

Title: Attenuation by Means of the Russian Prefixes под- and при-
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Both *pod-* and *pri-* can be used to build verbs that express attenuation in Russian. For example, both *podkupit'* and *prikupit'* can be glossed as 'buy a small quantity', as seen in these examples:

- (1) Здесь несколько магазинов, в которых можно подкупить нужные туристам продукты.
[Н. Иванов. «По лесной реке Усте.» Наука и жизнь, 2006.]
There are some shops here where the tourists can buy some more food.
- (2) Нужно прикупить еще пачку сигарет... [До после обеда (2004). «Солдат удачи», 2004.02.11.]
I should buy another pack of cigarettes...

In some cases, both prefixes attach to the same base verb to express an attenuative meaning, and the meanings are close (though not identical). However, many base verbs combine with only one of the two prefixes.

My objective is to discover the nature of the distribution and the motivation behind the choice of the prefix. I use data from the Russian National Corpus (www.ruscorpora.ru), where I have identified 1191 *pod-*prefixed verbs and 708 *pri-*prefixed verbs that can express attenuation. I analyze the attenuative meanings of *pod-* and *pri-* in the context of the entire range of meanings for each (arrived at via a radial category analysis). I show that the meanings of the prefixes and verbs interact following consistent patterns. For example, with sound and speech verbs there is a contrast between multiple and single subjects (*podpevat'* 'sing along with someone else' vs. *pripevat'* 'sing along while doing something else'). Verbs of improvement show a contrast between poor-to-normal and normal-to-better (*podgladit'* 'iron out wrinkles' vs. *prigladit'* 'smooth out a bit'). A similar contrast is shown with verbs of acquisition, as illustrated in the above examples (*podkupit'* 'buy more when there isn't enough' vs. *prikupit'* 'buy a little extra').