

Title: Prefixation and the locative alternation in Russian contact verbs
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Recent typological work on ditransitives emphasizes that valence alternations are verb-sensitive. The locative alternation with Russian contact verbs (*gruzit' barzhu drovami / drova na barzhu; nasypat' meshok krupoj / krupy v meshok*) is not only verb-sensitive but also prefix-sensitive. This paper proposes an account of their interactions.

I surveyed six root verbs and the four valence-relevant prefixes *na-*, *za-*, *po-*, *ob-* in the Russian National Corpus, counting frequencies of theme object (TO, e.g. *gruzit' drova na barzhu*) and goal object (GO, *gruzit' barzhu drovami*). Proneness of verbs to GO is: *polnit'* (100%) > *mazat'* > *gruzit'*, *sypat'* > *bit'*, *lit'*; prefixes: *ob-* > *po-* > *za-* > *na-* > no prefix; subsense: figurative > literal. Prefix behavior depends on semantics (e.g. *za-* quantizes telicity, therefore favors as direct object the argument that undergoes a state change) and syntax (*ob-* is an applicative). Where the choice is fairly free, an animate or topical participant is most likely to be the accusative object. Participial passives in texts are exclusively GO (*zagruzhennaja drovami barzha*) though elicited TO is fully grammatical (*zagruzhennye v barzhu drova*). There is a T > A unmarked diathesis (*voda zalila travu*) but no unmarked G > A (only *travu zalilo vodoj*). Related unsuffixed nouns pertain to T: *maz'*, *gruz*, *syp'*. Minimally suffixed adjectives pertain to either T (*gruznyj*) or G (*polnyj*). Verbs classify only for properties of T (shape, texture, etc.): *gruzit'* (T is heavy or bulky), *sypat'* (T is particles), *lit'* (T is liquid or granular), *mazat'* (T is semisolid).

Thus ditransitives have a GO bias in their syntactic behavior but are TO in their deeper lexical properties. The prefixes are polyfunctional but all four can derive ditransitives (*ob-* usually does). These things emerge clearly from corpora but are poorly covered in grammars and dictionaries.