On (Non-)Compositionality of Prefixed Verbs

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This paper deals with differences between compositional and non-compositional prefixed verbs in Slavic. Using a paraphrase test, it classifies prefixed verbs into four basic categories. In the course of this, it is shown that non-compositional prefixed verbs do not form a unified class. The paper provides a syntactic and semantic analysis of the particular classes and argues that also prefixed verbs with an idiomatic meaning can receive a compositional analysis. Non-compositional prefixed verbs are incrementally derived but the meaning of derivational steps can be updated under appropriate circumstances.

1. Introduction

Whereas the difference between lexically and superlexically prefixed verbs has been extensively discussed in the literature (e.g. Isačenko 1962, Babko-Malaya 1999, Ramchand 2004, Romanova 2004, 2006, Svenonius 2004, Di Sciullo & Slabakova 2005, Biskup 2007, 2012, Richardson 2007, Gehrke 2008, Žaucer 2009, 2012), the difference between compositional and non-compositional prefixed verbs has not attracted much attention. Thus, the first goal of this paper is to classify compositional and non-compositional prefixed verbs. The second task is to provide a syntactic and semantic analysis of particular classes of prefixed verbs.

It is well known that prefixed verbs can be compositional or non-compositional. Compositional verbs have a transparent meaning composed of the meanings of the prefix and the verb. In contrast, in the case of non-compositional prefixed verbs, the meaning of the derived verb is not a function of the meanings of its parts.

It has been argued that lexical prefixes (also referred to as qualifying, resultative, internal) have locative or idiosyncratic meaning and that superlexical prefixes (also referred to as modifying, external) have an adverbial meaning (e.g. Babko-Malaya 1999, Ramchand 2004, Romanova 2004, Svenonius 2004, Richardson 2007).

It has been also argued that lexically prefixed verbs can have both a compositional and non-compositional meaning, whereas superlexically prefixed verbs can only have a compositional meaning (e.g. Romanova 2006, Gehrke 2008). Having this in mind, consider examples of compositional lexically prefixed verbs in (1). It is obvious that, for instance, the

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meaning of \textit{vpisat’} is composed of the meaning of \textit{pisat’} and \textit{v} and that the meaning of \textit{oderwać} is composed of the meaning of \textit{rwać} and \textit{od}.

(1) a. \textit{v-pisat’} (R) \hspace{1em} b. \textit{ode-rwać} (P) \hspace{1em} c. \textit{na-měst} (CZ)
\hspace{1em} \text{in-write} \hspace{1em} \text{away-tear} \hspace{1em} \text{on-sweep}
\hspace{1em} \text{‘write/inscribe’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘tear off’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘sweep’}

Similarly, in the case of compositional superlexically prefixed verbs in the following example, the meaning of \textit{zabolet’} is composed of the meanings of its parts, that is, of the meaning of \textit{bolet’} and the ingressive meaning of \textit{za}, and the meaning of \textit{dopracovat’} is composed of the meaning of \textit{pracovat’} and the completive meaning of \textit{do}.

(2) a. \textit{za-bolet’} (R) \hspace{1em} b. \textit{do-pracovat’} (SK) \hspace{1em} c. \textit{prze-pisać} (P)
\hspace{1em} \text{behind-pain} \hspace{1em} \text{to-work} \hspace{1em} \text{over-write}
\hspace{1em} \text{‘become ill’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘stop working’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘rewrite’}

As to non-compositional lexically prefixed verbs, consider (3).\textsuperscript{1} It has been argued that, for instance, \textit{sign} and \textit{pump} are non-compositional (see Kratzer (2000) for the German \textit{aufpumpen}, Młynarczyk (2004) for the Polish \textit{podpisać} and Tatevosov (2008) for the Russian \textit{podpisat’}). A closer look reveals that there are differences between the prefixed verbs in (3). \textit{Podpisat’} (or the Slovak \textit{podpisat’} and Polish \textit{podpisać}), \textit{napompować} (or the Czech \textit{napumpovat}) and \textit{zapít} seem to be more transparent than \textit{nabyć} (or the Czech \textit{nabýt}) and \textit{užít’}. \textit{Podpisat’} (\textit{podepsat, podpisać}) also seems to be more transparent than \textit{zapít}. Furthermore, in \textit{oddělat}, only the verb has an irregular meaning but in \textit{užít’} both elements have an irregular meaning. This calls for a more detailed analysis of (non-)compositionality of prefixed verbs.

(3) a. \textit{pod-pisat’} (R) \hspace{1em} b. \textit{na-pompować} (P) \hspace{1em} c. \textit{za-pít} (CZ)
\hspace{1em} \text{under-write} \hspace{1em} \text{on-pump} \hspace{1em} \text{behind-drink}
\hspace{1em} \text{‘sign’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘pump’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘drink to sth.’}
\hspace{1em} d. \textit{na-być} (P) \hspace{1em} e. \textit{u-žít’} (SK) \hspace{1em} f. \textit{z-drhnout} (CZ)
\hspace{1em} \text{on-be} \hspace{1em} \text{at-live} \hspace{1em} \text{from-rub}
\hspace{1em} \text{‘buy’, ‘acquire’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘take medicine’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘scarper’}
\hspace{1em} g. \textit{od-dělat} (CZ) \hspace{1em} h. \textit{po-dělat} (CZ) \hspace{1em} i. \textit{za-vid’a} (BG)
\hspace{1em} \text{away-do} \hspace{1em} \text{along-do} \hspace{1em} \text{behind-see}
\hspace{1em} \text{‘take away’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘make a mess in sth’} \hspace{1em} \text{‘envy’}

The reminder of the paper is organized as follows. Section 2 categorizes compositional and non-compositional prefixed verbs by means of a paraphrase diagnostics. In section 3, the

\textsuperscript{1} Some verbs can have more meanings; in the translation I use only the meaning relevant to our discussion.
particular classes are syntactically and semantically analyzed. Conclusions are drawn in section 4.

2. A more fine-grained approach
I am concerned only with prefixed verbs having one prefix here; multiply prefixed verbs, I leave aside. Given the two elements, the verb and the prefix, and their regular-/irregular-meaning property, there are four classes. The first class is represented by prefixed verbs composed of a prefix with a regular meaning and a verb with a regular meaning. This class contains compositional prefixed verbs. The other three classes contain non-compositional prefixed verbs. Concretely, the second class is represented by prefixed verbs with a regular-meaning prefix and an irregular-meaning verb. The third class contains verbs with an irregular-meaning prefix and a regular-meaning verb. The fourth class is represented by prefixed verbs in which both elements have an irregular-meaning.

I will diagnose the particular classes by paraphrases. According to Bergsma et al. (2010), prefix-verb compositionality is a semantic equivalence between a prefixed verb and a paraphrase involving the verb’s stem used as a verb. This relates to the first class in my categorization. I modify and extend the proposal by Bergsma et al. to all four classes. Thus, for prefixed verbs of class 1, I propose that a prefix and a verb have a regular meaning, that is, they produce a compositional meaning, if the prefixed verb can be paraphrased with the unprefixed verb (abstracting away from perfectivity and telicity) and the prefix/preposition.\(^2\)

Since in the case of superlexical prefixes it is not possible to use the prefix (preposition) itself in the paraphrase, it is allowed to use the meaning of the superlexical prefix instead. For instance, \textit{vpisat’} and \textit{namést} have a compositional meaning – belong to class 1 - because they can be paraphrased with the unprefixed verb and the prefix, as shown in (4) and (5).

\[(4) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. v-pisat’} & \sim \text{b. pisat’ v (čto-to)} \quad \text{(R)} \\
\text{in-write} & \quad \text{write in something} \\
& \quad \text{‘write/inscribe’}
\end{align*}\]

\[(5) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a. na-mést} & \sim \text{b. mést na (co)} \quad \text{(CZ)} \\
\text{on-sweep} & \quad \text{sweep on something} \\
& \quad \text{‘sweep’}
\end{align*}\]

For superlexical prefixes consider (6) and (7), showing that \textit{przepisać} and \textit{dopracovat’} can be paraphrased with the unprefixed verb and the meaning of the prefix.

\[^2\text{Prefixes that do not have a prepositional counterpart are replaced with the corresponding non-homophonous preposition in the paraphrase.}\]
As to class 2, I assume that a prefix has a regular meaning and the verb an irregular meaning if only the prefix can be used in the paraphrase. Example (8), with the lexical prefix, shows that the verb *dělat* cannot be used in the paraphrase of *oddělat*; it must be replaced with *odstranit*.

(8) a. *od-*dělat ~ b. odstranit (co) *od* (čeho) 
away-do remove something away something 
‘take sth. away from sth.’ not: dělat (co) *od* (čeho) do something away something (CZ)

For a superlexical prefix, consider (9), where the excessive *pře-* is paraphrased as *víc než záhodno* and where *hnát* must be replaced with the more general *dělat*.

(9) a. *pře-*hnat ~ b. dělat *víc než záhodno* 
over-drive do more than advisable 
‘overdo’ not: hnát *víc než záhodno* drive more than advisable (CZ)

For prefixed verbs of class 3, I assume that the prefix has an irregular meaning and the verb a regular meaning if only the verb can be used in the paraphrase. Consider (10), where in the paraphrase of *zapít*, *za* must be replaced with *na*. This class does not contain verbs with a superlexical prefix since superlexical prefixes only have a regular meaning.

(10) a. *za-*pít ~ b. pít *na* (co) not: pít *za* (co/čím) 
behind-drink drink on something drink behind something (CZ)

With respect to class 4, both the verb and the prefix have an irregular meaning if there is no paraphrase that can use the prefix or the verb (or both). Some examples of such lexically prefixed verbs can be found in (11). Given that superlexical prefixes always have a regular meaning in prefixed verbs, they do not occur in this class.³

(11) a. *u-*žit’ (SK) b. *na-*byč (P) c. *za-*vid’a (BG)

³ If verbs with purely perfectivizing prefixes (empty prefixes) exist (see, e.g., Grzegorczykowa et al. 1984, Babko-Malaya 1999), they will be analyzed as belonging to class 1 because the prefixed verb differs from the base verb only in perfectivity and telicity.
3. The four classes

3.1. Class 1

I will begin with prefixed verbs with the compositional meaning, concretely, with the lexically prefixed \textit{naměst} and example (12). The syntactic derivation is shown below. Because of lack of space, I will discuss only the relevant parts of the derivation.

(12) \textit{Jan na-metl smětít na lopatku.}  \hfill (CZ)
\textit{Jan on-swept rubbish on dustpan}
\textit{‘Jan swept the rubbish into the dustpan.’}

First, the preposition \textit{na} merges with the ground DP \textit{lopatku}. Following Biskup (2007, 2009), I treat all cases uniformly as a result of Agree between \(\varphi\)-features (\(\varphi\)-fs) and the tense-feature (T-f) of the probe and goal. I assume that prepositional cases are an unvalued T-f on D, which is an extension of Pesetsky \& Torrego’s proposal (2004, 2006). Specifically, prepositions bear unvalued \(\varphi\)-fs and a valued T-f and DPs bear the unvalued T-f and valued \(\varphi\)-fs; see (13).

(13) \...
The operation Agree values the unvalued \( \varphi \)-fs of \( na \) and the unvalued T-f (case) of \( lopatku \). There is no visible agreement morphology on \( na \) but in languages like Abaza, Abkhaz, Hungarian, Irish, Iwaidjan languages, Jacaltec, Tsakhur, Welsh, there is one. There are also languages with tensed prepositions like Titan and Māori.

In the next step, \( P' \) merges with the figure DP \( smetí \). Given the Activation Condition (e.g. Chomsky 2000), T-f on \( smetí \) cannot be valued by \( na \). Later in the derivation, \( smetí \) gets structural accusative from the aspectual head via Agree with its unvalued \( \varphi \)-fs and the valued T-f (see e.g. Pereltsvaig (2000), Borer (2005) and Richardson (2007) for the relation between case and aspectual properties of the predicate).

PP is selected by the head \( p \) of the prefixal type and \( na \) incorporates into it. I assume that prefixes are incorporated prepositions (see e.g. Babko-Malaya (1999), Svenonius (2004), Romanova (2006) and for non-Slavic languages, Walinska de Hackbeil (1986), Mulder (1992), Miller (1993), Pitz (1994), Biskup, Putnam & Smith (2011)); hence the complex head \( na+p \) incorporates into the root \( \sqrt{\text{\footnotesize{\text{(way)}}}} \) and higher heads, valuing the T-f of the aspectual head on the way (which gives rise to perfectivity).

Let us now consider the semantic derivation. The meaning of \( na \) applies to the definite DP \( lopatku \) – which is derived by the iota operator – with the result that the figure \( x \) is in the state of being on the dustpan, as shown in (14). Then the meaning of \( P' \) combines with the meaning of \( smetí \) and via functional application we receive the meaning that the rubbish is in the state of being on the dustpan.

Next, PP combines with \( p \), which makes a prefix from the preposition. The meaning of the prefixal \( p \) is composed of three conjuncts. The first conjunct stands for the meaning of PP, that is, for the result state brought about by prefixation. In this way, we derive the prepositional nature of prefixes. The second conjunct allows \( pP \) to combine with the root. The third conjunct expresses the telic property of prefixes, the fact that prefixes bring about the causative relation between the result state and the other subevent.

The meaning of \( pP \) applies to the meaning of the root with the result that the rubbish is in the state of being on the dustpan and this is caused by the event of sweeping. After that, the agent is added and later also aspectual, temporal and sentence-mood properties are added.

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\(^4\) The variable \( e \) ranges over events as well as states.
This derivation contains a non-defective PP because both arguments of the preposition are present in the syntactic derivation, the preposition is overtly realized and assigns prepositional case. This means that two copies of the moved preposition are spelled out. It is usually assumed that more copies of one chain can be spelled out only if they bring about a new output. This is the case in our example since the prefixal copy always licenses the perfective aspect and the prefixal copy licenses case with its semantic properties.

PPs can also be defective. This means that the preposition lacks the second selectional feature, which corresponds to the lack of ϕ-fs on P. Given the assumption that case
assignment – the valuation of T-f of the prepositional argument - is dependent on ϕ-fs. Agree, the argument does not receive case from P. This derives a PP type of Burzio’s generalization (see e.g. Svenonius 2003, Biskup & Putnam 2012). However, T-f is present on the preposition because the incorporated P always perfectivizes the verb.\(^5\) The syntactic defectivity correlates with the semantic and phonological defectivity. The second, syntactically unrealized, prepositional argument is a free variable. Since P does not assign case and case assignment is a constitutive property of Ps, the prepositional copy is not spelled out; only the prefixal copy is. To give an example, consider (15), where the ground argument is missing. The relevant part of the derivation is shown in (16).

\[
\begin{align*}
(15) & \text{ Jakub na-pompował koło.} & \text{(P)} \\
& \text{Jakub on-pumped tyre} & \text{‘Jakub pumped up the tyre.’} \\
(16) & \text{Jakub DP} & \text{v'} \\
& \lambda y \lambda e \lambda e'[\lambda x[\text{tyre}(x)] \text{ on } y(e) & \land \\
& \text{pump}(e') & \land \\
& \text{Cause}(e)(e') & \land \\
& \text{Agent}(y)(e')] \\
& \text{owa v} & \sqrt{P} \\
& \lambda R \lambda y \lambda e \lambda e'[\lambda x[\text{tyre}(x)] & \text{on } y(e) & \land \\
& \text{pump}(e') & \land \\
& \text{Cause}(e)(e') & \land \\
& \text{Agent}(y)(e')] \\
& \text{pomp } \sqrt{ } & \text{pP} \\
& \lambda e[\text{pump}(e)] & \lambda Q \lambda y \lambda e \lambda e'[\lambda x[\text{tyre}(x)] & \text{on } y(e) & \land \\
& \text{Q}(e') & \land \\
& \text{Cause}(e)(e') & \land \\
& \text{Agent}(y)(e')] \\
& \lambda P \lambda Q \lambda y \lambda e \lambda e'[\lambda x[\text{tyre}(x)] & \text{on } y(e) & \land \\
& \text{p} & \lambda e[\text{pump}(e)] & \land \\
& \text{PP} & \lambda x[\text{tyre}(x)] & \text{on } y(e) & \land \\
& [\sqrt{\text{vT-f}}] & \text{na } P & \text{DP koło} & [\sqrt{\varphi\text{-f},uT-f}] \\
& \lambda x \lambda e[\text{x on } y(e)] & \text{tx}[\text{tyre}(x)] \\
\end{align*}
\]

The preposition na is defective, as shown above. Since it does not have ϕ-fs, it cannot assign case to the figure argument koło and koło receives structural accusative from the aspectual head. Therefore, there is no lower copy of na in (15), only the prefixal copy on the verb pompował. The ground argument is not syntactically present and semantically it is represented as the free variable y; see (16). The variable is interpreted as a contextually determined level of inflation at the semantic interface and the default interpretation is ‘fully pumped’.

\(^5\) There is a small set of simplex verbs that are perfective by their nature.
This is typical for fill verbs with the preposition *na*; consider, for instance, naplnit (CZ)/naplnit (SK)/napělnic (P) ‘fill’, nacpat (CZ)/napchat’ (SK)/napchać (P) ‘stuff’, nakrmit (CZ)/nakřmit (SK)/nakarmić (P) ‘feed’ or ‘fill’, najíst se (CZ)/najest’ sa (SK)/najeść się (P) ‘fill’, nasytit (CZ)/nasýtiť (SK)/nasyci (P) ‘fill up’. Napompowať can be paraphrased as pompowať na ‘pump to’ (e.g. na 2 bara ‘to 2 bars’, na miękko ‘softly’, na kamień ‘to the full pressure’), which shows that the verb indeed belongs to class 1.

The figure argument can also be syntactically missing. As already mentioned, it has been argued that the Russian *podpisat’* and the Polish *podpisać* are non-compositional verbs. However, I will show below that a compositional analysis is possible; consider example (17) and its derivation in (18).

(17) Boris podpisal kontrakt.        (R)
Boris under-wrote contract
‘Boris signed the contract.’

(18)

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(18) Boris DP v'
   \lambda y_\lambda e_\lambda e' [x under ty[contract(y)](e) &
   write(e') & Cause(e')(e') & Agent(y)(e')]
   a v \sqrt{P}
   \lambda R_\lambda y_\lambda e_\lambda e' [R(e')(e') & Agent(y)(e')]
   \lambda e_\lambda e' [x under ty[contract(y)](e) &
   write(e') & Cause(e')(e')]
   pis \sqrt{P}
   \lambda e[write(e)]
   \lambda Q_\lambda e_\lambda e' [x under ty[contract(y)](e) &
   Q(e') & Cause(e')(e')]
   p PP
   \lambda P_\lambda Q_\lambda e_\lambda e' [P(e) & Q(e') & Cause(e')(e')]
   \lambda y_\lambda e [x under ty[contract(y)](e)]
   [\sqrt{T-f} pod P DP kontrakt [\sqrt{\varphi-f,\sqrt{T-f}}
   ty[contract(y)]]
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The preposition *pod* is defective. It lacks the second selectional feature and \(\varphi\)-fs (see (18)), hence it does not assign case and the prepositional copy *pod* is not spelled out. The sole argument is the ground and the figure is represented only as the free variable \(x\). The free variable is contextually interpreted as a signature at the semantic interface, so the meaning of \(\sqrt{P}\) in (18) is that Boris’s signature is in the state of being under the contract, this is caused by the event of writing and the agent of the writing event is Boris.

The proposed analysis is supported by the fact that if the figure is present (i.e., *pod* is not defective), the prepositional copy of P is also spelled out and case is assigned, as in *podpisalsja pod kontraktom* (R)/*podpisał się pod umową* (P)/*podepsal se pod smlouvou* (CZ),
literally ‘he signed himself under the contract’. The reflexive is interpreted as the possessive his (signature); compare the Czech podělat se ‘make a mess in one’s pants’, vydělat se ‘do one’s business’.

If we allow the presence of the object in the paraphrase, as in (19), then podpisat’ and its Slavic-language equivalents will belong to class 1. If it is not allowed, the verb will belong to class 2, in which the meaning of verbs is irregular. Because of the imperfective aspect, the paraphrase sounds somewhat degraded but if it is correct that na in napisat’ is an empty prefix, then we could also use napisat’ instead of pisat’ in the paraphrase.

(19) a. pod-pisat’     ~    b. pisat’ podpis’ pod (čto-to) (R)
    under-write     write  signature  under something
    ‘sign’

3.2. Class 2
This class contains verbs with a regular-meaning prefix and an irregular-meaning verb, as in (20). There is a non-defective PP because both the figure and the ground are present, two copies of do are spelled out and P assigns genitive. (21) shows that only the prefix can be used in the paraphrase.

(20) Jirk-a od-dělat křesl-o od okn-a. (CZ)
    Jirk-NOM away-did chair-ACC away window-GEN
    ‘Jirka took the chair away from the window.’

(21) a. od-dělat     ~    b. odstranit (co) od (čeho)
    away-do                   remove what away what
    ‘take sth. away from sth.’ not: dělat (co) od (čeho)
    read what away what

According to Nunberg, Sag & Wasow (1994), the meaning of many idioms, albeit idiosyncratic, can be derived compositionally. They argue that not every idiom must be listed in the lexicon as a complete constituent. I will apply this approach to prefixed verbs. Specifically, I will follow Nunberg’s (1995) predicate transfer analysis, which was used for metonymies etc. There are two conditions on the predicate transfer operation: salience and noteworthiness. According to salience, there must be a functional correspondence between the original and the derived predicate. According to noteworthiness, the transfer must be conversionally interesting or relevant. Now consider the derivation of (20), as demonstrated in (22). When the vP phase is interpreted, the meaning of dělat ‘do’ is shifted to ‘remove’ in √P, as shown in boldface (the original meaning of √P is not shown there).
This transfer is properly licensed because there is a salient relation between these predicates: functionally, do is a superset of remove. It is also noteworthy, that is, conversionally relevant, because the speaker does not want to or cannot use the more specific predicate. A similar case is shown in (23), where the meaning of dělat ‘do’ is shifted to the more specific ‘defecate’ (in contrast to (20), in (23a) PP is defective because the figure is missing).

(23) a. po-dělat ~ b. kálet po (čem) not: dělat po (čem/co) along-do defecate along what do along what ‘make a mess in sth.’

The meaning shift is restricted; it happens only in certain semantic contexts delivered by the sister constituent. In (22) it is determined by the odPP. If there were, for instance, only the direct object křeslo instead of the PP, the interpretation of the verb would never be remove. Since dělat itself does not have the meaning remove, the transfer must happen in the course of the derivation. This holds generally; when prefixed verbs are morphosyntactically derived and their parts do not bear the irregular meaning from the beginning, their idiomatic meaning must arise in the derivation. Verbs like po-dělat in (23) and za-dělat ‘to cover sth. with sth.’ support this view; the meaning of dělat is always shifted according to the meaning of the PP present in the derivation.

There are also more complicated cases like, for instance, (24). According to the paraphrase test, zdrhnout behaves like verbs of class 2. The expressiveness of zdrhnout satisfies the noteworthiness condition but there seems to be no salient relation between drhnout and prchnout.
If the restrictive analysis is preferred and noteworthiness and salience are maintained as general conditions on the meaning transfer, verbs like *zdrhnout* will be derived as verbs of class 4, where a special listed meaning is used for the complex head in the root (see section 4).

3.3. Class 3

This class is represented by prefixed verbs with an irregular-meaning prefix and a regular-meaning verb, as shown by the following example with paraphrases. There is a defective PP because only one prepositional argument is present, bearing structural accusative, and only one copy of *za* is spelled out.

![Diagram](image_url)

The relevant part of the derivation is shown below. When the $vP$ phase is interpreted, the meaning of *za* ‘behind’ is shifted to ‘on’ in the meaning of $\sqrt{P}$, which in the context of ‘drink’ expresses the reason for the celebration; see the boldfaced parts. Given the general spatiotemporal properties of prepositions, I assume that there is always a salient relation between them. And the reason for the celebration can be taken to be noteworthy in the conversation. The meaning of the root is not shifted, nor there is a special listed meaning for the complex head *za-pí* in the root, which could be used (as in the case of verbs of class 4, as we will see below), hence the regular meaning of *pí(t)* is used.
Beside the two general conditions, the meaning transfer is again restricted by the semantic context. So, it does not happen in cases with consumable entities in PP like in \textit{za-pít pilulku} ‘wash down a pill’.

There are also problematic cases; see (27). With respect to paraphrases, \textit{dokoupit} behaves like verbs of class 3.

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{(27) a. do-koupit} & \sim \text{b. koupit k (čemu) not: koupit do (čeho)} \\
\text{to-buy} & \text{buy towards what}
\end{array}
\end{equation}

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{not: buy towards what} & \text{‘buy some more’} \\
\text{(CZ)} & \\
\end{array}
\end{equation}

Given the assumed salient spatiotemporal relation between Ps, the first general condition is satisfied but noteworthiness of the shift of \textit{do} is questionable. Thus, this preposition cannot be transferred and the verb needs to be derived as verbs of class 4.

\subsection*{3.4. Class 4}

This class, with an irregular-meaning prefix and an irregular-meaning verb, is the largest category. There are no paraphrases that can use the prefix or the verb or both of them. In contrast to class 2 and 3, verbs of this class are not derived by predicate transfer (hence salience and noteworthiness plays no role here). Instead, the meaning of the whole prefixed root, listed in the lexicon, is used. Let us demonstrate how, for instance, the derivation of (28) works.

\begin{equation}
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{(28) } & \text{Janko u-žil liek. (SK)} \\
\text{'Janko took medicine.'} & \\
\end{array}
\end{equation}

There is only one argument in PP (\textit{liek}), one copy of \textit{u} and no prepositional case; hence the PP is defective, as shown in (29). Crucially, when the phase is interpreted, the listed meaning \textit{take medicine} is used for the complex root head \textit{uží} (the incorporation is not shown there). The meaning is accordingly also used for the result subevent, as shown in the meaning of $\sqrt{P}$, which derives the fact that both elements of the prefixed verb have an irregular meaning.
Some meanings of prefixed verbs can be derived in two steps; consider the polysemous oddělat ‘take sth. away from sth.’, ‘hit’ and podělat ‘make a mess in sth.’, ‘fuck up’. We saw in section 3.2. that the first meanings of these verbs are derived as class 2 verbs. Interestingly, the second meanings are metonymically derived from the first meanings and they belong to class 4 because there are no appropriate paraphrases for them using the verb or the prefix. Note that the second meaning of po-dělat is probably not derived as class 3 (i.e., do something badly) because there is an analogous polysemous verb po-srat ‘make a mess in sth.’, ‘fuck up’ derived from the verb srát ‘shit’.

4. Conclusion

I have classified (non-)compositional prefixed verbs by means of paraphrases and provided a syntactic and semantic analysis of their various types. Prefixed verbs can be treated as idioms to a certain extent and can receive a compositional analysis even if they have an idiosyncratic meaning. They are incrementally derived but the meaning of derivational steps can be updated in the course of the derivation. Class 1 contains compositional verbs. Non-compositional prefixed verbs are of three types. Verbs of class 2 and 3 are non-compositional in the sense that their meaning is not composed of the original meanings of their parts but they can be derived compositionally by means of Nunberg’s (1995) predicate transfer. Prefixed verbs of class 4 are derived by the insertion of a listed meaning. Whereas lexical prefixes derive verbs of all four classes, superlexical prefixes only derive verbs of class 1 and 2.

References


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