

Prefix *pere-* and distributivity. Any relation?

Traditionally, the prefix *pere-* is considered to be ‘distributive’ in Russian. Distributivity is usually triggered by the D(istributive)-operator (Scha (1981), Lasersohn (1995), Schwarzschild (1996), Landman (2000) etc.), be it overt or covert. When it is present in the structure, the interpretation is distributive, whereas the same structure understood collectively implies the absence of the operator:

- (1) John and Bill carried a piano upstairs.
 A. John and Bill ^Dcarried a piano separately.
 B. John and Bill carried a piano together (no D-operator)

According to Lasersohn (1998) the distributive reading marks the argument of the verb that first combines with the generalized D-operator.

Now let us look at the Russian data featuring distributive constructions with the prefix *pere-*.

First of all, only the objects of its host verb can be distributed over, including prepositional and quirky complements:

- (2) a. Pereslušal vsju muzyku na svete i **perexodil** na
 DIST-listened^P.sg.ms. all music.ACC. on world.LOC. and **DIST-walked**^P.sg.ms. on
 vse diskoteki.
 all.pl.ACC. discos.ACC.
 ‘I have listened to all the music in the world and have been to all the discos.’
 b. *Vse amerikanskije turisty **pereigrali** v russkuju ruletku.
 all american.pl.NOM. tourists.NOM. **DIST-played**^P.pl. in russian.fem.ACC. roulette.ACC.
 ‘All the American tourists played the Russian roulette (one after another).’

Second, it is not the case that *pere-* can make a distributive predicate of any verb. It requires a certain shape of imperfective event. When the imperfectivity condition is not satisfied, *pere-* can never induce a distributive reading of the VP:

- (3) a. perebrosat’ kamni
 DIST-throw^P.inf. stones.
 only ‘throw stones distributively (different stones for each subevent)’
 b. perebrosit’ kamni (čerez kryšu)
 across-throw^P.inf. stones.ACC. across roof.ACC.
 ‘throw the stones over the roof (once)’

Third, to get a distributive interpretation of its object the verb does not have to be prefixed with *pere-*; it has to be imperfective. Out of two stems of the verb ‘throw’, the imperfective stem *brosat’* ‘throw repetitively’ is already distributive in a sense. Reading A implies that the object was spread across the subevents. At the same time, the verb in (4-a) can also induce a collective reading on its argument, as in B, where the same object participates in all the subevents:

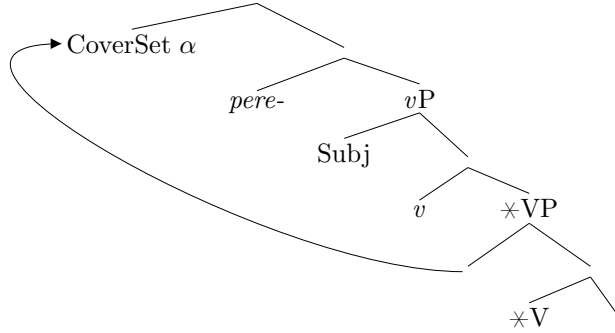
- (4) a. brosat’ kamni
 throw^I.inf. stones
 A. ‘throw stones’ (different stones for each subevent)
 B. ‘throw stones’ (the same set of stones for each subevent)
 b. brosit’ kamni
 throw^P.inf. stones
 ‘throw the stones (once)’

Clearly, *pere-* behaves differently from the D-operator: it is highly selective with respect to the arguments of the verb (always choosing internal over external) and with respect to the event shape of the verb; moreover, it is not a necessary factor for creating a distributive reading of the verb (4-a). However, it has something to do with distributivity, for when it attaches to *brosat’* the distributive/collective ambiguity goes, giving way to just the distributive interpretation (3-a).

To analyse *pere-* I will need two important notions: the notion of pluractionality (arising in the context

of the pluractional operator \ast) and the notion of a cover set (Cov) Schwarzschild (1996). Like many other superlexical prefixes, *pere-* is a measure function. Basing my conclusion on the facts above, I claim that it is a partial function over pluractional verbal predicates with nominal objects, representing cover sets. These nominal covers are homomorphically mappable onto the shape of a pluractional event. When *pere-* attaches to the verb, the nominal cover as its object gets a definite interpretation (reminiscent of one arising under the universal quantification). Thus, distributivity in *pere*-verbs arises due to two operators: the pluractional operator \ast and the measure prefix *pere-*.

(5)



References

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