

## **The Hindi particle *to*: from Grammar to Discourse**

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### Abstract

The Hindi particle *to* may be both a grammatical word (a conjunction), which occurs in the initial position with the meaning “so, then”, and a discursive particle, usually described as an intensive, or vaguely contrastive or emphatic device. Both have been treated as different units, and the discursive particle as several distinct (homonymous) words. The aim of the paper is to show that the diversity of the meanings and functions of the particle may be explained by a common abstract operation, realized in various ways according to the various specific contexts of occurrence, both syntactic and discursive. The first section briefly summarizes and interprets the main functions of grammatical *to*, as a coordinator and as a correlative, before I analyze the discursive particle, either with restricted scope, as a topic marker (section 2), or with wider scope, as an argumentative particle (section 3).

### Key words

Discursive particle, argumentation, topicalization, inter-subjectivity, correlation

## The Hindi particle *to*: from Grammar to Discourse

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The Hindi particle *to* may be both a grammatical word (a conjunction), which occurs in the initial position (“so, then”), and a discursive particle, usually described as an intensive, or vaguely contrastive (McGegor 1972: 141), or emphatic (“emphatic particle” (Kellogg [1856] 1938 : 490). Both have most of the time been considered as different units, and the discursive particle itself as such a disparate collection of meanings (“sure, well, at least, finally, will you, but”, etc.) with no logical connection, that it is usually assumed that discursive *to* covers several distinct (homonymous) words, apart from being itself an homonym of the conjunction.

The aim of the paper is to show that the diversity of the meanings and functions of the particle may be explained by a common abstract operation, realized in various ways according to the various specific contexts of occurrence, both syntactic and enonciative (discursive). This abstract operation, rather than its surface effects, may account for the semantics of the discursive particle, and may also be shown to be indirectly connected with the meaning of the grammatical *to*. It is assumed that polysemy rather than homonymy can account for the various readings of *to*, challenging the assumption of the only reliable studies devoted to *to* until now, Lakshmi Bai (1977) and Michael Shapiro (1999).

I first briefly summarize and interpret the main functions of grammatical *to*, as a coordinator and as a correlative (section 1), then proceed to analyzing the discursive particle, either with restricted scope, cliticizing after the term it has scope over and behaving as a topic marker (section 2), or with wider scope, cliticizing on one of the terms of this larger scope and behaving as an argumentative particle (section 3).

### 1. INITIAL *TO*: CONJUNCTION

The non-clitic *to*, strongly stressed, essentially behaves as a coordinative conjunction (“so, then”), and as a correlative, particularly in the hypothetic system.

#### 1.1. Coordinating *to*

In the first case, *to* operates as a linker between two discursive paragraphs, the second one still remaining in the logical sequence of the first one but adding to it a new element instead of a simple relation of cause-effect or of temporal sequence<sup>1</sup> : it introduces a new phase in a story which is clearly distinct from the previous one in a narrative context like (1a) where a new teacher is looking for a flat, and it often coincides, in written texts, with a new graphic paragraph. Or it introduces a new idea which helps getting out of an aporetic debate in a dialogue like (1b), where four people are wondering whether they should address an old woman lying on the pavement like some dying mendicant:

1a. *principal saip ne mujhe sujhâv diyâ ki âp adhbanî prayogshâlâ ke sTor rûm men jûniyarklârk ke sâth rah lîjîe*

*to main prayogshâlâ ke sTor rûm men pahuncâ aur vahân mainne pâyâ...*

The principal of the college (Sahab) advised me to stay in the store room of the half constructed lab (experimentation room) with the junior clerk.

**So/Then** I went I went to the store room of the lab and when I reached there I found... (what follows is the meeting with the clerk and their decision to go to the market)

*to ham donon Sunaulîdhar ke bâzâr men pahunce, jahân kul do dukânen thîn...*

**So** we reached the bazaar of Sunaulidhar where there were only two shops (what follows is a description of the bazar)

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<sup>1</sup> Two relations expressed respectively by *islie* “therefore” and *phir* “after/then”.

In narrative discourse, *to* then accounts for a scenery shift and opens a new narrative micro sequence, which corresponds to the selection of one of several possible continuation. Each of the two events introduced by *to* validates a proposal previously formulated and brings it the foreground in the narration. They remain in the logical sequence of the previous narrative topic but diverge from it by opening on a new scenario (new sequence or new viewpoint) for which they set the frame, a different frame from the previous one. In a dialogue, *to* articulates a new speech act on to the preceding one by re-orienting the discussion: it presents for instance in (1b) a new possible initiative in an apparently blocked situation, where all the paths opened by the various protagonists are condemned by A, B and C as dead-ends:

- 1b. A - *tum use uThão mat!*  
 B - *uske sãth ulajhnã bekãr*  
 C- *Thĩk kahtã hai.*  
 D - *to isse pũcchen vah kaun hai?*  
 A- Don't lift her !  
 B- Useless to get involved with her problems.  
 C- He is right.  
 D- **Then**, shall we ask her who she is?

Given the the fact that *to* occurs at the cardinal moments in a narration, when a story teller interrupts his tale after a non-final event, the hearer who wishes to know what happens next (and is not predictable) usually maps his expectation by somewhat providing the empty frame for further instantiation, and he does so by using *to* (1c), a *to* which may stand alone for the complete sentence (1d):

- 1c *to kyã huã?*  
*to interr be-aor*  
 And then what happened?  
 1d *to ?*  
 And then ?

Using this *to*-sentence in interrogative contexts when it does not convey the demand for the next event or ending event as in (1d) is potentially polemical (English “so what?”) with underlying aggressive denegation (« what does it prove ? what does it amount to?”): what is at stake in the demand of such rhetorical interrogations is the production of some new element which would carry on with a certain degree of innovating force along the previously given path. Hence the polemical meaning, dismissing the relevance of what has just been said or argued: the speaker A who uses this rhetoric *to* means that there is nothing to make out of what has been said, and that the information or argument given by the speaker B is nil. With *to*, A pretends to provide a frame to further instantiate, in order to mean that it has not been instantiated yet and cannot be:

- 1e A – *Abhĩ tak merã kãm kiyã nahĩn ?*  
 B – *Sir, mere pãs das aur chiTThiyãnãyĩn...*  
 A – **To** ?  
 A – You still have not done my work (what I asked you to do)  
 B – Sir, ten other letters came (I got ten other letters to answer)...  
 A – **So what** ?

### The correlative *to* and the hypothetic system

The other use of the non-clitic *to* is mainly associated with the introduction of the apodosis after a *if* (*‘agar/yadi’*) protasis, in a correlative system typical of Indo-Aryan languages<sup>2</sup>.

- 2a *agar tum merĩ madad karte to main saphal ho jãtã*  
*if you my help do.CTF to I successful become.CFT*  
 If you helped me (had helped me) I would succeed (would have succeed)

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Montaut 1999. Abbreviations : ERG (ergative), ACC (accusative), DAT (dative), PFV (perfective: simple anterior), PFT (perfect), pres (present), CTF (counterfactual), H (honorific), PPFT (pluperfect).

This *to* can also correlate temporal dependent clauses (protasis introduced by *jab* “when”), and morphologically belongs to the paradigm of the correlative system: *jab...tab* “when... then”, *jahân...tahân* “where... there”, *jaisâ...taisâ* “so... so”, etc.<sup>3</sup>.

2b *jab âp log cale gae to mainne usko bulâ liyâ*  
 when 2H people leave go.PFV to 1S.ERG 3S.ACC call take.PFV  
 When you left (then) I called him

The term introducing the first element of the correlative diptic is often omitted in Hindi but never is *to*, required in the hypothetical system even when the protasis is left unexpressed (2c):

2c *yah pahle hî jagî huî to...?*  
 this-one already just awake be.PFV to  
 And if she is already awake?

*To* in the hypothetical system is then a marker of entailment which chains the protasis *p* to the apodosis *q* in the way  $p > q$  (you help me > I succeed), but in such a situation where two divergent paths are available: *p'* (you do not help me) would entail *q'* (I do not succeed). *To* marks the selection of one of these two paths in contrast with the other one in a given situation where the speaker has constructed what Culioli (1990, 1999) calls a fictive landmark, that is, a point of localisation for the predication *q* which is not real (not asserted) but virtual (“if”: if we admit, let us imagine)<sup>4</sup>. It behaves as an indicator of contrastive selection triggering *q* by contrast with *q'*.

### 1.3. A continuity from the uses of *to* as a conjunction to the use of *to* as a topic marker?

While, as a correlative in hypothesis, *to* involves the selection of a path by contrast with another one, in temporal clauses it is required for iterative contexts, which also involve an operation of scanning: the speaker does not point to one single definite occurrence of the process but scans the whole series of occurrences without singling out any definite one. But *to* may also occur in specific punctual contexts like (2b), and differs from the simple temporal conjunction *tab* by the logical entailment superimposed to the bare concomitance of both correlated processes (*tab*), an entailment which sets the apodosis as a new frame depending on to the previous one.

As a coordinative conjunction, it contrasts in a similar way to *uske bând* “after that”: *uske bând* only marks the anteriority of a sequence in relation to the preceding one, whereas *to* is an opening for a new sequence which re-sets the narrative flow and breaks its linearity (new event, contrast, shifting in the scenery or in the viewpoint, foregrounding of a backgrounded element, etc.). This feature of salience, most cultivated by story tellers and children, is correlated with the accentual force and melodic height characteristic of this *to*, often followed by a short pause.

The etymological origin of the word fully accounts for its use as a connector between two clauses in a correlative system: *to* is basically an anaphoric, related to an ancient pronominal basis *t-*, itself inherited from a deictic binary system (distal/proximate) where the *t-* form refers to the non speaker’s sphere, a feature in conformity with its anaphoric role for third person and with its correlative role<sup>5</sup>, both attested early in the Sanskrit and Prakrit pronominal systems. The evolution from *tavat* > *tau* > *to* “so” shows an adverbial form correlated with *yavat* “so”, and similarly the nominative pronoun *tah* in Sanskrit is the origin of modern *to*, which is no longer used as a third person pronoun in Hindi but survives in many Indo-Aryan

<sup>3</sup> The ancient pronominal basis *t-/s-* has been replaced in standard Hindi by *v/u-* (*jaisâ...vaisâ, jahân...vahân, jo...vah*), but still remains in various speeches (cf. supra). *Yadi* ‘si’ is a Sanskrit word borrowed in Hindi (*tatsam* words as they are) whereas the regular phonetic evolution yields *jo/je* which was used up to the 19<sup>th</sup> c. with the meaning “if”.

<sup>4</sup> The notions of fictive landmark (“repère fictive”), entailment (“entraînement”), scanning (“parcours”) and access path (“chemin d’accès”) are borrowed from Culioli (1999).

<sup>5</sup> “Anaphoric” is used here in the traditional meaning (opposed to “cataphoric”) of simple co-reference, without presuming of its government and binding.

regional languages<sup>6</sup>, while the two forms of the Sanskrit third person pronoun *t-* and *s-* survive in proverbial formulas retained in modern Hindi<sup>7</sup>. Modern Hindi reconstructed the distal and anaphoric paradigm on a *v-/u-* basis inherited from an old deictic by analogy with *iyam/esham* > *yah*. The adverbial form of the pronoun has been used as soon as Sanskrit as a coordinator and the anaphoric pronoun in *t-* is well attested as a correlator in all Indo-Aryan languages. In Hindi *to* is specifically required as a correlator in the conditional system, but the older form in *s-* (*so*) was both used in the relative and conditional systems until quite recently, whereas *so* is still a coordinator with similar meanings as *to*. This double function of *to* supports the claim that coordinating and subordinating systems should not be considered as radically opposed, as shown by numerous recent studies (Brill & Rebuschi 2006, Haspelmath 2004: 3-39)

What is less expected is the shift from correlative to discursive particle. It is however a well-known evolution that conditional markers can develop into topic markers: since the famous paper of Haiman (1978) significantly entitled “Conditionals are topics”, typology has largely confirmed the affinity of conditional markers and topics (Haspelmath 2008: 1005 sq): the conditional clause (protasis) behaves as the frame on which will bear the following predication in the apodosis. Since in Hindi the correlator (introducing the apodosis) represents the end part (right position) of the protasis in truncated systems (cf. ex 2d), it is all the more understandable that it came to be used as a topic marker, cliticized at the right of the topicalized term (Montaut 2012).

Such a conclusion obviously challenges the assumption of Shapiro who explicitly doubts that the correlative *to* and the enclitic *to* can “be ever shown to have a common origin, either etymologically or functionally” (1999: 187). Shapiro’s study is however the only one attempting to view together the various meanings and functions of *to* trying to understand the behaviour of what he calls the enclitic “quasi postpositional” *to* (1999: 183sq) “within broad stretches of discourse”. But the treatment of this enclitic does not relate its position in the phrase and clause with its scope, a fundamental feature when discursive particles are at stake: when *to* has scope on the initial phrase, it makes it a topic, which can be argumentative (section 2), whereas when it has a wider scope, the whole sentence is made argumentative (section 3).

## 2. *To* as a topic particle

When the particle *to* is a clitic which forms a single accentual word with the term at its left, a word which can always be followed by a brief pause, it behaves mostly as a topic marker.

3a. *âjkal to âp akele hain*  
 nowadays *to* you alone are  
 These days, you are alone

3b. *ham to apnî beTî se bahut pyâr karte hain*  
 we *to* refl daughter to much love do pres  
 (As for) we, we love our daughter very much

In (3a) and (3b), the intonation shows an ascending tone on *to* which bears the accent in the ‘word’ *ham to* which is the topic, while the remaining of the clause (comment) is intoned in a linear way (varying according to the types of statements).

Before presenting the particularities of its behaviour, I will first define what will be henceforth considered a topic, because the notion, although frequently used, is not always defined according to the same criteria (Guimier 1999), if it is defined.

<sup>6</sup> The *t-* basis is one of the forms of the pronominal paradigm in Sanskrit (occurring in the feminine and neutral and oblique cases), a *s-* basis occurring in the masculine nominative. It survives in Marathi for instance (*to* “he”, feminine *ti* / *tyâ* “she”).

<sup>7</sup> For instance *tahân* “there” the old correlative of *vahân* (like modern *tab* “then” as a correlative for *jab*), *tispar* may still occur for *ispar*, and the nominative form *so*, from the Sanskrit masculine singular is the old correlative for *jo*: *jo honâ thâ*, *so huâ* : lit. “what had to happened that happened”. Adverbialized, *so* retains, in a slightly archaic register, the meanings of *to* 1.

## 2.1. Definition of the topic

The definition which follows is borrowed from Bonnot (1990) and Guimier (1999), who use exclusively formal criteria and discard psychological criteria. According to them, a topic is a constituent, whatever its category, placed in the initial position, which may be separated from the rest of the statement by a pause, and which is marked by a particular intoneme, varying according to the sentence modality (assertion, interrogation, exclamation), for instance a higher tone in the region of the stressed syllable in assertive statements. The remaining part of the statement is the comment and bears the sentence stress. The function of the topic is to provide for the frame of the statement; the predication is formulated within the frame set up by the topic. At the semantic level, the topic often but not always coincides with what Chafe (1976) identifies as “given” (belonging to those elements that are supposed by the speaker to be present in the mind of the hearer) or with what he identifies as “known”, distinct from the “given” (belonging to the body of general knowledge supposed by the speaker to be shared by the hearer). An adverbial expression of time or place for instance may be topicalized without being given or known (3a), by its mere vocation to provide for a frame of what is going to be predicated. A first person pronoun is also fit for being a topic because it is the more salient entity in the dialogue interplay.

In Hindi the topic does not require a specific morphological marker as it usually does in “topic prominent” languages: it is essentially marked by its position, always initial, and by the possibility of marking a pause after the topicalized expression. A statement in Hindi can have no topic and be entirely formed by a ‘comment’ or rather rhematic content (what is predicated). The statement *do baj gae* “it is two o clock” for instance is a strictly factual information with no topic, as well as

*mainne kitâb mez par rakhî thî*  
 “I had put the book on the table”.

Since the topic is in the first position, and since Hindi has a rigid word order SOV, the shifting of a term in the first position is enough to make it a topic. By basic word order, I mean, according to Greenberg, that the unmarked statements (with no specific syntactic or discursive constraints) are sequentially organized in a given order, SOV in the matter. As for rigid SOV order, again according to Greenberg, it means that goal complements precede the main verb, that is to say, volitional statements like “I want to go” follow the head final rule<sup>8</sup>. The fact that all the orderings are possible in Hindi without adding any morphological material (4) has prompted some scholars to claim Hindi as a free order language (Mohanani 1994) but the very use of the term “scrambling” suggests that one tacitly admits for some unmarked or more basic word order. Besides, it is well known that rigid head final languages such as Turkish do allow alternative orders and such is the case in Hindi which allows all the six possible orders (SOV, SVO, OVS, OSV, VSO, VOS) for a statement with two participants and a predicate (4), but only the first one is neutral, each of the five others requiring a specific context:

4a. *laRke ne laRkî ko mârâ*  
 boy ERG girl ACC beat-PFV  
 The boy has beaten the girl /A boy has beaten a girl

4b. *laRkî ko laRke ne mârâ*  
 girl ACC boy ERG beat-PFV  
 It is the boy who has beaten the girl (with a slight pause after the first constituent and no stress on the second one: the girl, the boy has beaten her)

4c. *laRkî ko mârâ laRke ne*  
 girl ACC beat-PFV boy ERG

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<sup>8</sup> The basic clause, providing for basic order, is the clause on which further transformations apply (which can yield all type of more complex statements) and which do not obey any specific discursive constraints. In non finite clauses for instance, the subject cannot be postponed and the object must remain in immediate preverbal position. All correlates stated by Greenberg for SOV rigid order apply in Hindi basic clauses.

He has beaten the girl, the boy (a strong accent on the first constituent makes it a focus: it is the girl he has beaten, the boy)<sup>9</sup>

4d. *mârâ laRke ne laRkî ko*  
 beat-PFV boy ERG girl ACC  
 He has beaten her, the boy, the girl

(4b) for instance, in contrast with unmarked (4a) suggests that the girl is the given element in a context of a fight between youngsters and that the boy is focalized (pre-verbal position is the ordinary position of the focus)<sup>10</sup>: regarding the girl, what is predicated is that this is the boy (and not someone else) who has beaten her<sup>11</sup>.

One of the reasons why it is often felt that scrambling results in adding definiteness to all constituents in Hindi<sup>12</sup>, is that a term shifted to the initial position is potentially a topic and a topic is necessarily definite (on the other hand, a term shifted to the preverbal position is focalized and potentially definite). The object in (5b) is necessarily definite because, among other reasons, it is a topic, whereas in (5a) it may be indefinite:

5a. *sunâr ne laRkî ko hâr bhejâ*  
 jeweller ERG girl DAT necklace sent  
 The/?a jeweller sent the/a necklace to the/a girl

5b. *hâr sunâr ne laRkî ko bhejâ*  
 necklace jeweller erg girl DAT sent  
 The jeweller sent the/\*a necklace to the girl<sup>13</sup>

## 2.2. *To* and the topicalized term: construction of a topic by contrast

As a topic particle, *to* may cliticize to adverbs or obliques with adverbial function which have *per se* a vocation to provide the frame for the statement and then to act as topics (*cf.* 3a) as well as to any type of argument (always after the casual mark or postposition), to attributes, and to predicates.

The order within the *to*-topicalized phrase is the following: Determiner Adjective Noun Postposition *to*. *To* is then final in the group it has scope over (henceforth its scope) and the phrasal accent falls on *to*. Since the canonical order is rigidly SOV, the occurrence of the topic marker *to* after a term other than the subject involves a non-canonical order (but the reverse is not true), whose discursive properties combine with the meaning of *to* so as to yield statements intuitively understood as argumentative: one intuitively feels that such statements

<sup>9</sup> Example of a focalized subject in the preverbal position in a transitive statement, where the object, even fronted, is not part of the given/known and not a topic (speaker blaming addressee for not seeing correctly):

*ainak tîne lagâ rakhî hai yâ mainne?*  
 glasses 2S.ERG place hold PFT or 1S.ERG “it is you or me who is wearing glasses?”

(4b) can be made more explicitly an object focalizing statement by adding a contrastive focus: *kisî jânvar ko nahîn, laRkî ko mârâ laRke ne*, “it is not a vulgar animal, it is a girl that he has beaten, the boy”.

<sup>10</sup> Except of course for the subject in intransitive sentences, whose unmarked position is immediately preverbal and not necessarily topic, and the object in transitive sentence, preverbal and not necessarily focused.

<sup>11</sup> If uttered without pause after the first constituent (4c) makes “the boy” a delayed information or post comment (or, in Chafe’s terminology, an “antitopic”), and if uttered with a pause after the first constituent it makes it a topic (“the girl”) with “the boy” as a post comment. (4d) brings the predicate in the topic position (‘as for the beating’, etc.).

<sup>12</sup> Dvivedi (1994) has however shown that it is not always the case, as also evidenced by the examples in note 9 above.

<sup>13</sup> Example from Mohanan & Mohanan (1994 : 169). In fact, *hâr* “necklace” is topicalized in (5b) with a possible pause after *hâr*, and the literal translation would rather be “the necklace, the jeweller sent it to the girl” (“to a girl” would correspond to Hindi *kisî laRkî ko*, INDEF girl DAT).

express the utterer's claim as more or less opposing the hearer's one<sup>14</sup>. I will try here to rationalize these intuitions.

Practically all lexical categories may be topicalized by *to* in all syntactic functions: the subject in (3b) or the adverbial complement in (3a), in statements where topicalization does not require scrambling. In statements with alternative orders, any constituent may be topicalized by fronting it, and be added the particle *to*: the object in (6), the beneficiary in (7), the complement of comparative in (8), the attribute in (9), the verb in (10). Besides nouns, adjectives and verbs, numerals too can be *to*-topicalized (11).

6. *ye lo! hindî kî kitâb to tumhen kal dîngî*  
 these take! Hindi of book to 2.DAT tomorrow will give  
 Take these! The Hindi book, I will give it to you tomorrow
7. *mujhe to usne kuch nahîn diyâ*  
 1S.DAT to 3S.ERG something NEG gave  
 (But) to me (I, as far as I am concerned) she has not given me anything
8. *TyûTar se to kâmpyûTar better*  
 tutor than to computer better  
 Rather than a tutor, a computer would be better;
9. *besharam to âp log hain!*  
 shameless to vous people are  
 Shameless yourselves!
10. *samajhtâ to shâyad main bhî nahîn*  
 understand.PRES to maybe 1S too NEG  
 (Understand / well), maybe I myself don't understand either
11. *în to mujhe nazar â rahî hain*  
 three to 1S.DAT look come PROGR PRES  
 There are (however) three of them I can see

Since a topic does not require *to* for behaving as such, since position and accentual marks identifying the term as a topic (*cf. supra*), it must be hypothesized that *to* constructs a particular kind of topic: as will be shown this operation cannot be dissociated from the interaction between two speakers, as tentatively indicated by the bracketed terms. Marked topics (+*to*) are intuitively perceived as more emphatic or contrastive than unmarked topics (position only). The marker *to* can indeed be attached either to a term in contrast with another term belonging to the same paradigm in the previous context, or it can be attached to the same term as previously uttered, in which case it re-qualifies the term in a different viewpoint than the one previously expressed (notions present in Shapiro's study in the form of "reiteration" for "sustaining" a previous interpretation, or "contradistinction to a parallel form that is operative in the discourse at hand" (1999: 182-3).

### 2.2.1. *To* construing the topic as contrasting with other elements belonging to the same paradigm

Examples (3a), (3b), (6), (7), (11) illustrate this type of operation. (3a) makes the temporal frame a contrastive topic, with "nowadays" implicitly suggesting that before or after the situation was/will be different: in the narrative, it corresponds to the moment B gets up to take leave and the speaker A gives the answer in (3a), suggesting that he should stay some more since "he is alone", and implicitly there is nobody home waiting for him these days (*âjkal to*),

<sup>14</sup> In Mc Gregor for instance (1972 : 141), the clitic form is deemed to convey either insistence or a vague contrast : « it suggests that the given sentence or clause expresses an idea at variance in some way with what precedes (either the content of a locution, an unexpressed thought or an action), or modifying it in some way". Lakshmi Bai (1977 : 69) had an intuition of the topicalizing role of the particle (in spite of the term 'focus'):: « though *to* can be used in a discourse only with what is 'given', the speaker has the freedom to select any one of the candidates from a set of 'given' elements as a "focus of contrast". It is precisely this "focus of contrast" which is marked with *to*". But without a precise analysis of the various topic properties, this intuition gets confused with the general demonstration of the author who claims that *to* is an assertion particle. Shapiro (1999) insists more on the "concessive meaning" in a discourse related interpretation. !



as opposed to last week or next week for instance. *To* makes the adverb a topic by actualizing the relation which the other terms of the same paradigm could have had with the comment: usually / at other times you are not free, the fact that you are free *nowadays* represents an occasion that you should not miss. The answer B gives to A is the following: “I am alone/alone, sure I am, but I still must absolutely be back home” (*cf. infra ex. 17*) makes it clear that he has well interpreted the exceptional character given by A to the topicalized “nowadays” and A’s request to make good use of this opportunity, since he has to give strong arguments (“absolutely”) to dismiss the invitation to stay. In (3b), the statement “we-*to* love our daughter a lot” comes at the end of a long conversation between parents and daughter, where the mother tries to justify the fact she is going to undergo a test in order to know the baby’s sex, and the girl tells her about female infanticides by parents who wish to know the sex before delivery to get rid of girls. The subject “we” in (3b), the topic in the mother’s answer, is then contrasted to those parents who dislike their daughters, since they undergo medical pre-birth tests in order to keep only boys. In this statement, *to*, which may be glossed by “we on the contrary, as for us however / we at any rate”, would have no meaning in a context where these medical tests would aim at selecting girls to keep them. Reversely, in the above context of (3b), the absence of *to* would make the statement irrelevant, because this declaration of parental love is too natural to be informative and simply asserted: it is relevant only for the intended distinction between parents who use medical tests to avoid girls, and “we”.

In (3a) the other elements of the paradigm in contrast with the topicalized adverb are implicit, in (3b) they are present in a diffuse way during the long discussion previous to (3b). In (6), they are explicit in the immediate previous context: “give me your school books for an hour or two, I forgot mine in the college”. The particle *to* here builds a sub-class of what cannot be borrowed in contrast with the class of what can be borrowed within the paradigm of school books.

Even in the absence of explicit terms allowing for the representation of the paradigm to which the topicalized term belongs, while differing from its other terms, the NP with topicalizing *to* still appears as distinct from other NPs from the same class:

a    *yah to Thîk hai*  
       this *to* right is                      This is good

If uttered with heavy stress on *to*, and possible pause after it<sup>15</sup>, (a) involves other selectable elements that the speaker discards, and similarly (b) implicitly suggests that there are other things that we don’t know, and that the one mentioned is the only significant one. Hence the particular salience (this is what is important, what is to the point):

b            *yah to ham jânte nahîn*  
               this **to** we      know.PRES      NEG  
               This we don’t know

*To* here acts as a trigger for making the object special in relation to the class of terms which could be substituted for it (what can be borrowed, what is not right, etc.). A sequence involving a contrastive content would endow with a very different meaning (*cf. infra 3.1*).

In example (7) -- “to me she gave nothing”--, the possible substitutable terms in the paradigm out of which *mujhe* “I” is selected contrastively are implicit: A’s statement “To me *to*, she has not given anything” occurs as an answer to the B’s description of a character C as beaming with generosity. A reacts by a self-representation, in a topic position, as somebody who has never benefited from C’s generosity, contrary to the other members of the paradigm of C’s supposed beneficiaries. The operation does not consist in foregrounding a new term (for the matter “I”) in a topic position, as was the case in (3a), but in constructing this term as a topic in contrast with the implicit paradigm of the other terms which could have occurred in the same place within the frame of the representation of “she” as a very generous person. Even if *to* has a limited scope (over *mujhe* “I”), its use here amounts to re-qualify the previous representation of C as a donator implicitly universal in order to contest the relevance of this representation. Its argumentative meaning derives from its basic function, which consists in constructing its scope as a contrastive topic.

<sup>15</sup> More frequently, with no pause and large scope : *cf. infra* (ex. 20 and footnote 20).

A still more distinctly polemical meaning appears in (11) where the topicalized numeral *tîn* “three” is followed by *to*. The speaker A, a Muslim, in a train, answers a question from B, a Hindu (“do you see other women in this compartment?”) which does not really aim at getting an information, since B only seeks to blame his wife for her stupidity in not going and sit in the “ladies compartment” reserved for females. B’s rhetorical question aims at having his judgment on his wife cautioned by the other travellers. Example (12a) gives the context for (11) *supra*:

12a B- *koî aur aurat bhî hai baiThî huî mardâne Dabbe men ?*

B- Is there even another woman sitting in the men’s compartment ?

A - *tîn to mujhe nazar â rahî hain*

A- There are three (you can’t deny) I can see

The term *tîn* “three” is presented by *to* as contrasting with the number presupposed by B’s rhetoric, zero (none would be so stupid as not to travel in the ladies compartment). When A answers that he sees three of them, he emphasizes the dishonesty of B in the count (you want us to believe that there are none but I can see three), and so dismisses his rhetoric: hence the polemical interpretation of *to* here, followed by a hot discussion between both A and B. If A had answered by a topicalized “I”-*to*, contrasting then his own vision to B’s vision, he would simply have opposed his own count to B’s count, with a milder polemical impact (we are placed differently, we don’t see the same things, you got wrong because you do not count properly whereas I do, etc.):

12b *mujhe to tîn nazar â rahî hain*

IS.DAT *to* three look come PROG PRES

As for me I (But if you ask me) I can see three of them

And if he had simply uttered (12c) without the particle *to*, the statement would have meant that A interprets B’s question as a real question, devoid of polemic undertones, to which A could give a factual answer. This type of answer, given the context, is for the least strange, whereas it is natural after a real question like “how many of them do you see?”

12c *mujhe tîn nazar â rahî hain*

IS.DAT three look come PROGR PRES

I can see three of them

In the context of a quite aggressive discussion between Hindu and Muslim travellers just before Partition between India and Pakistan, (11) has the expected impact of a very polemic statement: it discards the husband’s rhetoric about the stupidity of his wife (C), consequently she gets over her own shyness to protest and then the husband (B) overtly insults her, finding no longer escape in pseudo-rhetorical arguments since they have been torn out by (11):

13 C -*zanâne Dabbe men koî bandâ na pardâ! main kaise baiTh jâtî*

B - *tû chup karegî ki nahîn? Bevakûf!*

C- There is not a soul in the ladies compartment! How could I sit there?

B- Will you shut up (or not)? Idiot!

A’s intervention was indeed aimed at acting on B rather than at checking a number, as shown by (13), so that B stops preventing his wife from speaking. A sought to contest the Hindu husband tyranny over his wife, a tyranny he wants to emphasize because he is a Muslim and the Muslims are generally the ones blamed for depriving their women of freedom (of expression as well as dressing). This polemical use of *to*, whose efficiency is immediately perceptible in the dialogue following this sequence (violent quarrel about women’s freedom in both communities), is in conformity with the logic of the particle’s meaning, always more or less argumentative: the term topicalized by *to* implicitly suggests the presence of the other terms which could have been selected instead, and the fact that the question is taken literally (by opposing “three” to “none”) is what exhibits the distorted rhetoric of the previous sentence (“do you see any of them?”) along with its unfair and tyrannical undertones.

### 2.2.2. *To* as a re-qualification of an already mentioned term

The other examples in the series introducing 2.2 do not show contrast with some other element, implicit or explicit, belonging to the same paradigm as the topicalized element, since this element repeats the same term already mentioned (either already in a topic position or not). In (9) for instance, the attribute “shameless” was part of the previous statement in a non topical position, as an attribute. The statement by B in (9), repeated below, answers an accusation by A against B and addressed to C:

:

- |   |    |   |  |
|---|----|---|--|
| 9 | A. | <i>ye log besharam hain</i><br>these people shameless are<br>These people are shameless | B. <i>besharam to âp hain</i><br>shameless to you are<br>Shamelessness is rather yours |
|---|----|---|--|

The attribute *besharam* “shameless”, which belongs to the comment in A’s uttering, is promoted by B in the topic position, but a topic re-qualified in its relation with its referent since the referent is now the opposite group (it is you, not us, who are shameless): the already given term, when topicalized with *to*, is related to a contrastive subject and then redefined as a different type of shamelessness in relation to the new subject. Example (8), although it appears as a contrast within the paradigm of teaching helps (the comparative brings into contrast “tutor” and “computer”), also occurs in a context where the topicalized term “tutor” is the quotation by B from the previous speaker A: A the father of the schoolgirl, has a positive viewpoint on “tutors” whereas B the mother suggests, with the *to* topicalization, an opposite viewpoint. Here is the wider context of (8), interesting since *to* occurs three times, and is used each time in order to re-qualify a term which has been previously introduced by another speaker with a different viewpoint. Two parents are complaining about the Hindi teacher of their daughter and the stupid homework she has required, an essay on hunger:

8. *Mother - itnâ sârâ homework, vah bhî hindî men ! Ab hindî bhî koî subjekt rah gayâ hai, âjkal ke zamâne men ! islie main kahtî hûn iskî hindî kî Madam ko hatvâ do !*  
*BeTî : nahîn Pâpâ, please aisâ mat karnâ ! merî hindî kî Madam bahut kyûT hai. Vah to hindî kî lagtî hî nahîn, bahut smart hai, ekdam !*

Mother : So much of homework! And in Hindi on top of that! As if Hindi was still a real subject in the present days! That’s why I am asking you to have this Hindi Madam (teacher) fired!

Daughter: No, daddy, please, don’t do that! My Hindi teacher is very cute. She (you know) does not look like a Hindi (teacher) at all, she is very smart, absolutely!

(Both parents discuss the question of homework between themselves)

*Father - ham apnî biTiyâ ke lie ek aisâ tutor rakh lenge jo sârâ homework phaTâ-phaT kar diyâ karegâ*

*Mother - tutor se to computer better. (...) Computer yes, tutor no. Never ! Tutor badmâsh hote hain. Always! Merâ ek tutor hotâ thâ, very bad.*

*Father (...) khair, is mâmla ke bâre men main pûchtâch phir kabhî karûngâ. Apnî biTiyâ ke lie to ham lady tutor hî rakhenge*

Father – Well, we will find a tutor for our daughter who will have the homework done in a minute.

Mother – A tutor (what do you think ! /do you realize what a tutor means ?), a computer would do better (...). Computer yes, tutor no. Never ! All tutors are wrecks. I used to have a tutor, very bad

Father - (...) Well, I will look in that matter some other time. (But) For our daughter (at any rate) we will find a lady tutor (not a man)

In the first sequence, the topic *vah to* anaphorizes a previously uttered term, by the same speaker, the daughter, in a subject position (“my Hindi teacher” *merî hindî kî Madam*): this previous term is already discursively and syntactically salient but not topicalized, and it itself quotes a non salient non topic utterance from a different speaker (the mother: “have her Hindi teacher dismissed” *uskî hindî kî madam ko*). The operation triggered by *to* amounts to construct the topic as contrastive, not in relation to the previous occurrence of the referent in the same speaker’s discourse, (“my Hindi teacher”), but to its occurrence in the other

speaker's ("her Hindi teacher"). The first occurrence of the referent in the daughter's talk without *to* ("my Hindi teacher") is associated with a positive qualification as opposed to the mother's viewpoint; but initially the contrast is not taken as relevant *per se*, it only serves as an argument given by the daughter for not dismissing her Hindi teacher. In the next sentence on the contrary, the anaphoric *vah* which brings the same referent in a topic position with *to*, presents the positive qualification as relevant *per se*, and in total opposition with the other speaker's viewpoint. *To* expresses the discrepancy between an initial viewpoint on a class (the type: Hindi teacher, generally considered as dull) and a different viewpoint on a particular individual belong to the class but not fitting the usual qualification. So that there are more than one layer of contrast: *vah to* "(but) she", contrasts a single teacher with other Hindi teachers, the viewpoint of the girl and the view point of her parents on the referent, the general viewpoint on the class and the specific viewpoint of the girl on this specific individual -- whether or not the girl agrees with the general opinion about Hindi teachers dullness is less relevant than opposing the parents viewpoint on the specific teacher. The *to*-topicalized referent is re-qualified here as non-conform to the viewpoint previously expressed by the parents on this single individual, which, incidentally echoes a general opinion on the type.

The second sequence opens with a proposal by the father to substitute a tutor for school classes in Hindi: what is emphasized is the capacities of the tutor (to get quickly rid of homework), the idea of having a tutor is itself taken for granted. And it is this very idea (presupposition) which the mother opposes, by shifting the debate on tutors in general and then to one in particular, her former tutor. Attached to "tutor" in the mother's discourse, *to* makes it a topic which negatively contrasts with the implicitly positive opinion on tutors expressed by the other speaker, the father. Without *to*, the statement would have only expressed a mere comparison between various school props. *To* gets the class of tutors questioned, hence the following shift towards personal (bad) memories.

And when the father tries to come back to the initial question, it is again *to* (third occurrence) that brings back in the foreground the main topic ("our daughter"). Topicalizing "daughter" is a means to go on with the initial problem – how to help the girl – while contrasting the relation girl-tutor with the relation mother-tutor previously commented by the mother: contrary to the previous relation, bad because of male tutors, father's statement qualifies positively the relation daughter-tutor (lady tutor): *to* does not contrast a distinct viewpoint on the daughter, but the relation 'daughter-tutor' with the parallel relation 'pupil-tutor' represented in the viewpoint of previous speaker (mother).

Example (10), repeated below, also exhibits a conflict in viewpoints, on the predicative notion this time: B and C have just expressed that they do not understand what C means (hence asking for more information), whereas C questions his own statement as potentially dubious (regarding his own understanding).

- A – *Main nahîn samajhtî*. 'I don't understand'  
 B – *main bhî nahîn samajhtî*. 'I too don't understand /neither I'  
 C – *samajhtâ to shâyad main bhî nahîn*.  
 C – understand *to* may-be 1S too NEG

Understand, may-be I don't neither/ I also don't understand myself

When *to* is attached to a topicalized predicate, it usually cliticizes on the verbal basis, but it has scope on the whole syntagma as in (14) in the pluperfect, with the past auxiliary after the particle. The example is borrowed from the same context as (11), a dialogue in a train marked by a great tension on the background of increasing violence between religious communities.

14. A – *Kyâ kahâ, bîbî?* What did you said, Bibi /Sister?  
 B – *Kuch nahîn.* 'Nothing.'  
 A – *Kahâ to thâ kuch usne.*  
 say *to* PPFT something 3S.ERG  
 A (à B) – Yes she did say something.

*To* here has scope on the predicate (possible pause after *thâ*) rather than on the whole statement. It makes the predicate, already a topic because of its non canonical first position, a re-phrasing of the previous statement, where the same predicate was in a rhematic position (comment: *kyâ kahâ, Bîbî?* "what did you say Sister?"). But this rephrasing occurs after that

speaker B, the jealous husband, has answered negatively (“nothing”), and the use of *to* by A emphasizes the explicit construction of a different rhematic content (“something”), not only different but radically opposed, hence the polemical effect.

A possible answer could have consisted in an entirely rhematic statement (*hân, usne kuch kahâ thâ*, yes she something said), or with the same order as in (14), with a post-rheme, (*kuch kahâ thâ usne*, something had said she). This type of answer, « yes, she has said something», would have represented a simple contradiction, with no polemical intent. As for the topicalization of the predicate (first position) without the particle *to*, it is practically ruled out in this context, since it sets as a frame the very entity (‘say’) that speaker B has just negated..

But it frequently happens that the particle, although placed after the first segment of the statement, has scope on the whole sentence: in this case *to* re-qualifies the statement as a whole, most of the time with polemic intentions.

### 3. To as a non-topicalizing particle

The formal difference between topicalizing and non topicalizing uses of discursive *to* relies not so much on the position of *to* than on the unavailability of any pause after the term on which the particle cliticizes<sup>16</sup>. Such uses have been commented only in Shapiro and Bai, Shapiro only giving a clear interpretation of what he calls the “concessive” meaning, yet not always distinct from the behaviour of the clause linker *to*<sup>17</sup>.

#### 3.1. Polemic and argumentative functions

##### 3.1.1. *To* as a denier of relevance or as a shifter of relevance

Since polemical meanings are the most visible we may start there in order to grasp the other uses of non topicalizing *to*. The particle *to*, with scope on the whole statement in polemical contexts consists in limiting the relevance of an argument previously proposed by the other speaker, while pretending to confirm it. Rephrase the argument with *to* amounts to giving this argument a limited or factual confirmation in order to better deny its wider or real relevance. In (15) for instance, a statement by B, *to* has scope over a clause P which rephrases the clause P’ previously stated by speaker A, “speak the truth”: no segmentation is possible and *to* receives a light stress (*hî* has a stronger stress), the meaning intended by B amounts to agree with A but only in order to relativize the relevance of A’s argument (sure you are right, but it is not the point).

15. A - *shaharî log baRe beîmân hote hain. Marad kyâ aur aurat kyâ. Hindû kyâ aur musulmân kyâ. Sâre fitne-fasâd shaharon se hî shurû hote hain. kyon bâbâjî, main jhûTh bol rahâ hûn yâ sac ?*

The city folk is all very dishonest. Men and women alike. Hindus and Muslims alike. All communal riots start in cities. Right, Baba-ji ? Do I speak lie or truth ?

*B – bol to tû sac hî rahâ hai,*

Speak to you true just PROGR PRES

*par isse bhî baRâ sac yah hai ki insâf na shahar men na gânv men. Insâf to<sup>18</sup> tum dekh lenâ Pâkastân men bhî nahîn hogâ.*

<sup>16</sup> For instance, *kah to diyâ* (say to gave), *batâ to diyâ* (tell to gave) where « give » is a verbal vector semi-auxiliarized, is not topicalized in the following examples, providing no frame for a further comment and allowing no pause : A. *ye sab dhongê hain ! B - kah to diyâ thâ, ye aslî bhûkhî nahîn*, « A – they are all thugs ! B – I told you so, they are not authentically starving ». C - *lekin merâ essay ? - Batâ to diyâ. Khâlî peT kî pukâr*. « But what for my essay? (on hunger) ? – Didn’t I tell you?. The call of an empty stomach».

<sup>17</sup> For instance the example involving *to sahî... par* “sure/true ... but” (relevant for my subsection 3.1.1) is given as an extra evidence for the general meaning of initial *to* introducing a clause which “invalidates processes of logical entailment that might otherwise be assumed to be valid” (1999: 182).

<sup>18</sup> *To* here is a topic particle which backs the topic of justice (in contrast to previously mentioned: justice in God’s realm =Pakistan) after the digression about cities/villages.

B – You (indeed) speak true (Sure you are right), but there is a bigger truth than that, and this is that justice is neither in cities or villages. Justice, you will see, you won't find it either in Pakistan.

The fronted verb, topicalized (*bol* “tell”), in the strongly marked order V-to-S-O-aux, is not the simple quote of A's utterance, which is unmarked in its ordering (SOV) with the same object (*sac* “truth”). The new mapping within *to... hî* does not simply discard the alternative (“or wrong”) nor does it bring a different viewpoint on the predicate or the clause P, whose validity is not questioned. But if B agrees with A on the initial location of communal violence, he does so in order to signal that this “truth” has little relevance in the present discussion. B implicitly disqualifies A's interpretation of facts, while granting him the confirmation he rhetorically asked for (“right or wrong”: you can't say I am not right). But he grants him such a confirmation (“sure you are right”) only for the sake of shifting from P1 to P2: the real problem is not your being right on the initiation of violence (P1) but to deal with justice (P2). B does not enter in A's rhetoric and *to* marks this refusal to accept A's premises while accepting only the conclusions.

*To* can realize the same operation, with scope on the entire clause, with a subject (16) or an attributive adjective (17):

16. A - *sirf yahî nahîn, âjkal sab hindû bahut Dare hue hain, kyâ mard kyâ aurat. Sab ko din rât yahî Dar lagâ rahtâ hai ki pâkastân ban jâegâ, pâkastân ban jâegâ*

B - *vah to banegâ hî, bâbâjî, lekin yah to qaum hî Darpok hai*

3s *to* will.be.made *hi*, Babaji, but this *to* community *hî* coward is

A – It is not the only thing, nowadays all Hindus are afraid, men and women alike. All are afraid day and night that Pakistan will be made (a separate country), Pakistan will be made.

B – It will be made for sure, Babaji, but the thing is, this community-*to* is real coward

In (16), again in the context of a train trip just before Indo-Pakistan Partition, Muslim passengers are commenting the anxious muteness of their Hindu neighbours, particularly a lady. B's answer to A not only promotes the clause he quotes, previously stated as the potential object of a fear, to the syntactic status of a main clause, giving it reality, but it denies to it any relevance in the discussion: without *to*, a continuation with *lekin* “but” is hardly natural, like in (15), and the second sentence, again under the scope of *to... hî*, is meant to bring to the foreground a distinct argument, diverging from A's line of argumentation. After an adversative conjunction, when *to* does not topicalize a term<sup>19</sup>, it makes the clause a counter-argument: the Hindus are not afraid because of the creation of Pakistan but their very nature is to fear everything, a proposal which enables A to re-state the discussion in terms of hatred towards the other. In both cases *to* triggers a strategic shift in the argumentation.

Similarly, (17) which is the continuation of (3a) *supra*, displays the same structure as (16), with a first clause (underlined) whose content is qualified by B as weakly relevant, and a second adversative clause whose content is qualified by B as crucially relevant, in contradiction to A's request:

17A - <i>âjkal to</i> <i>âp akele hain...</i>	B	- <u><i>akelâ to hîn</i></u> , <i>lekin ghar to jânâ hî hai</i>
nowadays <i>to</i> you alone are...		- alone <i>to</i> am but house <i>to</i> go <i>hi</i> is
- These days you are alone...		- Sure I am alone, but I really must go home

In the first (underlined) clause of B's answer, the absence of *to* would result in a rather strange meaning in the context, since A was not asking for a confirmation but was using the argument to convince B to stay longer. In B's second sentence, *to... hî* in an adversative clause makes the clause a crucially relevant argument in countering A's offer.

The same values similarly chained in argumentation (first, denial of relevance, then, production of a final argument coming back to the main point for the speaker) may be obtained even without the adversative conjunction, as seen in (18) in the context of the difficult homework given by the Hindi teacher (*cf.* example 8), the schoolgirl seeks help from her father who gives her rather useless tips.

<sup>19</sup> Since neither the determiner *yah* “this” nor the noun *qaum* “community” is topicalized here.

18. *yah to Thîk hai Pâpâ, merâ esay to likhnâ hî likhnâ hai*  
 this to fine is Papa, my essay to write just write is  
 All that is fine, Papa (P1) (but) I have my essay to write absolutely<sup>20</sup>

### 3.1.2 *To* makes P a crucial discursive argument

Discursive cruciality is the meaning of *to* in clauses P2 of examples (16)-(18). Although apparently opposed to the meaning of *to* in P1 of the same examples (relevance denial), it nonetheless participates in a similar operation : speaker A provides speaker B a new element in the discussion, an element speaker had either not thought of or that had not with to consider. What is at stake is the promotion of the propositional content of P within a perspective opposed to A's views, for whom P is either not relevant or not conceivable. Such an operation is then symmetrical to the relevance denial, where P was relevant for speaker A and not for speaker B. When this operation occurs in non adversative contexts (of the type 'sure, but'), the salience intuitively perceived in *to*-statements is due to the fact that such statements are constructed in opposition a previous implicit assumption of A speaker. Hence their objection-like character instead of simple assertions. The series of answers given by Lakshmi Bai (1977) to the suggestion 'let us go and have a tea' can be explained in this way:

- 19a *mere pâs to bas das paise hain*  
 1S.GEN at to only ten paise are  
 I have only ten paise with me (not enough)
- 19b *kanTîn to band ho gayâ hogâ abhî*  
 cantine to closed be went PRESUMPTIVE just.now  
 The cantine must be closed by now
- 19c *abhî to tîn nahîn baje hain*  
 now.just to three NEG ring PFT  
 It is not yet three o'clock (too early)
- 19d *das minaT to kâm karne do bhât*  
 ten minutes to work do let brother  
 Let us work ten minutes more, brother

According to Lakshmi Bai, (19a-d) each represent the various alternatives among which the speaker selects one, and *to* is an assertive particle. But in fact, the speaker who selects (19a) does not eliminate (19b-d) in order to retain only (19a), nor does he only make a selection within a wider paradigm of substitutable clauses. But there is a distinctive "assertive" force rightly pointed by the author. This 'assertive force' is the result of the inter-subjective relation involved in the whole series as an answer to a proposal which the speaker wishes to discard. Speaker A in (19a) signals to speaker B (let us have some tea) something of which B was not aware (not enough money, closing time, unfinished work), which makes it difficult to obey the request and therefore acts as an indirect objection or refusal. *To* here behaves as a request for taking into account what speakers A qualifies as a crucial argument that has been neglected by B. Hence the possible translations opening with "but you know", "the problem is", "but"...

For this reason it can enter various polemical interactions since it allows the speaker to implicitly attribute to the other fictive viewpoints or back thoughts (you had not thought of that, you should think of it).

20. *Father - merâ lâl sab se acche skûl men paRhegâ*  
 my treasure all than good school in will.study

<sup>20</sup> When the contrastive clause P2 does not display *to* the adversative conjunction is required (with less argumentative force than with *to*):

*yah to Thîk hai ki bhûkh khâlî peT kî pukâr hai,*  
 this to OK is that hunger empty belly of call is  
*lekin savâl uThî hai peT khâlî huâ kyon...*  
 but question rises belly empty was why  
 Sure it's true that hunger is the call of the empty stomach, but the question if why is the stomach empty...

*Mother - yah lâl      merâ bhî      to hogâ*  
 - this treasure mine too      to will.be

A. Father – My little treasure (son) will study in the best school

B. Mother - (don't ever forget) that this little treasure will be mine too

*To* in (20) has scope on the whole clause which represents a possessive relation: this possession (incidentally claimed by A the father in a quite neutral way: “my son”) is re-claimed by B the mother as non exclusively paternal (“mine too”). In using *to*, B implicitly imputes to the father the symmetrical possessive relation (exclusively mine: *vah merâ hî hogâ*) whereas in reality A has not claimed his possession as exclusive and has simply referred to his son (*merâ lâl*). Using *to* in such an exchange amounts to attribute to B (and to blame B for) a possessive instinct that he has not expressed, but against which A can express hers. Hence the implicit aggressiveness of B's statement, and a possible answer like “who told you it won't be, where did you pick up this stupid idea that I will appropriate the baby, I never said it was mine only”, etc. would question this projected interpretation in order to restore the truth<sup>21</sup>. *To* here echoes the implicit construction by B of a fictive relation attributed to A and objected by B within a polemical frame.

When the discourse particle *to* has scope on a proposal already stated by a previous speaker, it denies it full (or any) relevance. When it has scope on a proposal which is new, it builds the relevance of this new P in contradiction with what the speaker thinks is the viewpoint of the other speaker.

### 3.2 Preverbal *to* in questions : asking for confirmation

This use of *to* in questions<sup>22</sup> is evidenced in examples (21) à (23):

21. *biTiyâ, in donon ne      pîche kôî      gaRbaR to nahîn      kiyâ ?*  
 daughter, these two ERG      behind some mess *to* NEG      do.PFV  
 Daughter, (let's hope) these two have not messed up things over there?

22. *tûjhe kuch      bacâ-khucâ      to      milâ?*  
 2.DAT something saved-remaining *to* get.PFV  
 So finally you did manage to get some leftovers?

23. *âp acche to hain ?*  
 you well *to* are  
 (I hope) you are fine?

The context for (21) and (22) is the following: a group of hungry beggars have come to the house of rich bourgeois and ask for food, the house wife and the elder beggars start quarrelling while two of the younger beggars accompanied by the daughter of the house sneak into the kitchen at the rear. The house wife, who has noticed the absence of these two, but did not want to leave the living room for fear of theft, asks her daughter about them when they come back from the kitchen (21). This statement, which could be glossed by “let's hope that nothing wrong happened”, “don't tell me that something wrong happened”, occurs on the background of the speaker's strong fear that a mess occurred in the kitchen, since she thinks the beggars can do anything. Similarly (22), addressed by the old mendicant woman to the young mendicant girl back from the kitchen, occurs on the background of the speaker's strong expectation that they could find something to eat there. In both cases, the statement echoes a positive valuation of the propositional content (not to mess, get leftovers): P is uttered within a teleonomical frame or intention aiming at a goal, and reaching this goal is presented as probable yet not certain (one may still fear that such is not the case, despite of our wish: non P

<sup>21</sup> Without *to* the statement, which is perceived as less aggressive (and less natural too), could receive an answer such as “of course my dear”? Without *bhî*, and with *to* cliticized on *merâ* “mine”, the statement would amount to a quasi denial of A's fatherhood (mine, not yours).

<sup>22</sup> Which differ from the standard pattern used in asking for confirmation, as for instance “you will leave tomorrow, won't you?” (with final *na*). The presence of *to* in such questions as (21) goes against Lakshmi Bai's thesis according to which the assertive *to* can not occur in questions other than rhetorical (1977: 70), unless we consider (21-23) as rhetorical questions.



is to be feared). The statement amounts to check whether P has been realized in conformity with the speaker's expectation: *to* is responsible for this operation which constructs the statement as checking one's expectations regarding a given event, against the (weak) possibility of that not being the case. Such expectations are presented as the "good thing" to hope for, and then must appear as positively marked: not to mess the kitchen is positive, get something to eat is positive. Without this positive marking, *to* won't occur<sup>23</sup>.

As for (23), considered by McGregor as idiomatic and insistent<sup>24</sup>, it does not occur in the same contexts as the simple *to*-less formula "are you fine?" (*âp acche hain?*). The question is natural for instance when the speaker has not seen the person he greets in this way for a long time, or has had no news (when phoning for instance), or whom he thinks might not be so well. It is aimed at obtaining a confirmation that, yes, hopefully, he is fine, barring the access to the reverse eventuality. The propositional content P is then framed into a mild opposition, not in relation to the hearer's viewpoint, but to the probability of non P feared by the speaker.

### 3.3. Final *To*: winning over the other's reluctance

In a postverbal position, mostly after an imperative verb, the particle *to* acquires a highly specific meaning: Lakshmi Bai (1977: 73) for instance makes it a "request particle", with hardly any relation to the other meanings of *to* and a quasi homonym of the "assertive" particle. Most speakers explain it as a mark of extra emphasis on the order given.

24. *baiThie to !*

sit.IMPER.H *to*

Please do sit down! / Why don't you sit down? (don't hesitate, don't leave so soon, don't remain standing, you can stay for five minutes)

25. *batâo to !*

tell.IMPER.NON-H *to*

But tell it! Come on, why don't you tell? Will you finally tell it? (don't retain the information)

The first example (24) has become a quite idiomatic polite way of welcoming (which implies that the visitor dares not sit and waits for being asked to). Although it is only slightly distinct from the same statement without *to*, it still retains something of the addressee's reluctance as perceived or inferred by the speaker (hence the translations above), such behaviour being almost part of politeness and etiquette. Statement (25) on the contrary strongly differs from its counterpart without *to* and requires a specific context: it echoes a strong reluctance on the part of the addressee, or at least the speaker's anticipation of such reluctance. Example (26) shows concrete evidence of B's reluctance, whereas in (27) the reluctance rather relates to B's inability (or lack of efforts) than to his unwillingness:

26. A - *â !*

B - *ân...*

A - *idhar â!*

B - *û hûn...*

C - *is buddhû ko ek bâr men bâr mân lene kî âdat nahîn.*

A - *are â to!*

- Hey come.IMPER *to*

A - Come!

B - Ya...

A - Come here !

B - Ok ok...

C - This idiot is not used to obey at the first time.

A - Hey you, you do come! / what are you waiting for! / will you move your ass?

<sup>23</sup> ... \**koî gaRbaR to kiyâ hai?*, as well as \**bacâ khucâ to nahîn milâ?* is ruled out, except with the very strange presupposition that creating a mess, and not finding anything to eat is seen as a positive thing.

<sup>24</sup> No other example is given of this type of emphasis in McGregor's *Grammar*.

When A utters the last sentence (with *to*), he has already ordered B twice to come, without *to*, and this order has not yet been fulfilled. Only in the third utterance of the same order, once fully aware of B's reluctant behaviour, A uses *to* after the order verb. The intuitive perception of insistence results in reality from the feature 'unwillingness' imputed by A to B, and this imputation in (27) is not born by the previous context although it is made clear in the following context:

27. A - *kis point ko ? kuch hamen bhî to batâo?*<sup>25</sup>  
 what point ACC ? something 1P.DAT too to tell.SUBJ?

B - *batâ to rahâ hûn, my darling!*<sup>26</sup> *tum suno! samjho to!* (...)  
 tell to progr pres-1 my darling! 2 listen! understand to

A - *darling, tumhârâ dimâg hil rahâ hai.*  
 darling your brain shakes prog pres

B- *tum nahîn samjhogî...*  
 2 NEG understand.FUT...

A – Which point? Couldn't you tell us too (we too we would like to know)?

B – I keep telling you, my darling! You, listen! You could at least try to understand ! (long crooked explanations follow).

A – My darling, are you feeling alright (have you lost your mind)?

B - You won't (even try to) understand...

Far from a mere emphasis, stylistically optional, such examples show that the particle *to* operates systematically in constructing P as countering a non-P imputed to the addressee. With *to*, an order then conjures up the risk of non reaching its goal, and at the same time emphasizes the addressee's reluctant behaviour<sup>27</sup>. Here again, the meaning of *to* stems from contrastive and even conflicting attitudes of both partners. Phrasal *Nahîn* "No" in answers to P, when followed by *to* (*Nahîn to*) similarly acquires its "emphasis" from the fact that the speaker refutes the assumption that he imputes to the addressee (wrongly considering P as a possibility).

## Conclusion

The very high frequency of the occurrences of *to*, particularly remarkable in oral interaction, as well as the variety of its meanings and functions, may be correlated to the limited number of words behaving as discourse particles in Hindi<sup>28</sup>.

In spite of the apparent heterogeneity of the meanings involved in the data studied, it is obvious that the multiple surface meanings and functions of the discursive *to* obey a single basic meaning. This basic meaning consists in triggering an operation which deals with alterity ("altérité": "otherness"), at various levels: *to* seems to convey the speaker's judgment on a term or sequence on which it has scope, in such a way that *to*-P triggers the implicit or explicit representation of P' (P': non P or other than P). When *to* is a topic particle, P is the topicalized term and P' either refers to other members of the same paradigm where P belongs, or it constructs a different relation between P and its comment (rheme), or a viewpoint on P differing from the viewpoint previously expressed by (or attributed to) the other speaker (re-qualification). When *to* is not a topic particle, it presents the whole statement on which it has scope as a correction of another distinct viewpoint: either a new argument is presented as countering an initial proposal, or a proposal already voiced is presented with weaker

<sup>25</sup> *To* here is of type 3.1.2, example (20). A acts as if B did not want to talk about this with A and had no intention to discuss it with other.

<sup>26</sup> *To* here is of type 3.2: "that is what I do, contrary to what you think".

<sup>27</sup> Example in non imperative clause : *mainne kahâ to* 'I said it however' in such contexts where the speaker finds it difficult or almost impossible to do so because of the addressee's unwillingness to hear about it ??? Cf. *âegâ to* (don't worry, don't imagine he won't come, he will finally arrive)

<sup>28</sup> As evidenced by the various examples: (13), (20), (21), (22), (27) are from *Bhûkh âg hai* (KB Vaid), contemporary theatre, or (11), (14), (15), (16), from *Guzrâ huâ zamânâ* (KB Vaid), a contemporary partition novel, or from recorded conversations (Standard Hindi, middle class, 40-60 years old informants, Delhi).

relevance or no relevance, or (in pre- or postverbal positions) *to* aims at rejecting an opposite eventuality (conjuring a fear, dismissing a fictive assumption, winning over an anticipated reluctance from the other speaker). The operation triggered by discursive *to* always involves inter-subjectivity, since it negotiates with the other's viewpoint, distinct from and often conflicting with the utterer's viewpoint. This orientation is compatible with the origin of the word, initially a pronominal basis related to the sphere of non-ego. As for the grammatical word, the correlative *to*, whose behaviour directly depends on the anaphoric pronoun, displays the peculiarity of construing, in the hypothetical system, an alternation for selecting one of the terms, whereas the coordinative conjunction ("then") opens a new scenario distinct from the previous discursive sequence.

The behaviour and meaning of *to* as a discourse particle certainly differ from the grammatical meanings: they are highly diversified and often involve polemical values. But on the one hand, they form a constellation of meanings and uses whose consistence becomes clear as soon as the operation at stake is analyzed on the basis of interactive contexts; on the other hand, they are not totally disconnected from the grammatical word<sup>29</sup>. But the discourse particle always involves inter-subjectivity, whereas the conjunction is not sensitive to it. The above study is of course only a first attempt to disentangle the meanings and functions of *to* in interactive situations, finer grain studies being still awaited particularly regarding the exact intonational contours in the various scopes (topicalizing vs non-topicalizing) of the particle.

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<sup>29</sup> Which is also true of the Russian particle *to*, analyzed by Bonnot (1990), equally issued from the same Indo-European pronominal basis. Russian *to* has numerous uses comparable to those of Hindi *to*, but does not share the correlative use nor the meanings observed in sections 3.3 and 3.3.