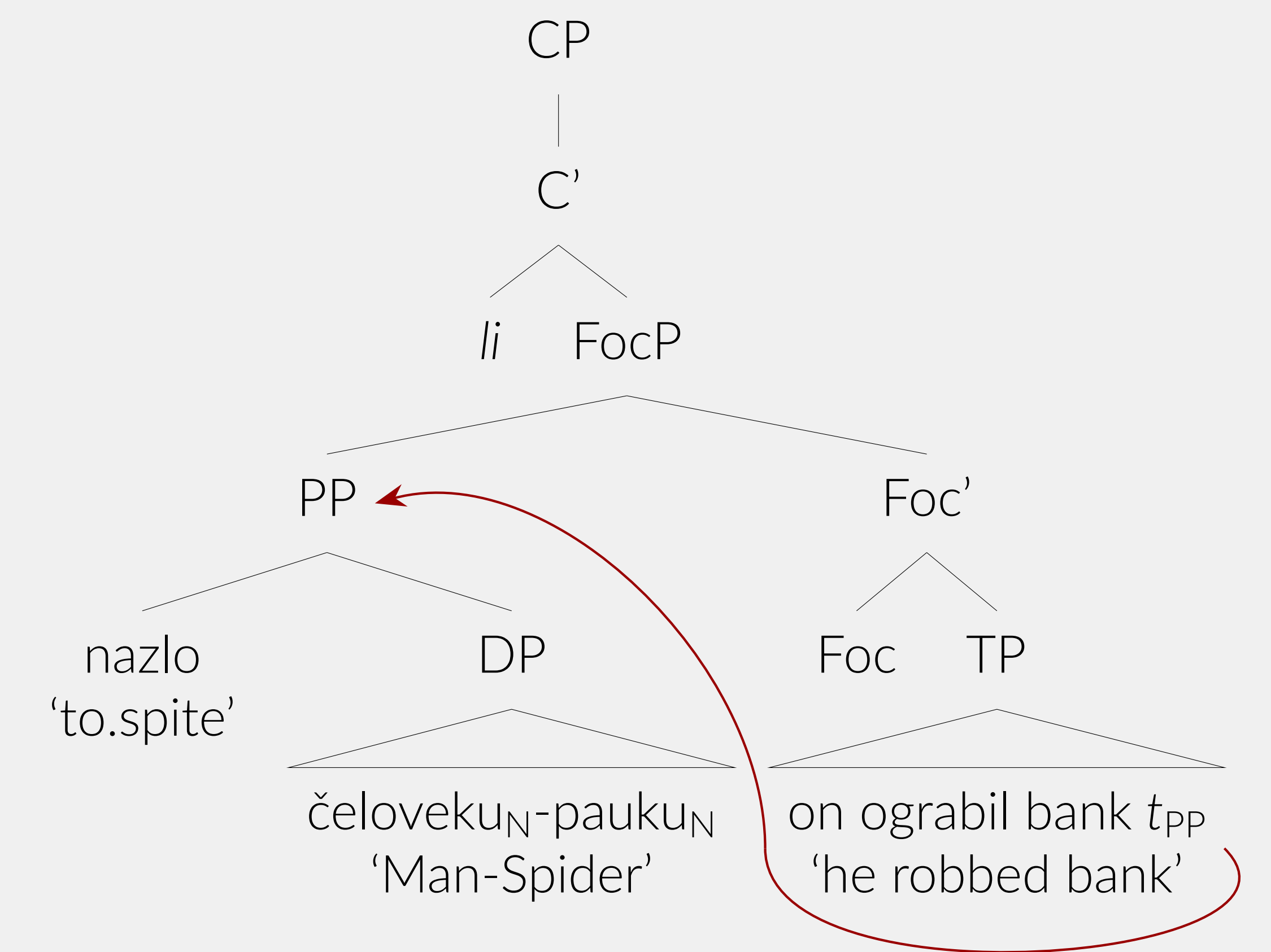
Narrow focus on preposition only:

- (7) **okolo_F**=*li* dereva(*=*li*)
near=q tree.gen=q

Compounds seem to behave similarly:

- (8) divan(=*li*) krovat'(=*li*)
sofa=q bed=q
- (9) nazlo(=*li*) čeloveku(=*li*) pauku(*=*li*)
to.spite=q man.dat=q spider.dat=q

The Syntax



Discussion

→ New evidence shows clitic placement is prosodic

- New data show **syntactic heads** to be unlikely *li*-hosting domains.
- The patterns of *li*-placement in **split PPs** (4–7) align with the prosodic behavior of **compounds** (8).
- Recursive prosodic words allow for a successful **PI-based account** of clitic placement and focus.

→ The (re)proposed syntax is empirically adequate

Focus is not restricted solely to the *li* host (contra [6, 7]).

- (10) Ne znaju, **solnečnoj**=*li* **aktivnost'**ju eto vyzvano. (RNCorpus)
neg know solar=q activity this caused
'I don't know whether it's **solar activity** that this is caused by.'

[7] notes that *li* survives **sluicing**. According to [2, 8] Cs like čto 'that' also do and Foc° can license sluicing in Russian.

- (11) Nina uezžaet, no ja ne znaju, [_{FocP} nadolgo=*li* [_{TP}]].
Nina leaves but I neg know for.long=q
'Nina's leaving, but I don't know if it's for long.'

→ Conclusions

- Our proposal uniquely descriptively adequately accounts for all possible placements of *li*.
- Unlike BCS [1], Russian 2P hosts seem to be conditioned by prosody. This may be useful to consider in other languages.