

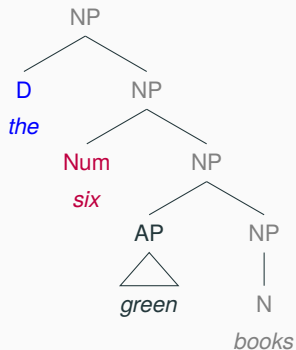
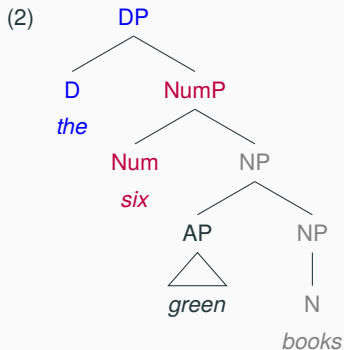
Revisiting Russian small nominals

Pavel Rudnev, HSE University

Background

Approaches to noun-phrase structure

(1) the six green books



Selection in clauses targets the highest head and ignores the rest:

- *Question vs. declarative*
 - a. Sue **thinks** that/*whether the world is flat.
 - b. Sue **wonders** whether/*that the world is flat.
- *Finite vs. non-finite*
 - a. Bertrand **wants** the world to be flat.
 - b. *Bertrand **wants** that the world is flat.
- *Subjunctive vs. indicative*
 - a. Sue **asked** that the answer be/*is two.
 - b. Sue **thinks** that the answer *be/is two.

Different verbs select clauses of various size

- The police seems [_{TP} to have left]
- Mary had [_{VP} her brother open the door]
- I want [_{VP} it understood that the order was given]

Selection in nominals does the exact opposite: if a verb selects a nominal, it ignores all of its functional structure.

- *Non-existing selection pattern A*
 - Samuel is streading a book/*the book.
- *Non-existing selection pattern B*
 - John glorped books/*his books.

(Bruening et al. 2018 have another selectional asymmetry between clauses and nominals based on form determination, but I omit it from today's discussion.)

Salzmann (2020), citing Larson (2019), claims that the following facts support the DP-hypothesis and disfavour the NP-hypothesis

- *every man/happiness/*happy*
 - D ('every') c-selects N ('man/happiness') and doesn't c-select A ('happy'), and projects a DP

However, in that instance adjectives in A+N combinations must be heads, since the pattern is identical:

- *beautiful flowers/*floral*
 - A ('beautiful') would have to c-select N ('flowers') without c-selecting A ('floral'), and project an AP

Larson's argument doesn't work as intended.

Selection of functional structure inside nominals?

Recall the non-existing selection pattern B:

- John glorped books/*his books.
- John glorped three books/*the three books.

If such a selection pattern were attested, one could mount a feasible defence of the DP-hypothesis.

Small nominals

- ‘truncated’, pseudo-/semi-incorporated noun (phrase)
 - *have lunch, be in prison/être en prison, have a heart of gold* etc.
- noun phrase containing some functional material but lacking a D-element
 - e.g. a projection of Q (Pereltsvaig 2006)

Properties of small nominals (Pereltsvaig 2006: 494)

According to Pereltsvaig (2006), small nominals in this sense cannot

- a. have an individuated interpretation
- b. be specific
- c. have a partitive interpretation
- d. take non-isomorphic wide scope
- e. serve as controllers of PRO
- f. bind reflexives and reciprocals
- g. trigger external agreement

Moreover, small nominals cannot be replaced by pro-DP elements but can be replaced by pro-QP elements.

Finally, 'not only can Small Nominals appear in argument positions, but they can be specifically selected by a head.' (Pereltsvaig 2006: 455)

Objects of verbs with cumulative prefix *na-* can be articleless:

- (3) Dzheĭms Bond skopiroval chertezhi.

James Bond copied blueprints.ACC

‘James Bond copied {some/the} blueprints.’

- (4) Dzheĭms Bond **na**-kopiroval chertezheĭ.

James Bond CML-copied blueprints.GEN

‘James Bond copied (many) blueprints.’

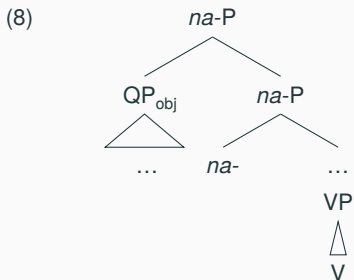
And they cannot be bigger than QP:

- (5) * Dzheĭms Bond na-priglashal [ètu dyuzhinu krasotok]
James Bond CML-invited this dozen babes
(‘James Bond invited these dozen babes.’)
- (6) * Dzheĭms Bond na-priglashal [nas / menya]
James Bond CML-invited us me
(‘James Bond invited {us/me} a lot.’)
- (7) * Dzheĭms Bond na-priglashal [Ivanovŷkh / Ivanova]
James Bond CML-invited Ivanovs Ivanov
(‘James Bond invited {the Ivanovs/Ivanov} a lot.’)

I share these judgements.

Selection of QP by *na-*

Pereltsvaig (2006) analyses the aforementioned distributional patterns as following from a selectional requirement imposed by the perfectivising cumulative prefix *na-*.



I now show that this structure cannot be correct because the observation it aims to capture does not hold.

Let's recall the generalisation

'My claim here is that they [i.e. objects of cumulative *na*- verbs — PVR] crucially cannot be DPs, as evidenced by the fact that these nominals cannot include D-level elements, such as a demonstrative, a pronoun, or a proper name.'
(Pereltsvaig 2006: 457)

I have searched the web for sentences containing a cumulative *na*- verb with an internal argument modified by a demonstrative or possessive pronoun, or realised as a personal pronoun.

Cumulative *na*- verbs are compatible with demonstratives

- (9) Esli vȳ na-priglashali ètikh gosteĭ, to sami ikh i rasselyaĭte
if you CML-invited these guests that yourselves them and settle
'If you have invited these guests here, then feel free to settle them
yourselves.' <https://echo.msk.ru/blog/echomsk/1694466-echo/>
- (10) Po suti, na-priglashali tekhn, kto obelyaet vȳrodka
by essence CML-invited those who whitewash bastard
'They essentially invited those who had been whitewashing the bastard.'
<https://twitter.com/Ponassenkov/status/1229410467694727171?s=20>

Cumulative *na*- verbs are compatible with possessives

- (11) Na èpizodicheskie roli Lyuk Besson na-priglaschal svoikh
on supporting roles Luc Besson CML-invited POSS:REFL
druzeï-rezhissërov Lui Leter'e, Zherara Kravchika, Èrika Roshana i
friends-directors Louis Leterrier Gérard Krawczyk Éric Rochant and
drugikh
others
'Luc Besson invited his film-director friends Louis Leterrier, Gérard
Krawczyk, Éric Rochant and others to play supporting roles.'
<https://afishaplus.ru/valerian-and-the-city-of-a-thousand-planets-review>

Cumulative *na*- verbs are compatible with pronouns

- (12) Na-priglaschal **ikh** vsekh na svoyu registratsiyu... teper' ne znayu, kak
CML-invited them all on POSS registration now not know how
vsë razrulit'
all sort.out
'I invited them lot to my wedding ceremony... and I don't know how to sort
it all out now.' <https://proza.ru/2012/02/05/1047>
- (13) Dochka osvoila planshet i skoree vsego na-priglaschala **vas**
daughter mastered tablet and likely CML-invited you
kuda ni popadya
where.not.going
'My daughter has mastered the tablet and has likely invited you lot to all
sorts of places.'
- (14) Na-vezli **nas** syuda so vseĭ stranĭ i brosil.
CML-brought us here from all country and left
'They have brought us here from the entire country and left for good.'

Other verbs in addition to *na-priglasat* 'CML-invite':

- *naestsya* 'eat oneself full'
- *nakopirovat* 'copy'
- *nasobirat* 'pick/collect'
- *napridumyvat* 'invent'

There are bound to be many others, since the pattern of *na*-prefixation is completely productive.

Internet data reveal many naturally occurring sentences that the c-selection for QP analysis predicts should not exist.

I have informally queried a couple dozen Russian-speaking colleagues, all of whom find the examples like the above completely natural and acceptable.

Two hypotheses with distinct predictions

Our two hypotheses — the NP hypothesis and the DP/QP hypothesis – make very clear and diverging predictions.

DP/QP hypothesis

- clear contrast in acceptability between ‘QP’- and ‘DP’-sized objects of cumulative *na*- verbs

NP hypothesis

- roughly identical acceptability of ‘QP’- and ‘DP’-sized objects of cumulative *na*- verbs

These can be tested experimentally.

Ibex Farm¹

- 8 pairs of sentences containing cumulative *na*- verbs and an internal argument
 - 4 corpus sentences containing a D-element (condition has_D)
 - 4 matching sentences without a D-element (condition no_D)
- 1 pair member per subject
- 7-point Likert scale
- 16 pairs of fillers, half grammatical, half ungrammatical

¹I thank Daniyar Kasenov for coding the experiment.

- 82 subjects recruited through personal connections and via social media
- 24 sentences per subject in total
- separate list for each subject
- comprehension question after each sentence

Example experimental items

(15) 'no_D'

Na-vezli lyudeř syuda so vseř stranř, a potom brosil
CML-brought people here from all country and then left

'They brought people from the entire country here, and then just left them.'

(16) 'has_D'

Na-vezli nas syuda so vseř stranř, a potom brosil
CML-brought us here from all country and then left

'They brought us here from the entire country, and then just left us.'

Example filler items

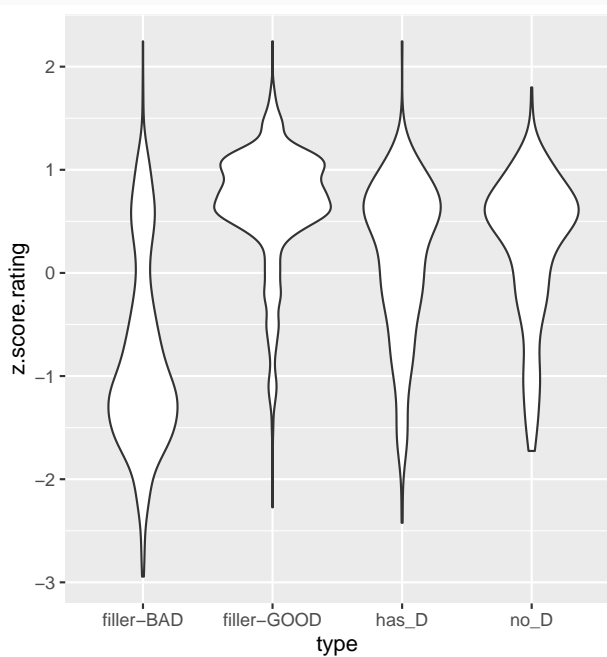
- (17) Nikto ne znaet gde rabotaet ego mama
nobody not knows where works his mum
'Nobody knows where his mother works.'
- (18) * Nikto ne znaet rabotaet ego mama gde
nobody not knows works his mum where
'Nobody knows where his mother works.'

All data manipulations were performed using R (R Core Team 2018).²

Condition	Mean	Sd
filler-GOOD	6.24	1.3
filler-BAD	3.03	2.04
has_D	5.19	1.76
no_D	5.32	1.82

²I'm grateful to Mikhail Knyazev and George Moroz for showing me how to analyse the results in R.

This can be visualised by condition type in a violin plot:



Ratings for experimental items

Sentence	has_D-mean	no_D-mean	has_D-median	no_D-median	has_D-sd	no_D-sd
napridumŷval1	5.428	5.784	6.0	6.0	1.436	1.071
napriglashal	5.763	6.25	6.0	7.0	1.182	1.112
nasobirala1	5.333	4.108	6.0	4.0	1.758	2.081
napriglashala	5.659	4.757	6.0	5.0	1.681	1.687
napridumŷval2	5.395	6.273	5.0	7.0	1.332	1.097
nasobirala2	4.474	5.326	4.0	6.0	1.747	1.791
navezli	5.895	6.0	6.0	6.5	1.556	1.299
nazakazŷvala	3.837	3.789	3.0	4.0	2.094	2.195

One pair with very low ratings irrespective of presence of D.

Experiment: summary

- no significant difference in acceptability between has_D and no_D conditions
- not predicted if cumulative *na*- c-selects a QP
- predicted by NP hypothesis

What is responsible for the low acceptability of Pereltsvaig's sentences?

- (19) * Dzheĭms Bond na-priglashal [ètu dyuzhinu krasotok]
James Bond CML-invited this dozen babes
(‘James Bond invited these dozen babes.’)
- (20) * Dzheĭms Bond na-priglashal [nas / menya]
James Bond CML-invited us me
(‘James Bond invited {us/me} a lot.’)
- (21) * Dzheĭms Bond na-priglashal [Ivanovŷkh / Ivanova]
James Bond CML-invited Ivanovs Ivanov
(‘James Bond invited {the Ivanovs/Ivanov} a lot.’)

A different view of cumulative *na*- verbs

- cumulative *na*- verbs require a measure
- that measure can be either explicit or contextually salient
- but it is not easily recoverable from the context in the unacceptable examples because there simply is no context available

Other properties

Matushansky & Ruys (2015)

- (22) Džejms Bond napriglašal [djužinu krasotok] vypit' po
James Bond ACM.invited dozen.ACC babes.GEN drink.INF DIST.P
martini.

Martini

= James Bond_j invited [a whopping dozen babes]_k PRO_{k+j} to drink a
martini apiece.

≠ James Bond_j invited [a whopping dozen babes]_k PRO_k to drink a martini
apiece.

Arguments of cumulative *na-* verbs can also apparently control PRO in depictive secondary predicates:

- (23) On na-sobiral ètikh sliv [PRO eshchë zelënyîmi]
he CML-picked these plums still green
'He picked these plums still unripe.'

Though the constraints on depictive secondary predicates in Russian are still poorly understood.

Pereltsvaig (2006: 41a) gives the following judgement:

- (24) * Bond na-priglashal krasotok na dni rozhdeniya drug druga
Bond CML-invited babes on days birth each other
(‘Bond invited (many) babes to each other’s birthdays.’)

Ability to bind anaphors

I think context improves such sentences quite substantially:

(25) *It's always like this for him...*

Snachala na-podchinyaet vedomstv drug drugu, a nam
first CML-subordinate government.bodies each other, and us
potom razbirat'sya
later sort.out

'First, he subordinates a whole lot of government bodies to each other, and we're left to sort out the mess.'

(26) On obozhaet na-protivopostavlyat' neskol'ko tocek zreniya drug drugu,
he loves CML-oppose several points view each other
a potom ob'yavit' ikh polnost'yu sovместimymi
and then declare them fully compatible

'He just loves to first oppose several viewpoints to each other, only to declare them fully compatible afterwards.'

- *contra* Pereltsvaig (2006), Russian small nominals are not c-selected by cumulative *na*-
- therefore, they cannot be used to support the DP/PossP/QP/.../NP hypothesis
- other selection-based arguments exist — e.g. Erschler (2019) — and need to be addressed

Appendix

(In)compatibility with ‘certain’ i

‘Arguments of cumulative *na-* are incompatible with adjectives denoting specificity; the only possibility is to mark such adjectives with the genitive case, with the resulting interpretation being the kind interpretation’.

This is demonstrably wrong:

nasobirat ‘CML-pick’ is compatible with accusative NPs containing *opredelënnŷĩ*, as in

- *nasobiral opredelënnŷe laifkhaki*
- *nasobiral opredelënnŷe sredstva*
- *nasobiral opredelënnŷĩ opŷt/kapital*

Pereltsvaig (2006) further claims that ‘if a quantity expression is present, it cannot be modified by a specificity adjective’, giving the following example:

- (27) * Džejms Bond na-sobiral [opredelěnnuju oxapku cvetov].
James Bond CML-picked particular armful of.flowers
intended: ‘James Bond picked a particular armful of flowers.’

Again, this observation does not appear to hold, since the above sentence is flawless if *količestvo* ‘quantity/amount’ is substituted for *oxapka* ‘armful’:

- (28) Džejms Bond na-sobiral [opredelěnnoe količestvo cvetov].
James Bond CML-picked particular amount of.flowers
‘James Bond picked a particular amount of flowers.’

Bruening, Benjamin, Xuyen Dinh & Lan Kim. 2018. Selection, idioms, and the structure of nominal phrases with and without classifiers. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 3(1). Ubiquity Press, Ltd. 42. doi:10.5334/gjgl.288.

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R Core Team. 2018. *R: A language and environment for statistical computing*. Vienna, Austria: R Foundation for Statistical Computing.
<https://www.R-project.org/>.

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