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Analogy or Conceptual Metaphor? Coming Concretely and Abstractly Close in Uses of the Russian Prefix *pod-*

Abstract

This article discusses the notion of analogy as compared to conceptual metaphor and how the theoretical difference between the two affects the way in which the different meanings of polysemic linguistic units are seen to be related. This is illustrated through the meanings of concrete approaching and abstract approaching that the Russian prefix *pod-* adds to a verb stem. On the basis of the analysis it is claimed that the notion of analogy alone is not enough, as abstract approaching is not only an extension of the meaning of concrete approaching but includes features that can be explained only by the cooperation of both domains. It is suggested that this kind of approach will also be applicable in discussing the polysemy of other verbal prefixes.

1. Introduction

This article discusses the way that polysemy can be explained through the notions of analogy and conceptual metaphor. This is illustrated by studying certain meanings of the Russian prefix *pod-*. By way of an introduction I will now briefly discuss the importance of prefixation in Russian and the way that polysemy has been dealt with so far. I will then present the prefix *pod-* to the reader.

1.1 Prefixation in Russian

Russian describes action very precisely with mere verbs, due to both the system of verbal aspect¹ and the additional meaning components provided by prefixes. Russian has twenty verbal prefixes, and most of them have

¹ On the category of verbal aspect in Russian see Comrie (1976).

several meanings.² This exactness is especially noticeable for verbs of motion.³ Prefixes also have a close relationship to the verbal aspect of Slavic languages. The meanings discussed here are not, however, dependent on grammatical aspect, since the prefix discussed here, *pod-*, very rarely functions as a pure means of aspectual word formation (as a semantically empty prefix that merely forms the perfective from the imperfective).⁴ The same prefix therefore occurs with verbs of both imperfective and perfective aspect.

1.2 Ambiguity in prefixes and how to describe it

The different meanings of a prefix can be discussed as cases of either homonymy or polysemy, and besides classifying different meanings we can focus on the vagueness of the meanings (Zalizniak 2007: 95–98). In the case of *pod-* the connection has, on the one hand, been obvious enough for the meanings to be seen as polysemous when they involve various concrete notions having to do with ‘under’. On the other hand, the abstract meanings of *pod-* have commonly been considered completely separate and simply coinciding, i.e. homonymous.

Previous studies on Russian prefixes have differed both in the metalanguage used for describing the meanings and in their theoretical backgrounds. They have described the meanings of different Russian prefixes with the help of words belonging to natural languages. Other ways of describing these semantic connections include different forms of metalanguage such as formal semantics (Dobrušina, Mellina & Paillard 2001), structuralist formal models (Flier 1975, 1985; Gallant 1979), or cognitive schemata (Janda 1986, 1988). A detailed investigation into Russian prefix studies up to the late 1990s can be found in Krongauz (1998: 55–98). During the last fifteen years, various methodological and theoretical issues in the study of prefixation in Russian have been discussed

² In this paper the notion of word meaning is not problematized. It is taken for granted that a word or other meaning component has a meaning or several meanings that can be listed and compared.

³ In Slavic languages verbs of motion are regarded grammatically as a separate group, since they differ from other verbs in their grammatical behaviour.

⁴ Adding a prefix may bring in redundant information, which has led to the interpretation that some uses of prefixes are semantically empty. The existence of empty prefixes has been denied by several contemporary scholars (see e.g. Janda 1986; Krongauz 1998).

by Dobrušina, Mellina & Paillard (2001), Norwegian scholars from Tromsø (Nordlyd 2004), Gehrke (2008), Plungjan (2001), and by both Russian and Western scholars in (Krongauz & Paillard 1997). What these approaches to prefixes have in common is that they hardly mention analogy as a way of explaining correspondences in the meanings of prefixes.

New tendencies in polysemy studies in general include different ways of explaining the place of polysemy in the language system and describing the cognitive system behind it (see Evans 2009; Rakova 2003; Rakova, Pethő & Rákosi 2007). This reinforces the development that started in the 1980s (Janda 1986). There is, however, a need for new, more precise ways of describing the polysemy of Russian prefixes.

1.3 The meanings of the prefix *pod-*

The prefix *pod-* has many meanings that are not self-evidently related to one another. Plungjan (2001) offers the most detailed listing of the various meanings. The concrete meanings of *pod-* have to do with either approaching or being under or down ('being under', 'being down', 'going under', 'from under', 'upwards', or 'downwards', depending on the verb the prefix is connected to and on the context in which it is used). The abstract, non-spatial meanings of *pod-* present a curious combination. Plungjan (2001) divides these meanings into three categories: (1) describing supplementary action (additional, simultaneous, or lesser action); (2) causing harm or damage or doing something in secret; and (3) approaching an object (modifying the action according to someone else's needs or to fit into something; imitating something).

The meaning of a prefix can be determined by comparing the meaning of a verb with and without the prefix. One should not, however, be too simplistic about this: in actual fact, the meaning of a prefixed verb is not always the meaning of the prefix plus that of the core verb, but is also affected by other characteristics of both the prefix and the verb and by the interaction between the two (see Dobrušina, Mellina & Paillard 2001). These relevant characteristics include the grammatical properties of both (valence relations), and the semantic properties affecting them. For example, the prefix *pod-* has the following grammatical properties: (1) It combines both with verbs of motion and with other verbs; (2) It combines with both transitive and intransitive verbs; (3) If the verb with *pod-* is used with a preposition, the preposition is *k* (+ dative) with the verbs of motion and *pod* (+ accusative) with other verbs. The verb stem *pevat'-pet'* 'to

sing’, which will appear later in example 11 (c), has the following grammatical properties: (1) It is transitive; (2) Its valence relations include the possibility of telling not only who sang and what, but also what the song was about and who wrote it. Semantically, in the combination *podpevat’-podpet’*, *pod-* brings in the meaning of singing along. The grammatical characteristic realized in this verb is that it requires the dative case without a preposition, the word in the dative indicating what we sing along to. Thus, in this particular case adding the prefix not only specifies the meaning of the verb – singing along is a particular kind of singing – but also changes its grammatical behaviour.

In this paper I discuss two meanings of *pod-*: the concrete spatial meaning of approaching something and the meaning(s) that I call abstract approaching. Concrete approaching means physical movement towards, while abstract approaching is coming closer physically and mentally, changing one’s opinion in the direction of somebody else’s, or approaching a person in an abstract way so as to be or seem to be mentally closer to him/her (in order to achieve something). As for their grammatical behaviour, prefixed verbs with *pod-* in the meaning of concrete or abstract approaching are often followed by the preposition *k* ‘towards’ + a noun in the dative indicating the person or thing that the approaching is directed at.

I start by introducing the verbs in question through some examples of prefixed verbs with these meanings. The concrete meaning of approaching is commonly acknowledged for *pod-*. This can, first of all, be movement towards a dominating object (the concrete cases of adding *pod-* to motion verbs), for example (1a)–(1b).

- (1) a. *pod-beža-t’*
 under⁵-run-INF⁶
 ‘to run (close) to’

⁵ The prefix *pod-* has been glossed throughout as ‘under’. I interpret the concrete meaning of approaching that the prefix expresses with the verbs of motion as a case of being under, since horizontal and vertical movement are conceptually related (see Luodonpää-Manni & Viimaranta 2010). This can also be interpreted as having to do with the notion of domination (Viimaranta 2012).

⁶ The abbreviations used in the glosses: INF = infinitive; REP = repetition, REFL = reflexive

- b. *pod-kovylja-t'*
 under-stumble-INF
 'to hobble up to'

Second, the verbs can also be causatives, as in (2a)–(2c). These verbs mean bringing someone or something close to something and in this way causing the approaching. Some of them (3a)–(3b) are, besides being causative, also reflexive. The one that summons or lures someone else causes the other person to come close to him/her.

- (2) a. *pod-ves-ti*
 under-bring-INF
 'to bring up to'
- b. *pod-voloči-t'*
 under-drag-INF
 'to drag up to'
- c. *pod-kati-t'*
 under-roll-INF
 'to roll up to'
- (3) a. *podo-zva-t'*
 under-call-INF
 'to call up', 'to summon'
- b. *pod-mani-t'*
 under-allure-INF
 'to beckon'

Let us now look at examples of abstract approaching. The notion that I will refer to as abstract approaching has been described by Plungjan (2001) in terms of three categories: “approaching the object”, “imitation of a model”, and “ingratiating”. In the first of these two groups a non-physical action is performed in order to provoke a development that is favourable to the speaker either as such or because of its results. This involves a process of either stimulation (for example, (4a)–(4b)) or adjustment (for example, (5a)–(5b)).

- (4) a. *pod-zadori-t'*
under-provoke-INF
'to egg on'
- b. *podo-gna-t'*
under-chase-INF
'to urge on'
- (5) a. *pod-gotovi-t'*
under-prepare-INF
'to prepare for'
- b. *podo-j-ti*
under-walk-INF.
'to be suitable for'

After giving examples of the different meanings of *pod-* it should be clear on what basis I see all of these cases as representatives of a single meaning category. What the various types of abstract approaching have in common is the idea that when the subject moves closer to the object, it adjusts itself in such a way as to get mentally closer to the object. This adjustment is a central notion for what I call abstract approaching. Adjustment means here conforming to other peoples' expectations and changing one's behaviour accordingly.

2. Analogy and conceptual metaphor

How should we deal with polysemy interpreted as a meaning change from concrete to abstract, proven by the use of the same linguistic units? Two competing explanations are offered in this article. The first of these is that concrete and abstract notions are expressed by the same means because of analogy. The second alternative is based on conceptual metaphor theory, according to which the concrete domains in language influence the way the abstract domains are talked about because concrete concepts offer source domains for abstract concepts.

2.1 Analogy

Let us start with the term *analogy*. Itkonen (2005: 15) defines analogy as structural or functional similarity. Humans constantly seek analogical

models and classify them on the basis of their characteristics as compared to other models. This happens unconsciously. (Blevins & Blevins 2009.) Analogy is important because it involves a process of pattern-seeking (the word used by Blevins & Blevins (2009: 1)), which plays a crucial role in human behaviour and conceptualization. What is meant by pattern-seeking is the unconsciously working human capacity to find similarities, repeating patterns, and causal connections everywhere. This capacity is developed in humans in early childhood, and its most primitive forms, found in children from 10 months onwards, consist of noticing changes in one's environment and making connections between events and objects (Goswami 2001).

On the system level, analogy means that the functioning of a system is modelled by another system. More concretely, in analogy the functioning of two systems is similar because of the structural correspondences in the systems. The way that analogy works has been illustrated with various models that all describe analogy as making a connection or reference from one entity to another, drawing conclusions about the similarity in the functioning of the parts of different systems.

In linguistics the notion of analogy is traditionally used especially often in phonology and morphology, both of which include many examples of cases in which the tendency to become more similar on the basis of imitation is very clear. Analogy has also been used in language typology as a means of explaining similarity relationships between languages. When it comes to means of description, the linguistic notion of analogy has been described with the help of different kinds of equations and tables in which the corresponding notions (and sometimes also their functional units) are compared.⁷ This kind of description assumes that the analogy relation, based on perceived similarity, is by its nature straightforward. The similarity relationship described in terms of analogy can be of different kinds, depending on the number of factors taking part in it. The similarity results in a change in the members of the paradigm for a certain part of the word. No matter what the concrete form of the description for analogy is (a list, feature matrix, or table), it does not assume change in the resulting form (except for the part under analogy). In this way, analogy does not change the original model that contributed to the analogy.

The importance of analogy has been seen differently in different times and disciplines.

⁷ The information provided in the tables can be a result of very different kinds of operations on data, see Skousen, Lonsdale & Parkinson 2002.

Linguistic analogy has long been recognized as a major factor in language acquisition and language learning. According to Anttila (1977: 23), analogy is so important for linguistics because the very structure of language is analogical. It has also been seen (along with association and categorization) as a major factor in semantic change (Györi 2002). The study of analogy from the (cognitive) linguistic viewpoint has a strong link with the study of artificial intelligence and computer models (see papers in Helman 1988; Holyoak, Gentner & Kokinov 2001) and the psychological study of reasoning and memorizing (see Vosniadou & Ortony 1989). Analogy also has its place in the philosophy of science (Hesse 1988).

The role of analogy among different processes of conceptualization and learning has also provoked discussion. It has been claimed that analogy is equal to all reasoning and that it is the core of human cognition (Anttila 1977; Hofstadter 2001; Penn, Holyoak & Povinelli 2008; Blevins & Blevins 2009), the main mechanism of memory construction that ultimately explains all learning (Kokinov & Petrov 2001), a process used all the time in learning, reasoning, decision-making, creation of culture, and scientific reasoning (e.g. Gentner & Gentner 1983; Niiniluoto 1988; Holyoak & Thagard 1995), or an age-old phenomenon that was already in use thousands of years ago in poetry, philosophy, and religion and continues to be used constantly (Holyoak & Thagard 1995; Holyoak, Gentner & Kokinov 2001). Quite to the contrary, it has also been claimed that analogy is not a single cognitive process and because of this it cannot be given such a central position as has been done in the studies mentioned above (Hoffman, Eskridge & Shelley 2009). Itkonen (2005: 199) criticizes the notion that analogy is the basis for all thinking; in his view, the concept of “human thinking” would have to be defined too generally in order to come up with such a simplification. As a cognitive process, analogy has also been explained in relation to other processes such as categorization (Turner 1988).

The idea of different stages of analogy has also been used in creating various computer models for analysing analogy. One such model is that of Holyoak & Thagard (1995: 116–137), who have discussed the stages of selection, mapping, evaluation, and learning. These stages are unconscious cognitive processes that explain the importance of analogy in our conceptualization. There exists independent evidence for each of these stages.

Seeing the relationship between interconnected concrete and abstract things through the notion of analogy suggests that a concrete meaning has

been extended to cover abstract notions that have some kind of connection or similarity relationship with it. Analogy is the process that functions as a combining notion between several categories. It is based on structural similarities.

2.2 Conceptual metaphor theory and blending theory

Our alternative explanation, based on conceptual metaphor theory (Lakoff & Johnson 1980, 1999), assumes that metaphor, i.e. conceptualizing a thing through something else, is a central mechanism in human conceptualization. In this article I make use of the way that the blending theory (e.g. Fauconnier & Turner 1998, 2002) describes conceptual metaphors and other conceptual blends, since in considering how conceptualization is formed this is more precise than the traditional metaphor notation (e.g. SIMILAR IS CLOSE).

Conceptual metaphor theory assumes that in metaphorical conceptualization, which is one of the basic mechanisms of our conceptualization, a certain conceptual domain is understood via another domain, for example similarity in terms of proximity. In the process of conceptualization selected features of one thing are projected onto another thing as a result of the process called blending that involves two different input spaces (which correspond to conceptual domains in conceptual metaphor theory if we assume the blend to be conventionalized). The characteristics of the different input spaces form a new mental space, the blend, into which selected features of the different inputs are projected with the help of the correspondences set by a separate mental space known as the generic space, which makes the blend possible. The generic space contains the possible common features of the two input spaces.

The use of the notion of blends does not in itself contradict the possibility of assuming that the blend also involves analogy as a way of forming the connections. Nevertheless, since the notion of blend, as is clear from its name, always includes the idea of mixing different categories, a pure analogy is, in my opinion, not a blend, because it does not involve the mixing of domains and it does not bring about change in the original domains or mental spaces. Another issue altogether is that pure analogy may be much rarer than one would think, and in many cases where analogy is seen there are actually blends or different forms of conceptualization processes following one another.

2.3 Metaphor and/or analogy

The difference between metaphor and analogy requires further commentary. Both terms are often used without specifying the meaning of the term and sometimes interchangeably. They are also described in a very similar manner. For example, the notions of embodiment, projection, and mapping that are central especially in the metaphor studies of 1980s are used in analogy literature of the same period as well. The same goes for forms of description used in those studies such as the use of image schemata in describing both. See, for example, Johnson (1988).

Fauconnier & Turner (2002) deal with the question by explaining that in analogical projections the source domain is mapped onto a target domain so that inferences easily available in the source are exported to the target and we can thus reason about the target on the basis of a structure-mapping only, while in conceptual blending the blend consists not only of the correspondences between structures, but forms a new domain that is in use when we think and talk about the notions involved. Further, they use the term *analogy* to describe a vital relation that depends upon role-value compression in a blend (ibid: 98–99). In this way it is obvious that Fauconnier & Turner (ibid) do not see analogy and conceptual blending as mechanisms of the same level, but regard the role of analogy as much narrower.

Many scholars have seen analogy and metaphor as separate but related concepts, since both are cases of cross-domain mapping. Holyoak & Thagard (1995) think that the mental processes behind the two are partly the same, but the phenomena themselves are not. For them metaphor is a figurative device linked to analogy. Gentner et al. (2001) also deal with metaphor and analogy as (partly) different phenomena. For them, metaphor, analogy, and similarity are related concepts that cannot be fully differentiated from one another. They distinguish between novel and conventional metaphors, and for them only novel metaphors are mappings between different domains and as such similar to analogy. The difference between metaphor and analogy as they see it is that many metaphors are also analogies, but not vice versa, because metaphor can be, besides analogy, based on shared features, or on both analogy and shared features. Therefore Gentner et al. (2001) call conceptual metaphors “extended analogical mappings”.

Analogy and metaphor can also be seen as representing the same phenomenon. According to Blevins and Blevins (2009: 7–8), metaphor is

simply a semantic analogy. Itkonen (2005: 35–44) sees metaphor as a kind of analogy.⁸ Onikki-Rantajääskö (2001: 34–38) sees analogy as schematic and metaphor as one form of analogy. This interpretation means that analogy is a very common tendency in language, explaining much of its formal regularity and change.

Thus, there is no commonly accepted truth on the relationship between analogy and conceptual metaphor. My view of analogy is that it is a pattern-seeking process of conceptualization in which a cross-domain mapping takes place. This mapping is based on structural similarities in the systems. These similarities provoke in our system of conceptualization the unconscious need to deal with different issues as the same on the basis of their similarity. Conceptual metaphor, for its part, is also a cross-domain mapping, but in it the similarity that explains the mapping is formed in the process whereby features of the domains change into something new in blending. If we wish to use the term *analogy* for a process which is seen to create objects that have characteristics not fully explainable by the predecessor in the analogical chain, we need to find more precise ways of describing this kind of analogy. The notion of blend is useful especially for the way that it helps to explain the changing power of analogical processes.

3. Material and methods

The material analysed consists of a list of 73 verb infinitives. They are part of a corpus consisting of the 501 prefixed verbs with *pod-* found in the entry for *pod-* and in the separate entries for words with *pod-* in *Bol'shoj Tolkovyj Slovar'* (Kuznecov 1998), the most comprehensive single-volume dictionary of contemporary Russian. The 73 verb infinitives were selected on the basis that only they represent the meaning categories of concrete and abstract approaching. The verbs included are listed in the Appendix, which also shows whether each of them can be used only in the meaning of abstract approaching, only in the meaning of concrete approaching, or both. Some of the prefixed verbs included have other meanings in addition to concrete and/or abstract approaching, but in this paper those meanings are not commented upon or even included in the glosses.

⁸ Itkonen also criticizes the way that blending theory is sometimes used in a very vague manner, in the sense that could in his opinion simply be called combining (2005: 43–44).

The material illustrates two related meaning categories whose interrelationship is easy to prove because these same prefixed verbs are so systematically used in both meanings. The purpose of this material is to illustrate the way that differentiating between analogy and conceptual metaphor affects the interpretation of the difference between meaning categories and the functioning of polysemy.

The infinitive forms in themselves show us with which verbs the prefix can be combined and what meanings result from this combination. I use examples from the Russian National Corpus (www.ruscorpora.ru) to further illustrate the meaning of the verbs. These examples have not been used in classifying the prefixed verbs: the classification is based solely on the infinitive forms. This article uses the notions of Landmark (LM) and Trajector (TR) to describe the way in which one object (TR) moves in comparison to another (LM) (see Langacker 1987). These notions have been used in describing the meanings of prefixes (especially the concrete spatial ones). (For example, Janda 1986.)

4. Results: Concrete and abstract approaching and explaining them by analogy or metaphor

The analysis of the material shows a number of tendencies in the meanings of concrete and abstract approaching. Coming close in concrete terms means that the thing moving comes up to a certain limit but does not touch the landmark. Touching can still be the intention of the actor or even presupposed to happen immediately after reaching the destination. The combination of *pod-* with a verb does not, however, assume it. See examples (6)–(7).

(6) *pod-gres-t-is'*
under-row-INF-REFL
'to row oneself up to'

(7) *podo-dvi-nu-t'*
under-move-little-INF
'to move closer'

In (6) *pod-* is used to indicate rowing up to the point of destination. It is reflexive, so the subject is assumed to row him/herself where needed.⁹ In this way, (6) demonstrates a case in which the subject is the moving trajector and the destination is the landmark. For example, *podgrestis' k beregu* 'row to the shore, get to the shore by rowing'. In (7), the destination will be given with the prepositional construction *k* + dative. The object that is moved is a trajector that moves closer to something; the extent to which it moves can be expressed, but this is optional. The main point seems to be that after the movement the trajector will be closer to the landmark. For example, *Kazalos' by, prosto: pododvinut' stul k rojalju i igrat'*. 'It would seem to be an easy task – to **move** the stool **closer** to the piano and play'.

Whereas in concrete approaching the movement brings the object closer, in abstract approaching the coming closer is not physical, but nevertheless has a physical basis in our conceptualization since abstract closeness is related to the need for some kind of communication or exchange. Adjustment is a central notion for abstract approaching. The action involved is modified or adjusted in one way or another to make it more suitable or profitable. Different kinds of adjustment include both such notions as toadying and bribery and more positive things such as inspiring and making more suitable. For example:

(8) *pod-kupi-t'*
under-buy-INF
'to bribe', 'to make an impression on'

(9) *pod-ygr-yva-t'*
under-play-REP-INF
'to toady'

In (8) the person can be 'bought from under', i.e. bribed. This approaching comes with a concrete reward. It can also mean the kind of buying that does not involve money, attracting someone to one's side by actions that are so overwhelmingly impressive or inviting that the object of 'buying' is won over. The achievements of the subject in this case are estimated to be equivalent to a substantial amount of money in their power to win others over. For example *Volodja okončatel'no podkupil moe serdce vkusnymi,*

⁹ The same verb can also be used without the reflexive postfix *-sja* (realized in this case as *-s'*).

mjagkimi buločkami. ‘Volodja finally **won** my heart with delicious soft buns.’

In (9), toadying in order to get some kind of benefit from approaching has to do with the way that friends and family favour one another even unconsciously because of their physical closeness. Trying to get oneself into such a position, i.e. approaching in opinion or pretending to do so, is expressed by combining the verb with the notion of approaching, signalled by the prefix *pod-*. For example, *Poetomu my **podygryvaem** toj auditorii, kotoraja važna našemu reklamodatelju.* ‘That’s why we **play up to** the audience that is important for our advertiser.’ There are actually 11 different verbs in the material with the meaning of toadying or ingratiation. Many of them, for example (10a)–(10c), can be translated as ‘to lick someone’s boots’.

- (10) a. *pod-lasti-t’-sja*
under-make up to-INF-REFL
‘to lick someone’s boots’
- b. *pod-liza-t’-sja*
under-lick-INF-REFL
‘to lick someone’s boots’
- c. *podo-l’sti-t’-sja*
under-tempt-INF-REFL
‘to lick someone’s boots’

In these verbs approaching takes the form of putting oneself (seemingly) under someone else in order to please him/her. This means adjusting one’s behaviour in a way that pleases the other person. The idea of doing it from the downside where there is less power is also included, as is the idea of putting oneself down by licking things that are considered to be dirty. For example *Dela svoji ispolnjal ispravno, v durnom ne zamečalsja...razve čto **podol’stit’sja** ne umel.* ‘He did his work and did not give reason for complaint...the only problem was that he did not know how to **lick the others’ boots.**’

Adjustment can also take the form of incitement or inspiration. The example (4a) *podzadorit’* involves abstract approaching in the form of provoking someone into doing something. In this case the provocation means supporting the decision to do something, bringing closer to doing it. For example *Nu, čego že vy stoite? **podzadorila** ona detišek. – Begite,*

darite mamam... ‘Why are you standing there? she **urged** the children. – Go and give the presents to your mums’.

Coming close can also mean being suitable. The example (5b) *podojti* means concretely going close to something. In its abstract uses it indicates suitability. For example *Edinstvennoe, čto ja mogu posovetovat’, čitat’ kak možno bol’she po sootvetsvujuščej tematike, iskat’, vybirat’ to, čto možet podojti Vam i Vašemu rebenku.* ‘The only advice I can give is to read as much as possible on this subject, look specifically for something that **suits** you and your child.’ The idea of coming close as being suitable for something involves presenting the notion of usability and suitability as reachability. Circumstances that make things possible are things that are close enough.

Podgotovit’ (5a) means preparing something with adjustments and slight changes. If the same verb stem is used without the prefix, the action involved is made in a more general manner, without paying attention to the concrete details of adjustment. For example: *Moja zadača – podgotovit’ reformu sejčas.* ‘My job is to **prepare** the reform now.’ This indicates that when the reform is planned the preparations involve taking a close look at the concrete adjustments needed in this concrete case.

Another kind of adjustment takes place when a secondary action is formed in the shadows of another action. These cases involve an adjustment in order to fulfil the expectations having to do with a particular role. For example: (11a)–(11d).

- (11) a. *pod-da-k-iva-t*¹⁰
 under-yes-say-REP-INF
 ‘to say yes to’, ‘to nod along’, ‘to echo’
- b. *pod-mah-iva-t*
 under-wave-REP-INF
 ‘to wave in the same rhythm’
- c. *pod-pe-va-t*
 under-sing-REP-INF
 ‘to sing along’

¹⁰ Folk etymology finds here also the stem *-kiv-* meaning ‘to nod’.

- d. *pod-tveržd-a-t'*
 under-assure-REP-INF
 'to confirm'

In these verbs the secondary action is made abstractly close to another action that it accompanies. The same movement (a), rhythm (b), melody (c), or model (d) that is being echoed or imitated gives the common ground for the connection between the actions. For example: *A ved' on, sobstvenno govorja, daže ne trepalsja, a prosto glupo i slepo **poddakival** svoemu sobesedniku.* 'And he was, strictly speaking, not even fluttering, but just **echoed** his interlocutor stupidly and blindly.' Another example of a similar meaning with 7c) could be *Vkjučala svoju kassetu i **podpevala.*** 'She put her cassette in the recorder and **sang along.**'

Even if the case of confirming may seem different, what it has in common is the way the action is being modelled by another kind of action. For example *Ih naznačenie – **podtverždat'** podlinnost' elektronnoj podpisi.* 'Their purpose is to **confirm** the authenticity of the electronic signature'. Confirming, as opposed to just affirming (*utverždat'*), includes the notion of imitating, since the thing confirmed is approached through similarity.

In meanings involving abstract approaching, as in the examples above, the trajector that moves in comparison with the placement of the landmark is the person that approaches another in opinion, while the other person is the landmark. The notion of approaching, moving towards something is in itself not physical, and as such the increase in proximity cannot be measured in absolute physical terms: it can only be relative to the previous situation. Since the motion takes place between people (although this is sometimes presented as ideas coming closer), both trajector and landmark are capable of moving, but in reality they do not necessarily move at all. Both meanings can take both animate and inanimate actors.

Cross-domain mappings happen both analogically and due to conceptual blending. When interpreted as analogy, the different parts of separate systems form connections in such a way as to make us see the similarities involved. When talking about conceptual blending, the relationship consists not merely of (unconsciously) noticing the similarities in functioning, but the resulting blend shows how in our minds the two previously separate domains form a new domain that includes characteristics from both original domains. On the one hand, if we assume the relationship between concrete and abstract approaching to be analogical, we see that the classifying machine in our heads automatically notices the corresponding parts of these two systems and because of this

allows us to use the same means – in this case the prefix *pod-* – for describing both. If, on the other hand, we assume the relationship between concrete and abstract approaching to be metaphorical (a blend), we see the parts of these systems not only as having functional correspondences, but also as forming a new domain, which blends some characteristics from both original domains but has an independent existence. Furthermore, if we want to explain the existence and use of a certain meaning category, in this case the use of the same prefix for both concrete and abstract approaching, the thing being looked at is not the relationship between concrete and abstract, but the relationship between concrete approaching and something else that makes possible the creation of the meaning category (and thus also the mental space) of abstract approaching.

Interpreted as an analogy, the corresponding notions of concrete and abstract approaching are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. The analogy of concrete and abstract approaching

CONCRETE APPROACHING	ABSTRACT APPROACHING
physically close	mentally close
going closer physically	changing to be more similar-minded, adjusting
able to touch	able to come into contact with
able to hear	able to be influenced
the one that approaches	flatterer/imitator/adaptable person
the thing being approached	the one imitated/flattered/dominating
doing “close to”	doing in a similar manner
under	influenced

In thinking about how abstract approaching has acquired the meaning that it conveys in modern language use, one could first assume that this is a case of analogy. Coming concretely and abstractly closer have several things in common – many features that make abstract approaching seem like concrete approaching. This impression is reinforced by the use of the same verbs in both meanings. The things involved in abstract approaching, such as becoming more similar, have a concrete basis in the sense that people have a tendency to wish for more intimacy with people they agree with and have most in common with. In this way, the wish for concrete closeness is blended in our understanding with the wish to benefit from abstract closeness. Nevertheless, the shift is not total – concrete meanings have

retained their significance, and the notion of abstractly coming closer (in opinion) has only been added to them.

This description of an analogy shows how concrete and abstract approaching have corresponding functional parts. The analogy interpretation would assume that when talking about abstract approaching the functional similarities between these parts – such as the way we go physically closer in the domain of concrete approaching and go mentally closer in the domain of abstract approaching – make it possible for us to use the same prefix for both notions. The table showing analogical correspondences between the two meanings cannot describe the way that this analogy has developed. Historical linguistics can provide further evidence of the order and timing of analogical processes.¹¹

The metaphor interpretation suggests that our conceptualization really blends conceptual domains when we use *pod-* for abstract approaching. This entails the assumption that concrete approaching is more primitive as a notion than abstract approaching. In this case the complex metaphor (blend) involved is Adjustment Is Approaching. Relating to the list of primary metaphors presented by Lakoff & Johnson (1999: 50–54), the primary metaphors involved here include at least Intimacy Is Closeness, Similarity Is Closeness,¹² Control Is Up. Primary metaphors are not blends because they are based on mappings between single concepts that draw on our everyday bodily experience and not on entire conceptual domains (or mental spaces). Primary metaphors can, nevertheless, function as inputs to blending. The primary metaphors mentioned here are based on evidence provided in earlier studies. The primary metaphor Similarity Is Closeness justifies the notion that approaching indicates an increase in similarity. Intimacy Is Closeness, for its part, makes understandable the way that abstract approaching uses approaching as a means for imitating and ingratiating. The primary metaphor Control Is Up explains the way that ingratiating and imitating work. Since the person in control is metaphorically above the others, attempts to get closer to that level – whether by imitating, ingratiating, or adjusting one's actions – are conceptualized as involving vertical movement (see Lakoff & Johnson 1980; Luodonpää-Manni & Viimaranta 2010; Viimaranta 2012).

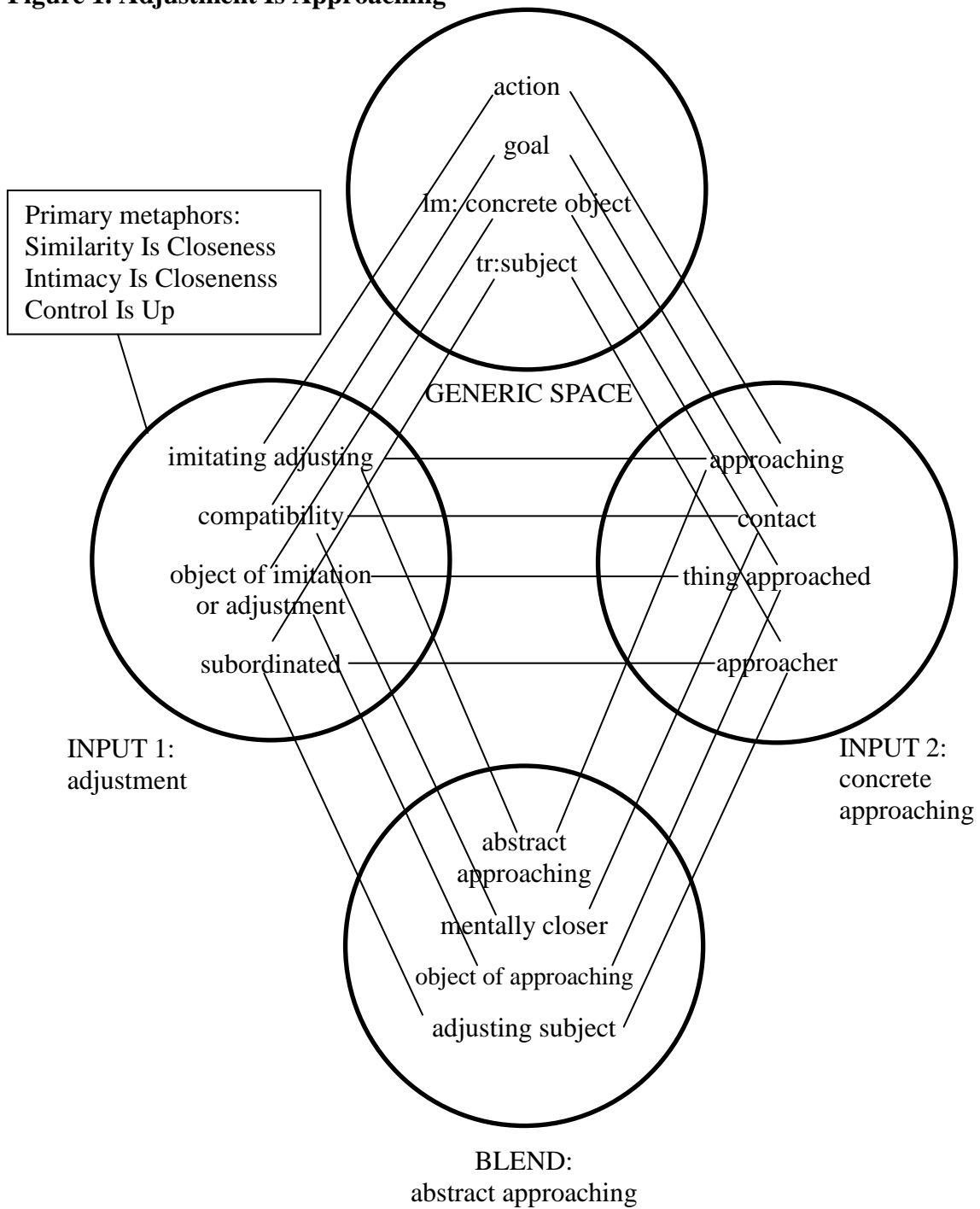
¹¹ As noted earlier, these processes and their stages can also be tested by experimental means (Holyoak & Thagard 1995), but these experiments have concentrated on the creation of new analogies as evidence for how the process works.

¹² The same conceptual metaphor has been called, at least, SIMILAR IS CLOSE, SIMILARITY IS CLOSENESS, and SIMILARITY IS PROXIMITY.

Designating the conceptual metaphor in question as Adjustment Is Approaching requires further explanation. The notion of adjustment is the target domain that provides us with the features needed to talk about abstract approaching. Concrete approaching is the source domain involved when talking about abstract approaching. The blending theory (for example, Fauconnier & Turner 1998, 2002) illustrates a conceptual metaphor as combining different mental spaces rather than having a one-way transfer from one conceptual domain (source) to another (target). The domains combined are described as input spaces, the things that they have in common (that make the blend possible) as the generic space, and the metaphor resulting from all this as the blend. The form of blend in this type of case that represents a metaphor is a single-scope network. This means that both inputs contain distinct frames and the blend is structured by one of the input frames.

In this case (see Figure 1) the input frames involved are Input 1 (Adjustment) and Input 2 (Concrete approaching). This means that the frame of adjustment is seen in terms of concrete approaching. As the evidence from Russian shows, this blend is conventionalized. It is a conceptual metaphor that has to do with our permanent ways of thinking. The blend Adjustment Is Approaching is a complex metaphor. In the case of both concrete and abstract approaching, the landmark is a concrete object, either animate or inanimate. In the blended space the landmark is the object of imitation or some other kind of abstract approaching. The action involved in Input 1 is adjusting or imitating; and it involves in Input 2 concrete approaching, which results in the action of abstract approaching in the Blend. The primary metaphors Similarity Is Closeness, Intimacy Is Closeness and Control Is Up affect the way that Input 1 is built. In both the input spaces 1 and 2 the action has a goal, which is compatibility in Input 1 and contact in Input 2. These goals are blended into being mentally closer in the Blend. The landmark involved is the object of imitation or source of adjustment in Input 1 and the thing being approached in Input 2, resulting in the object of abstract approaching. The trajector that moves is, in the case of concrete approaching, the subject of the sentence, concretely going or ending up closer to the landmark. In the case of verbs expressing a reflexive meaning, the trajector can also be the object that the subject calls (etc.) to his sphere of influence. In Input 1 the trajector is a subordinated subject and in the Blend the corresponding notion is the adjusting subject.

Figure 1. Adjustment Is Approaching



In all, this particular case does not contradict the other things known about the difference between analogical and metaphorical mappings. If the meaning of abstract approaching that the Russian prefix *pod-* has could be wholly explained in terms of pure analogy, this would mean that the central

(or “diagnostic”, in the terminology of analogy literature) features of concrete approaching would have been mapped as such onto abstract approaching and new features would not be necessary. For example, what in the domain of concrete approaching is the physical approaching itself, would be analogously mapped into the domain of abstract approaching without any additional features. So abstract approaching would simply be seen as concrete approaching since the analogy created between those quite different actions (moving towards and adjusting or imitating) would emphasize their similarity.

Dealing with the notions of concrete and abstract approaching as a case of analogy enables us to explain in the form of a table (see Table 1) the way that the meaning shift from concrete to abstract is based on certain correspondences between the fields. These correspondences can be seen to indicate the way that the human mind constantly seeks for similarity in patterns. The evidence from language, the way that the Russian prefix *pod-* is used both for concrete and abstract approaching, proves the point. The analogy interpretation is not, however, able to give any detailed information on either the content or the origin of the correspondences between concrete and abstract approaching. In this respect the metaphor interpretation is more illustrative. The two interpretations are, in the end, compatible in many ways.

5. Discussion

An ideal model of describing polysemy in Russian prefixes would be able to describe the connections between different uses (meanings) of the same prefix. Historically, prefixes have been formed from prepositions (or rather, the two have a common ancestor). The different uses of a certain prefix are related in a way that reflects both the historical development and the constant conceptualization processes of humans. As processes central to our conceptualization, both conceptual metaphor (and metonymy) and analogy are worthy of attention. Analogy is a form of cross-domain mapping in which the correlations noted are based on functional correspondences between the parts of the analogous systems.

The difference between two possible assumptions – that the relationship between concrete and abstract approaching is metaphorical, or that it is just one case of analogy widely found in language – is not only theoretical. This difference has to do with the whole issue of how we understand human conceptualization. If we assume that abstract

approaching in its different forms is merely a case of widening the meaning by analogy, we recognize in our conceptualization the ability to see similarities and make generalizations. On the other hand, if we assume this conceptualization to be metaphorical, we assume that human conceptualization is based on processes that are built not only on recognizing similarities, but also on making conceptual blends in which analogy is just one of the means employed. In this particular case, it is tempting to see the relationship between those meanings of *pod-* that I call concrete and abstract approaching as a case of analogy. The relationship between the meanings seems straightforward enough.

Analogy is a very broad notion used both in linguistics and in other fields. It is hard to deny its importance. If the description includes only the corresponding functional parts of different systems, the concrete functioning of the process is left undescribed. Conceptual metaphor theory is able to explain why we do not even notice that we use the same prefix for concrete and abstract notions. This is a result of conceptual blending that creates a whole new conceptual domain. Conceptualization of the abstract through something concrete is a widespread phenomenon. Conceptual metaphor theory traditionally sees the difference between abstract and concrete notions as a central reason for metaphorical conceptualizations. Coming concretely close can be perceived with our senses and concrete closeness can be measured unambiguously. Nevertheless, even concrete closeness can have abstract consequences – what is close enough or too close can be different for different people. Especially when the approaching objects are human beings, this aspect of the question can be of the utmost importance.

6. Conclusions

The starting point for this article was the way that languages (in this case Russian) can use the same linguistic units when expressing different meanings. The specific case studied was the use of verbs with the prefix *pod-* indicating approaching in concrete and abstract meanings. Analogy and conceptual metaphor were discussed as possible explanations for concrete and abstract meanings of the same combination of a verb with a prefix. The notion of analogy seems to offer a good explanation of how the functioning of concrete approaching has widened into abstract approaching. This relationship assumes that the characteristics of concrete approaching, and more specifically the way that the system of correspondences works in

it, has been analogously transferred into another system, that of abstract approaching. Dealing with some rather exotic meaning categories for *pod-* under the combined notion of abstract approaching helped to see the similarities between these three different abstract meanings and their relationship to concrete approaching.

According to my analysis it is nevertheless impossible, at least in this case, to explain all aspects of the relationship between concrete and abstract approaching with the notion of analogy only. The reason for this is that the cross-domain mappings involved include more complex cases of blending than mere analogy. In this way, although analogy can (also in this case) explain a great deal more than conceptual metaphor theory gives it credit for, it is not quite able to account for all the notions involved.

Thus, the notion of conceptual metaphor is necessary for explaining this case of polysemy, and it can be used to describe the meaning of other verbal prefixes as well. Analogy alone, although an important factor in language in general, is not sufficient for explaining polysemy and the widening and changing of meaning. It is one of a number of processes involved in conceptual blending.

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APPENDIX: The verbs studied

Concrete/abstract approaching (9)

podgonjat'-podognat' 'to urge on'
 podhodit'-podojti 'to come close, be suitable'
 podklikat'-podkliknut' 'to call, to hail'
 podmanivat'-podmanit' 'to beckon'
 podstupat'-podstupit' 'to approach'
 podstupat'sja-podstupit'sja 'to get near'
 podtjagivat'-podtjanut' 'to pull up to, tighten'
 podvodit'-podvesti 'to lead up to'
 podvozit'-podvezti 'to give a lift, to haul'

Concrete approaching (23)

pod"ezžat'-pod"ehat' 'to drive up to'
 podbežat'-podbegat' 'to run up to'
 podbrodit'-podbresti 'to roam up to'
 podčalivat'-podčalit' 'to moor to'
 podgrebat'-podgresti 'to row up to'
 podgrebat'sja-podgrestis' 'to row (oneself) up to'
 podkatyvat'-podkatit' 'to roll up to'
 podkovyljat' 'to hobble up to'
 podkradyvat'sja-podkrast'sja 'to sneak up to'
 podletat'-podletet' 'to fly up to'
 podnosit'-podnesti 'to carry to'
 podnosit'sja-podnestis' 'to bring up to'
 pododvigat'-pododvinut' 'to move up to'
 pododvigat'sja-pododvinut'sja 'to move oneself up to'
 podpolzat'-podpolzti 'to crawl up to'
 podpuskat'-podpustit' 'to allow to approach'
 podskakivat'-podskakat' 'to gallop up to'
 podtaskivat'-podtaščit' 'to drag up to'
 podtaskivat'sja-podtaščit'sja 'to drag oneself up to'

podvalivat'-podvalit' 'to steam in to'
 podvalivat'sja-podvalit'sja 'to join (the others)'
 podvolakivat'-podvoločit' 'to drag up to'
 podzyvat'-podozvat' 'to call up to'

Abstract approaching (40)

poddabrivat'-poddobrit' 'to cajole'
 poddabrivat'sja-poddobrit'sja 'to cajole'
 poddakivat'-poddaknut' 'to say yes, to assent'
 podgotovljat'-podgotovit' 'to prepare'
 podgotovljat'sja-podgotovit'sja 'to get prepared'
 podgovarivat'-podgovorit' 'to incite'
 podgovarivat'sja-podgovorit'sja 'to obtain by dropping hints'
 podhalimničat' 'to toady'
 podhalimstvovat' 'to toady'
 podkupat'-podkupit' 'to bribe; to win over'
 podlaživat'-podladit' 'to adapt'
 podlaživat'sja-podladit'sja 'to adapt oneself; to humour'
 podleščat'sja-podlestit'sja 'to toady'
 podležat' 'to be liable to'
 podlipat' 'to toady'
 podlizyvat'-podlizat' 'to toady'
 podlizyvat'sja-podlizat'sja 'to get benefit by licking someone's boots'
 podmahivat'-podmahnut' 'to sign (hastily), to scribble'
 podmaslivat'-podmaslit' 'to toady'
 podmazyvat'-podmázat' 'to toady'
 podmazyvat'sja-podmázat'sja 'to get benefit by licking someone's boots'
 podnačivat'-podnačit' 'to incite'
 podobstrastničat' 'to toady'
 podol'sčat'sja-podol'stit'sja 'to toady'
 podospevat'-podospet' 'to arrive in time'
 podoždat' 'to wait for'
 podpevat'-podpet' 'to sing along'
 podravnivat'-podravnjat' 'to align, to level'
 podravnivat'sja-podravnjat'sja 'to align oneself'
 podščelkivat' 'to click in tune'
 podsluživat'sja-podslužit'sja 'to fawn upon'
 podstykovyvat'-podstykovat' 'to attach'
 podstykovyvat'sja-podstykovat'sja 'to attach oneself'

podtverždat'-podtverdit' 'to confirm'
podvarivat'-podvarit' 'to heat up again; to boil up more'
podvyvat'-podvyt' 'to howl (a little)'
podygryvat'-podygrat' 'to make an impression on'
podyskivat'-podyskat' 'to try to find (a suitable one)'
podzadorivat'-podzadorit' 'to egg on'
podžuživat'-podzudit' 'to incite'

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