

Stacked prefixes, resultatives, and null verbs: the case of Slovenian *na-* *se*

Background: Studies of resultative secondary predication typically assume that there can be only one independent secondary predicate per verb. The assumption is based on data such as *Sam kicked Bill ✓black and blue / ✓out of the room / *black and blue out of the room* (Goldberg 1995: 81), **send the letters up away* (den Dikken 2003) (cf. *send the letters up, send the letters away*), etc., and is often built into the structure proposed for resultatives (e.g. Rappaport Hovav & Levin 2001, Ramchand 2008a, Kratzer 2005, etc.). Such analyses predict that constructions with two resultative predicates and a single verb cannot exist.

Slavic languages exhibit a class of prefixed verbs that are commonly analyzed as resultative, with the prefix analyzed as a preposition heading the result predicate (Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998, Babko-Malaya 1999, Svenonius 2004, Ramchand 2008b, Tatevosov 2008, etc.). Just as is the case with Germanic resultatives, Slavic prefixed verbs can license unselected objects, (1a), including an unselected reflexive, (1b) (cf. Spencer & Zaretskaya 1998, Babko-Malaya 1997, Svenonius 2004).

- (1) a. **(pre-)govorit dvomljivca* b. **(z-)laufat se* [Slovenian]
 over-talk doubter out-run self
 ‘talk a doubter over’ ‘wear oneself out/run oneself exhausted’

And like Germanic resultatives, Slavic resultative-prefixed verbs obey the restriction to one independent resultative secondary predicate per verb, (2), which the structures proposed for these verbs also incorporate (Svenonius 2004, Ramchand 2008b, etc.), thereby predicting, similarly, that a construction with two resultative prefixes and a single verb is impossible.

- (2) a. *o-brcati jetnike* b. *iz-brcati jetnike (iz celic)* [Slov.]
 around-kick prisoners out-kick prisoners from cells
 ‘kick the prisoners black and blue’ ‘get the prisoners out (of the cells)’
 c. ** iz-o-brcati/*o-iz-brcati jetnike* [Slov.]
 out-around-kick/around-out-kick prisoners

Puzzle: Despite (2), there exist data that appear to challenge the generalization that there can be just one resultative prefix per verb. Though the *na-* in (3a) introduces an unselected reflexive, which shows it is a resultative prefix (cf. also Tatevosov 2009 for Russian), it can also stack over another resultative prefix, such as the unselected object-introducing *pre-* in (3b). We thus get (3c), with two unselected objects, two resultative prefixes, but just one verb.

- (3) a. **(na-)hodit se* b. **(pre-)govarjat dvomljivce*
 on-walk self over-talk doubters_{ACC}
 ‘get one’s fill walking’ (cf. laugh oneself silly) ‘talk doubters over’
 c. **(na-pre-)govarjat se dvomljivcev* [Slovenian]
 on-over-tell self doubters_{GEN}
 ‘get one’s fill talking doubters over’

Proposal: I propose that in contrast to its surface appearance, the doubly-prefixed (3c) in fact contains two VPs, each of which contains one resultative secondary predicate; one of the V’s, however, is null. In a manner reminiscent of some proposals for serial verb constructions, the two VPs are concatenated with a conjunction-like CausP (cf. Lidz & Williams 2002). One of the VPs is located in the specifier of CausP, the other in its complement, and the whole structure occurs under a single Tense node.

- (4) [TP [CausP [Spec,CausP [VP [V *govar-*] [RP *dvomljivcev pre-*]]]] [Caus’ [Caus°] [VP [V] [RP *se na-*]]]]]

Both Vs cannot be overt for the same reason that Slavic languages do not have serial verb constructions of the type known from Edo (Baker & Stewart 2002) or Dàgáàrè (Hiraiwa & Bodomo 2008): Slavic roots cannot occur uninflected (cf. Muysken & Veenstra 2006), and (4) can only provide this to one verb. The null verb is recoverable due to the presence of the resultative prefix in its VP (which supports Marušič & Žaucer’s 2006 claim, based on the null

HAVE, GO, and FEE-LIKE, that null verbs need a flag to signal their presence but no uniform formal licensing by a modal functional head, contra van Riemsdijk 2002). By positing the null verb, I manage to uphold the otherwise robust generalization that there can be only one resultative predicate per verb. (Note: not *all* doubly-prefixed strings claimed to have 2 VPs!)

Evidence for two VPs: Cases with *na-* stacked over another prefix exhibit two scopes of VP adverbials, (5)-(6); the locative in (5) modifies the ‘fake-out-Kaká’ part of the complex event, the locative in (6) modifies the ‘get-one’s-fill’ part of the complex event. If the structure contains two VPs, the availability of two scopes of locative adverbials is not surprising.

(5) *P. se je že na-pre-igravu Kakája doma (zdej bi ga rad driblu še na štadionu)*

P self is already on-over-played Kaká home now would him like fake.out also on stadium

‘P’s had his fill faking out Kaká at home, now he wants to go fake him out on the stadium’

(6) *P. se je na-pre-igravu Kakája že doma (zato mu zdej ni več do driblanja Kakája)*

P self is on-over-played Kaká already home so him now not-is more to faking.out Kaká

‘P’s already had his fill faking out Kaká at home, so he no longer feels like faking out Kaká’

Further, prefixed verbs are known to be interpreted perfectly, unless they carry secondary imperfective suffix *-va-*, in which case they are read imperfectively (\approx progressively). Curiously, while the addition of *na-* to the imperfectively interpreted *-va-*-suffixed base *pre-igravati Kakája* ‘be faking out Kaká’ is typically interpreted as yielding a perfective complex event (i.e. ‘get one’s fill faking out Kaká’ rather than ‘be getting one’s fill faking out Kaká’) (cf. Arsenijević 2007), this same string can also express a complex event with an imperfective interpretation (‘be getting one’s fill faking out Kaká’), so that both ‘fake out Kaká’ and ‘get one’s fill’ are read imperfectively. This is why we can form (7), which would be contradictory if the doubly-prefixed string had just one interpretation (either perf. only or imperf. only).

(7) *Takrat se je Peter ravno počasi na-pre-igraval Kakája, a ker sem*

then self is Peter just slowly on-over-played Kaká but since am

ga zmotil, se ga v končni fazi ni na-pre-igraval.

him interrupted self him in final phase not-is on-over-played

‘At that point, Peter was slowly getting his fill of faking out Kaká, but because I

interrupted him, he finally didn’t get his fill of faking out Kaká.’

The two-VP structure in (4) needs just a slight upgrade to capture the otherwise puzzling aspectual ambiguity of *na-pre-igravati se Kakája*: the two chunks can be a bit bigger than VPs, i.e. $\text{Asp}_{\text{SecImpf}}\text{Ps}$. Thus, each VP can be dominated by its own $\text{Asp}_{\text{SecImpf}}\text{P}$ and they can both be interpreted imperfectively; but due to haplology, just one *-va-* can be pronounced.

In sum: The *na-se* construction challenges the otherwise robust generalization that there can be only one independent result predicate per verb, thereby also challenging the standard approach to secondary predication. Positing a null verb, however, allows us to uphold both. It also explains the presence of two unselected objects, two scopes of VP adverbials, and the possibility for both parts of the complex event to be read imperfectively.

Extension: In Russian, the prefix *na-* shows another, nonreflexive-introducing use which also licenses unselected objects and is thus resultative, (8) (from Romanova 2002: 172,202).

(8) a. *na-rvatj cvetov* b. **(na-)grabitj deneg* (cf. *grabitj proxožix*) [Russ.]

on-pluck flowers

on-rob money

(‘rob passers-by’)

‘obtain a lot of flowers by plucking’ ‘obtain a lot of money by stealing’

At the same time, this resultative *na-* can also stack over another resultative prefix, (9), thereby posing similar challenges for the theory of resultatives as the reflexive-introducing *na-* from above. The two-VP account in (4) can be extended to (9), though due to argument sharing (as in some serial verb constructions), (9) can only surface with one internal argument

(9) *Konduktor uže na-ot-ryvala biletikov.* [Russian]

ticket-seller already on-off-tore tickets_{GEN}

(Romanova

‘The ticket-seller has prepared a lot of tickets by tearing them off the roll’

2007: 273)