

Ну работа и работа: Russian constructions with reduplication

Norwegian:

“Double-subject-construction”:
Pronoun/Noun VP, Pronoun
(Vindenes & Eiesland 2019)

Du er rar, du!
Hu er morsom, hu!
*Det regner, det.
*Man bør lære seg dette, man.

Åpningsakten var flott, den.
*Åpningsakten var flott, åpningsakten.

Other repetitions of words:
“XP er XP” construction

Nok er nok!	Adv cop Adv
Mat er mat!	N cop N
Gjort er gjort!	Part cop Part
Stengt er stengt!	Part cop Part

Constructions

- Construction is a pairing of form and meaning at any level of generality (Croft 2001; Goldberg 2006; Fillmore et al. 1988)
- Construction is a central unit of language structure.
- Constructions contain anchor elements (e.g. er in “XP er XP”) and open slots (XP in “XP er XP”) that we can fill with a restricted set of elements.

Reduplication

- Narrow understanding:
The common definition restricts reduplication to morphology:
Reduplication is repetition of a morphological base (Haspelmath 2002: 274)
Indonesian: *kanak kanak* 'child' + 'child' = 'children' (Forza 2016)
- Broad understanding:
Reduplication is "a formal linguistic device that can be used at all levels of linguistic structure" (Maas 2005: 395)
Reduplication is doubling of linguistic forms at other levels of grammar (Forza 2016): morphology, phonology, syntax, text
In syntax: reduplication is a syntactic repetition of elements, words
- For our purposes: reduplication in a broad sense
Reduplication is a repetition of an element within a construction.

Examples of reduplicative constructions in Russian:

X есть X	<i>факт есть факт</i>
X – это X	<i>Москва – это Москва</i>
X такой X	<i>леди такая леди</i>
X значит X	<i>работать так работать</i>
X X-ом, а Y Y-ем	<i>дружба дружбой, а служба службой</i>
X так X	<i>нет так нет</i>
(ну) X и X	<i>ну работа и работа</i>
V не V, а	<i>Хочешь не хочешь, а надо поторопиться</i>
V-Inf V, но	<i>Читать читает, но мало</i>
etc.	

Terminology used for such expressions in the literature:

- конструкции с тождественными словоформами ‘constructions with identical wordforms’, редупликация ‘reduplication’, повтор ‘repetition’, удвоение ‘doubling, duplication’ (Sannikov 2008)
- конструкции с повторяющимися словесными элементами ‘constructions with repeated lexical elements’ (Iomdin 2013)
- tautological constructions, tautologies (Vilinbakhova 2006; Rhodes 2009; Escandell-Vidal & Vilinbakhova 2018) regarding the pattern X cop X
- reduplicative constructions (Forza 2016; Maas 2005)
- noun reduplications, constructions with reduplication (Giljarova 2009)

The Russian Constructicon:

<https://spraakbanken.gu.se/karp/#?mode=konstruktikon-rus>

- The Russian Constructicon a free open-access electronic resource that offers a searchable database of Russian constructions.
- Current version contains 1,244 constructions, and more items are constantly being added.
- Constructions are accompanied with thorough descriptions of their properties and illustrative examples from the Russian National Corpus (www.ruscorpora.ru).
- Descriptions are provided by linguists and translated into English and Norwegian.
- Designed for both linguists and L2 learners of Russian.
- Different levels of L2 proficiency (CEFR levels A1 – C2).

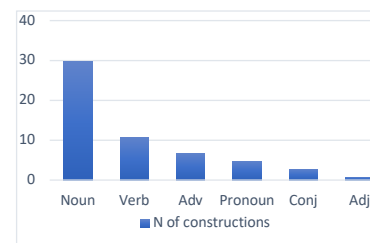


Figure 1: Reduplicated elements in terms of part-of-speech classes

N= 56 constructions with reduplicated elements in the Russian Constructicon

Case study: Pattern (ну) XP и XP, as in ну работа и работа

4 uses / readings:

A. SIMILARITY-reading

- (1) *Был у нас на заводе сотрудник. Ну, медведь и медведь.* (Sannikov 2008: 336)
(= чем-то похож на медведя)
'There was a colleague at our factory. Well, he looked /was clumsy like a bear' [lit. well, bear and bear]
- (2) *Профессор какой-то завалыщенький. Ну, бомж и бомж.* (Sannikov 2008: 377)
'The professor was kind of worthless. He looked like a homeless person. [lit. well, a-homeless-person and a-homeless-person]
- (3) *Этот бомж на вид такой солидный, интеллигентный. Ну, профессор и профессор.* (Sannikov 2008: 377)
'This homeless man has such a respectable, intelligent look. He looks like a professor.' [lit. well, professor and professor]

Semantics: Formal resemblance, similarity in appearance or behavior

Constructicon annotation: Comparison, Similarity

Synonymous constructions: XP XP-Instr (*медведь медведем*)

Restrictions on XP slot fillers: nouns (NP)

Status of NU: optional, appears frequently

B. NOTHING-SPECIAL-ABOUT-IT-reading

- (4) *Был у нас в зоопарке медведь. Ну, медведь и медведь. Что в этом такого?* (Sannikov 2008: 336) (= обыкновенный медведь).
'There was a bear in our zoo. Well, just an ordinary bear. [lit. bear and bear] What about it?'
- (5) *Сейчас я, наверное, не обратил бы на него внимания, ну американец и американец, чего тут такого. Тогда же он казался, честно, существом с другой планеты.* (Б. Щербиков. Миссия Йемен, 2009)
'Now I would probably not have noticed him, he was just an American [lit. an American and an American], there is nothing special about it. But then he looked, to be honest, as if was a creature from a different planet.'
- (6) *Как-то раз со стороны соседей стали слышны мяуканья. Раньше не было, а тут таак слышно стало! Ну, слышно и слышно. Подумаешь, завелась кошка у соседей. Ну и пусть живёт. Веселее даже.* (from Internet)
'One time we heard mewling (of a cat) from the neighbouring apartment. Earlier, there was not a sound, but this time one could hear it sooo well. Well, it was noisy. Not a big deal! [lit. noisy and noisy] The neighbours took a cat. Let it stay! Even more joy this way.

- (7) *А многим девушкам нравятся высокие мускулистые рельефные парни? Ответ: а что с них толку, ну красивый и красивый, дальше что?* (from Internet forum)

'Do many girls like tall muscular guys? Response: what's the use of them? Ok, someone is handsome, so what of it? [lit. handsome and handsome]

- (8) Заголовок поста: «Metallica - спела "Группа крови"». Комментарий: «Не понимаю, почему в СМИ это вызывает такой восторг, ну спела и спела и что?» (from Internet forum)

The title of the post: 'Metallica sang the song "Blood type" (of Viktor Tsoi)'

The comment post: "I do not understand, why mass media admires this event so much. It sang the song, so what? [lit. sang and sang]

Semantics: evaluation of an object, characteristics, or an activity as unremarkable, uninteresting, trivial, usual, and not worth special attention

Constructicon annotation: Assessment

Synonymous constructions: XP как XP (*суп как суп, ничего особенного*)

Restrictions on XP slot fillers: nouns (NP), verbs (VP), adjectives, predicatives

Status of NU: optional, appears frequently

C. ACCEPTANCE-reading

- (9) *В середине двухтысячных я приехал из Москвы в Воронеж на автобусе, подошел к первому попавшемуся таксисту, смачно жуящему чебурек, и попросил отвезти меня. На это таксист ответил, что у него обед. Ну обед и обед, могу и подождать, пока доест чебурек.* (from Internet)

'In mid 2000s I arrived from Moscow to Voronezh by bus, walked up to the first available taxi driver who was chewing a meat pie and asked him to give me a ride. The driver responded that he was in the middle of his lunch break. That is ok [lit. lunch and lunch], I can wait until he is done eating the meat pie.

- (10) Успенский бесится, кричит мне в телефон, что на спецпроекты у него денег нет. Ну, нет и нет. Я, разумеется, ему перезванивать не стал. [«Звезд а», 2001]

'Uspenskij is mad, he screams to me on the phone saying that he has no money for special projects. Fine with me [lit. no and no]. I obviously did not call him back.

- (11) Заголовок поста: Муж потерял обручальное кольцо.
Пост: Такая вот ситуация... Вчера обнаружили, что кольца у мужа нет... Где-то спало с пальца... Я так расстроилась, глаза на мокром месте... Вроде бы не суеверная, а переживаю... Может были у кого такие ситуации...
Комментарий: Да ерунда все это! У мужа моего кольцо не снимается, всегда на пальце, а вот я дурица, поругавшись лет 15 назад, выбросила его с балкона в Барселоне... потом пошли искать – не нашли, видно, в кроне деревьев где-то застряло... ну потерял и потерял, не думайте о плохом, всякое бывает! (from Internet forum)

Title of the post: 'Husband lost the wedding ring.'

Comment: '<...> that is not so bad [lit. lost and lost], do not think about bad consequences, things happen.'

- (12) *Дорога плохая. Упал он. Ну, упал и упал. Встал и дальше пошел.*
(Санников 2008: 378) 'The road was bad. He fell. Ok. Not a big deal [lit. fell and fell]. He got up and kept walking / moved on.'

Semantics: The speaker accepts the situation as it is, even if the situation is undesired. Mostly about past events.

Constructicon annotation: Attitude, Concession

Synonymous constructions: XP так XP (*работать так работать, что поделаешь*)

Restrictions on XP slot fillers: VP-Past, predicatives (net), nouns (mostly nominalizations)

Status of NU: optional, appears frequently

D. CONTINUATION-OF-ACTIVITY-reading

- (13) *Простите, но он еще, в общем-то, молодой человек. И ему еще здесь работать и работать.* [Ксения Аксельрод. Правительственный квартал в Сити как тест на лояльность (2003) // «Мир & Дом. City», 2003.03.15]
'Excuse me, but he is still pretty much a young man. And he is going to work here for a long time [lit. work (verb) and work (verb)].'

- (14) — *Я уж думала, он у нас заскучал. Но сегодня он просто расцвел. Говорит и говорит, прямо не может остановиться.* [Мариам Петросян. Дом, в котором... (2009)]
'I almost thought that he became bored here at our place. But today he simply brightened up (blossomed). He talks a lot [lit. talks (verb) and talks (verb)] and cannot not stop talking.

- (15) *Июль и август без конца работа и работа. Дел всех не переделать.* [А. Т. Авдеева. Дневник (1945)]
'In July and August, there was a lot of work to do [lit. work (noun) and work (noun)]. There was a lot to do.'

Semantics: The speaker refers to a lot of amount of activity or a lot of time spent on an activity.

Constructicon annotation: Continuation, Time, Intensity

Synonymous constructions:

Restrictions on XP slot fillers: VP-Inf, VP-finite, nouns (mostly nominalizations)

Status of NU: *nu* with VPs is optional; no *nu* with NPs

Conclusions:

- I argue that these four uses of the pattern (*ну*) XP и XP represent not a single construction with four different readings, but rather four distinct constructions.
- Uses B and C are close to each other.
- The pattern (*ну*) XP и XP is very productive in colloquial Russian.
- The Russian National Corpus provides has very little data for this study.

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