

PARASYNTHETIC PREFIX VERBS OF BRAZILIAN PORTUGUESE: EVIDENCE FOR LOCALITY EFFECTS IN MORPHOSYNTACTIC STRUCTURE

INTRODUCTION: Prefixes are productive pieces involved in complex verb formation in various languages. However, Germanic and Slavic languages are especially famous in this respect by presenting productive mechanisms to build up verbs from prefixes and particles, resorting to a wide range of morphemes with resultative, spatial, and idiosyncratic meanings (Svenonius 2004). Nevertheless, prefixes are also a common tool for word formation in Romance languages. For example, prepositional prefixes of Romance, mostly etymologically derived from Latin prepositions and adverbs, are often used to denote spatial and temporal relations. **GENERAL STATEMENT:** Within this discussion, this paper examines a class of verbs prefixed by *a-*, *en-* and *es-* of Brazilian Portuguese, traditionally called Parasyntetic Verbs (examples in (1)). Empirically, I show that these prefixes are responsible for changes in the argument and aspectual structure of the roots they adjoin to (together with other works (Pereira, 2007)). Also, they show morphophonological evidences to the fact they are inner prefixes attaching within the *vP* projection in productive forms. In a theoretical level, I propose that the productive prefixes can be fully explained as the spell out of functional non-cyclic heads within the piece-based theory of Distributed Morphology (Halle & Marantz 1993, Embick & Noyer 2006). The analysis also explains how these functional heads can interact with others with a recent development of Distributed Morphology Theory based on cyclic and linear locality domains (C_1 -LIN Theory (Embick 2010)). **DATA DESCRIPTION:** The three verbal prefixes studied in this paper are related to Latin directional prepositions. They inherit some kind of predicational function from their **origins** which make them different from other prefixes with adverbial functions. In a **morphophonological level**, the prefixes *a-*, *en-*, and *es-* seem to adjoin to different categorial internal structures: adjectives (2–4), nouns (5–7), and bare roots (8–10). They can be easily identified when attached to categorized words, in a synchronic decomposition process (e.g. *a-vermelh-ar* ‘to redden’, *en-gavet-ar* ‘to put in the drawer’, *es-faque-ar* ‘to knife’), but they can also be identified in contexts of bound roots in which the base is not a word in the language (e.g. *a-greg-ar* ‘to add’, *en-gren-ar* ‘to gear’) via commutation (*a-greg-ar/se-greg-ar* ‘to add/to segregate’; *a-gred-ir/re-gred-ir/pro-gred-ir* ‘to assault/to regress/to progress’; *avisar/revisar* ‘to warn/to review’), and some seem to occur with a single bound root (*afastar/*refastar/*profastar/*defastar* ‘to depart’), in which case the real status of the prefix becomes unclear and cannot be recognized by some speakers. Also, they show to be inner prefixes since they cannot occur with already-prefixed words of any kind (11), including those prefixed by themselves (12). Another condition on the occurrence of these prefixes is a restriction to verbal contexts. They only occur within nouns and adjectives in cases of deverbal derivation, particularly in adjectival participles and eventive nominalizations suffixed with eventive suffixes. In productive forms, it is possible to see their contribution to: Argument and Aspectual Structure. With respect to **argument structure**, If we compare the bases to which the prefixes *a-*, *en-*, and *es-* attach to the verbs they form, we find that these prefixes seem to be interfering with the introduction of an extra argument. For example, a noun like *garrafa* ‘bottle’, an adjective like *vazio* ‘empty’, or a root like *grad-* cannot “hold” an argument by themselves. It is clear that an adjective like *vazio* is attributive and needs an entity to refer to, but it cannot do this by itself in some languages, as Hale and Keyser (2002) have observed. Moreover, they create: i) unaccusative verbs (like (13)) that, in principle, can be provided with an external argument introduced later by *voice* (in terms of Kratzer 1996) or some other functional head, or ii) simple transitive structures (like (14)). They will never derive unergative structures ((13c), (14c)). These facts show a close connection between the prefixes and the internal argument presence. With respect to **aspectual structure**, these prefixes integrate mostly achievement and accomplishment verbs, being related to a punctual temporal event structure (Pereira 2007). Gradual adjectives like *vermelho* ‘red’ or *cheio* ‘full’ will result in accomplishment verbs (*avermelhar* ‘to redden’ and *encher* ‘to fill’), and non-gradual adjectives or nouns like *padrinho* ‘godfather’ or *noite* ‘night’ will result in achievement verbs (*apadrinhar* ‘to become a godfather’ and *anoitecer* ‘to become night’). Finally, they show an interesting connection to the realization of the suffix verbal forms, which I assume to be the morphological realization of verbal functional heads (Folli & Harley 2005; Harley 2007). When the suffix is realized as *-ec-* there is a huge tendency for the prefix to be realized as *en-*, as well as when the suffix is *-ej-* or *-e-* the prefix is *es-* and when the suffix is *-iz-* the prefix is either *a-* or a zero morph. On the

other hand, in some verbs with bound roots, the prefixes contribution seems to be quite opaque, it seems that they were completely integrated into the root and are not active anymore in the derivation. Some examples are those in iii below. **ANALYSIS:** We propose an analysis based on a syntactic view of word formation, Distributed Morphology, where different behaviors can be the result of different locality conditions on attachment. We assume that prefixes *a-*, *en-* and *es-* that can behave like root attaching prefixes inside \sqrt{P} (17) leading to special interpretation and having no influence in argument as well as aspectual structure (Marantz 2001, 2007); or can behave like first level categorizing prefixes, cases in which these particles are the spell out of non-cyclic functional heads (labeled as X for the moment) responsible for changes in argument, semantic and aspectual structure within νP (18). Moreover, these prefixes never work as event modifiers, what seems to be the case for prefixes like *re-* (repetition), *circum-*, *super-* or *com-*, called compositional prefixes scoping above ν (19). This proposal can explain in terms of locality the empirical distinction between lexical (strict lexical or inner) and superlexical prefixes (Svenonius 2004, Markova & Padrosa-Trias 2008). Svenonius (2004:1) does not resort to an explanation in terms of different generative loci of prefix formation, but he argues that the division between lexical and superlexical prefixes “should be analyzed in terms of the place of the different prefixes in a syntactic decomposition of the clausal structure.” More precisely, the author proposes that “lexical” prefixes (with resultative, spatial and idiosyncratic meaning) attach under VP, and superlexical prefixes (with aspectual and quantificational meaning) attach above VP. Despite following the same locality idea employed in Svenonius (2004), I will argue that this distinction is too rough to account for a wide variety of observed behaviors of prefixes in natural languages. **IN CONCLUSION**, the paper aims at contributing to a more accurate explanation for the term Prefix, which refers to a position within the word, but does not reveal anything detailed about the function of the morpheme in relation to the whole structure. Data on prefix verbs of Brazilian Portuguese leads us to a more refined analysis of prefixes in terms of locality of attachment, particularly for those which attach lower, under νP . Also, locality and linear adjacency can account for the way in which the prefixes realizing kinds of verbal aspectual functional heads can interact with suffixes realizing a little ν head.

EXAMPLES

i. General schema of parasyntetic verb formation:

(1) PREFIX + BASE¹ + SUFFIX² + (TV³) + INFLECTIONAL MORPHOLOGY

ii. Data presentation

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| (2) a-vermelh-a-r
PREFIX-red-TV-INF
'to redden' | (3) en-fraqu-ec-e-r
PREFIX-weak-SUF-TV-INF
'to weaken' | (4) es-vazi-a-r
PREFIX-empty-TV-INF
'to empty' |
| (5) a-terror-iz-a-r
PREFIX-terror-TV- SUF-INF
'to terrify' | (6) en-garraf-a-r
PREFIX-bottle-TV-INF
'to bottle' | (7) es-faqu-e-a-r
PREFIX-knife-SUF-TV-INF
'to knife' |
| (8) a-grad-a-r
PREFIX- $\sqrt{\text{grad}}$ -TV-INF
'to please' | (9) en-gren-a-r
PREFIX- $\sqrt{\text{gren}}$ -TV-INF
'to gear' | (10) es-cav-a-r
PREFIX- $\sqrt{\text{cav}}$ -TV-INF
'to dig' |

iii. Morphophonological Structure

(11) [**Informal**]_A 'informal' > ***ainformalizar**/***eninformalizar**/***esinformalizar**

(12) [**Encaixe**]_N 'fit' > ***aencaixar**/***esencaixar**

iii. Argument Structure

- (13) a. O tanque esvaziou.
The tank emptied.
b. Eu esvaziei o tanque.

¹ Noun, adjective or bound (root formation).

² Phonologically realized or not.

³ Theme vowel.

- I emptied the tank.
 c. *Eu esvaziei.
 I emptied.

- (14) a. Eu acaricieei o cachorro.
 I petted the dog.
 b. *O cachorro acariciou.
 The dog petted.
 c. *Eu acaricieei.
 I petted.

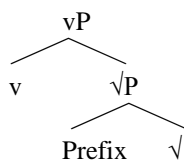
iii. Non-productive prefixes

(15) **Acessar** ‘to access’

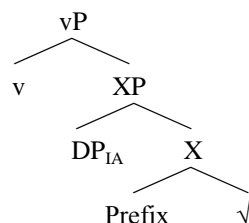
(16) **Esquecer** ‘to forget’

iii. Loci of affixation of parasynthetic prefixes (Simple structures in (17) and (18)). Adverbial prefixes in (19).

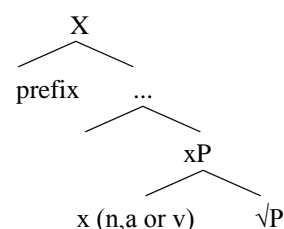
(17) Incorporated Prefix



(18) Productive Inner Prefix



(19) Adverbial Prefix



REFERENCES

- Embick, D. (2010). *Localism versus Globalism in Morphology and Phonology*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Embick, D., & Noyer, R. (2006). Distributed Morphology and the Syntax/Morphology Interface. In: G. Ramchand, & C. Reiss, *Oxford handbook of Linguistics Interfaces* (pp. 298-324). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Folli, R., & Harley, H. (2005). Consuming results in Italian and English: flavors of v. *Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* (62), 95-120.
- Hale, K., & Keyser, J. (2002). *Prolegomenon to a Theory of Argument Structure*. Cambridge: MIT Press.
- Harley, H. (2007). The bipartite structure of verbs cross-linguistically, or Why Mary can't exhibit John her paintings. *Write-up of a talk given at the 2007 ABRALIN Congress in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, March*.
- Kratzer, A. (1996). Evering the External Argument from its Verb. In J. R. Zaring, *Phrase Structure and the Lexicon* (pp. 109-137). Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Marantz, A. (2007). Phases and words. *Manuscript*. Disponível em https://files.nyu.edu/ma988/public/Phase_in_Words_Final.pdf. Último acesso em 11/11/11. , 1-16.
- Marantz, A. (2001). Words and Things. Cambridge, Manuscript.
- Markova, A., & Padrosa-Trias, S. (2008). Some remarks on prefixation: evidence from Bulgarian, Catalan and English. *Interlinguistica* 19, to appear.
- Pereira, R. A. (2007). *Formação de verbos em português: afixação heterocategorial*. Muenchen: Lincom Europa. Academic Publications.
- Svenonius, P. (2004). Slavic Prefixes inside and outside VP. *Nordlyd* (32:2), pp. 205-253.