

**Interactions Between Pluractionality and Aktionsart: Yu (2003)**

**1. Some Background to Frame the Discussion**

**(1) A Summary of Lasnik's (1995) Semantics for Pluractionals**

Choose one element from each set to obtain a possible denotation for PA:

$$[\lambda P_{\langle e, t \rangle} : [\lambda e : |e| > n . \forall e' . e' \leq e \ \& \ \text{atom}(e') \rightarrow P(e')]$$

$$\& \forall e', e'' . e', e'' \leq e \ \& \ \text{atom}(e') \ \& \ \text{atom}(e'') \rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \neg T(e') \circ T(e'') \\ \neg K(e') \circ K(e'') \\ \neg \theta(e') \circ \theta(e'') \end{array} \right\}$$

$$\& \{ \neg, \emptyset \} \exists t . \left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{between}(t, T(e'), T(e'')) \\ \text{between}(t, K(e'), K(e'')) \end{array} \right\} \ \& \ \neg \exists e''' . P(e''') \ \& \ t = \left\{ \begin{array}{l} T(e''') \\ K(e''') \end{array} \right\} ] ]$$

Connectedness Parameter

Distributivity Parameter

**(2) Some Questions**

- a. What is the mechanism for 'selecting parameters'? Lexical ambiguity? Context dependency?
- b. What kinds of factors (if anything) affect the choice of parameter setting? How can we model / explain those?

**(3) 'Frequentative' (Pluractional) as Derivational Morphology in English**

Traditional English grammarians view many English verbs as containing (the remnants of) 'frequentative' morphology generally seen throughout Indo-European (-er, -le)

- a. Some Examples: (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Frequentative>)  
bat/batter, blab/blaspheme, bob/bobble, burp/burble, chuckle/??, crack/crackle, dab/dabble, drip/dribble, daze/dazzle, flick/flicker, flit/flutter, float/flutter, fond/fondle, gob/gobble, joust/jostle, nest/nestle, pat/patter, piss/piddle, prate/prattle, prick/prickle, scuff/scuffle, slide/slither, sniff/sniffle, speck/spackle, spark/sparkle, stride/straddle, tramp/trample, wag/waggle, wrest/wrestle, etc.
- b. Questions This Raises:
  - Do we want to say English (still) has pluractional morphology?
  - If not, on what grounds do we 'bracket' the phenomena in (3a)? Will applying those standards to other languages exclude other cases of alleged pluractionals?...

## 2. Background on Chechen and Its Pluractional Morphology

### (4) The Chechen Language

- Spoken by 1.5 million people in Chechnya (duh) and Georgia.
- Falls within the ‘Nakh’ branch of ‘Nakh-Daghestanian’
- Endonym is *noxchiin mott* ‘Chechen language’. The term ‘Chechen’ comes from Russian, as the people were first encountered in the town of Cheecheen.
- Highly understudied; main references are Nichols (1994), Matsiev (1995)

### (5) Basic Description of Pluractional Morphology in Chechen

- a. Like other Nakh-Daghestanian languages, about 20% (!) of verbs have a ‘pluractional’ variant.

- *Previous terms for this morphology:*  
‘perfective’ vs. ‘imperfective’; ‘durative’ vs. ‘non-durative’

- b. The ‘pluractional’ variant differs from the non-marked (base) verb in that the theme vowel is the high/front counterpart of the theme vowel in the base verb.

c. <u>Vowel Alternation</u>	<u>Examples</u>
a, aa ~ ie	<i>saga</i> ‘to shine’ ~ <i>siega</i> ‘to shine continuously’
ow ~ ii	<i>hxowza</i> ‘to rotate’ ~ <i>hxiiza</i> ‘to rotate repeatedly’
a, aa ~ i	<i>tatta</i> ‘to push’ ~ <i>titta</i> ‘to push repeatedly’

### (6) Some Additional Notes

- a. There are many verbs in Chechen that have high/front theme vowels which are *not* pluractional variant of other verbs.

*d.ieka* ‘to make sound’, *q’illa* ‘to become impoverished’

- b. There are many verbs that exhibit a *distinct* morphological marking, relating (exclusively) to whether its absolutive argument is plural. Some verbs allow for both pluractional marking and this ‘absolutive plural’ marking.

*lalla* ‘to chase’

	Non-Pluractional	Pluractional
Absolutive Singular	<i>lalla</i>	<i>lialla</i>
Absolutive Plural	<i>lakhka</i>	<i>liakhka</i>

- This will raise some key questions regarding ‘distributive readings’ of certain pluractional verbs...

### 3. Informal Description of the Semantics of Chechen Pluractional Morphology

#### (7) Three Types of Interpretation for Pluractional Morphology (Yu 2003)

- a. Frequentative / Habitual (repeated events)
- b. Distributive (multiple participants)
- c. Durative (prolonged event, extended time)

#### (8) Frequentative/Habitual Interpretation

- a. Under this interpretation, described as the ‘prototypical semantic effect’, the pluractional verb denotes repeated events of the kind denoted by the base verb.

- b. Illustration:

<i>d.uttu</i> ‘pour’	<i>d.yuttu</i> ‘pour repeatedly’
<i>molu</i> ‘drink’	<i>myylu</i> ‘drink repeatedly’
<i>loosu</i> ‘sift’	<i>lyysu</i> ‘sift repeatedly’
<i>q’oiq’a</i> ‘thunder’	<i>q’ieq’a</i> ‘thunder repeatedly’
<i>tosu</i> ‘throw/spit’	<i>tyysu</i> ‘throw/spit repeatedly’
<i>teba</i> ‘sneak up’	<i>tieba</i> ‘sneak up repeatedly’
<i>loocu</i> ‘capture’	<i>loecu</i> ‘capture repeatedly’
<i>loqu</i> ‘play/sing’	<i>loequ</i> ‘play/sing repeatedly’
<i>socu</i> ‘stop’	<i>soecu</i> ‘to halt repeatedly’
<i>khu’u</i> ‘sit down’	<i>khyyshu</i> ‘to sit down repeatedly’
<i>tottu</i> ‘to push’	<i>tyttu</i> ‘to push repeatedly’
<i>khoattu</i> ‘to ask’	<i>khoettu</i> ‘to ask repeatedly’
<i>qousa</i> ‘to pump/blow’	<i>qiisa</i> ‘to blow repeatedly’
<i>d.oolu</i> ‘to pass/climb over’	<i>dyyulu</i> ‘to pass/climb over repeatedly’

- c. Some Notes:

- Many of the V-alternations above are not ones mentioned in (5c). Are the vowels in the pluractional variants indeed all high/front?
- Yu (2003) does not provide sentences illustrating these meanings; thus, the full meaning of ‘repeatedly’ in these examples is not entirely clear.
- Most of the verbs in (8b) are translated as achievements or accomplishments:
  - Pour, drink, sift (?), thunder, throw/spit, sneak up, capture, stop, sit down, ask, pass/climb over
- Several of the verbs in (8b), though, seem to be translated as activities:
  - play/sing, push, pump/blow

(9) **Distributive Interpretation**

- a. There are a number of verbs in Chechen with the following property: when their absolutive argument is plural, the ‘pluractional’ variant of the verb must be used.
- b. Such use of the pluractional morphology is described by Yu (2003) as having a ‘distributive interpretation’

c. Illustration:

<i>ghoattu</i> ‘get out of bed’	<i>ghyttu</i> ‘get out of bed (several subjects)’
<i>loocu</i> ‘catch’	<i>loecu</i> ‘catch (several subjects ( <i>sic</i> ))’
<i>loqu</i> ‘sing’	<i>loequ</i> ‘sing (several subjects)’
<i>xoakhku</i> ‘lie’	<i>xoekhku</i> ‘lie (several subjects)’
<i>d.uuzhu</i> ‘fall’	<i>oegu</i> ‘fall (several subjects)’
<i>mar’iaqqa</i> ‘embrace’	<i>marlialkha</i> ‘embrace (several subjects)’
<i>lowzu</i> ‘step’	<i>lyyzu</i> ‘to walk around (several subjects)’
<i>huttu</i> ‘stand’	<i>hyttu</i> ‘stand (several subjects)’

d. Some Notes:

- Again, some of these pairs do not follow Yu’s initial description of the morphophonology (e.g. *mar’iaqqa* ~ *marliakha*)
- Recall that Chechen also has morphology indicating plurality of absolutive argument (6b). One might wonder to what extent the ‘distributive’ forms above are cases of allomorphy of the absolutive plural agreement in (6b).
- All these verbs appear to be obligatorily distributive *w.r.t.* their absolutive argument (*i.e.*, purely collective readings are not possible.)
- There don’t seem to be any clear generalizations regarding the Aktionsart of these verbs:
  - Activities: *loqu* ‘sing’, *xoakhku* ‘lie’, *d.uuzhu* ‘fall’, *huttu* ‘stand’
  - Accomplishments: *ghoattu* ‘get out of bed’
  - Achievements: *loocu* ‘catch’, *lowzu* ‘step’
- Under this ‘distributive’ interpretation, pluractional verbs can describe a plurality of events *taking place at the same time* (9e)

- e. (i)    diizhina        xoekhku        tkho.  
         D.lie.PP        lie-PLURAC    we  
         *We are lying down.*
- (ii)    ysh    niaxar ullie    hittira.  
         they door by stand-PLURAC  
         *They assumed a standing position by the door.*

(10) Interactions Between ‘Distributive Interpretation’ and Plurality of Absolutive

- a. Though the verbs in (9c) receive a ‘distributive interpretation’ with plural arguments, if the argument of the V is singular, a frequentative/habitual reading is obligatory.

(i) iza ocu myriahx duqa hxaalkhie ghittira.  
He that period very early got.out.of.bed-PLURAC  
*He often got up very early during that period of time.*

- b. When the absolutive argument of the verbs in (9c) is plural, then a distributive reading is *obligatory*, and a frequentative/habitual reading is impossible. (No negative data given; Yu (2003: 297))

(11) Key Puzzle: Interaction Between ‘Distributive Interpretation’ and *Again and Again*

- a. If a verb has a pluractional counterpart, *and* that pluractional counterpart allows only a frequentative/habitual reading (e.g. *loosu* ‘sift’), then the unmarked verb cannot be modified by *jukh-jukha* ‘again and again’.

- Rather, the pluractional counterpart must be used.

(i) naanas jukh-jukha dama liisira / \* leesira.  
Mother.ERG again.and.again flour sift-PA sift  
*Mother used to sift flour over and over again.*

- b. If a verb has a pluractional counterpart, *and* that pluractional counterpart allows a distributive reading (e.g. *d.uuzhu* ‘fall’), then the unmarked verb *can* be modified by *jukh-jukha* ‘again and again’.

(ii) jukh-jukha xaazh oahxa buuzhu.  
again.and.again apple down fall  
*The apple falls down again and again.*

- c. Yu’s (2003) Comment:

- The possibility of (ii) above suggests that the grammar of Chechen treats PA morphology with verbs like *buuzhu* ‘fall’ as being semantically non-contentful
- On the other hand, the fact that such verbs *can* be frequentative/habitual interpretations with singular arguments undercuts this!...

(12) **Durative Interpretation**

a. Under this interpretation, the pluractional verb denotes a ‘prolonged’ (rather than ‘repeated’) event of the kind denoted by the base verb.

b. Illustration:

<i>ghurtu</i> ‘attempt’	<i>ghiarta</i> ‘to attempt for a while’
<i>xowzhu</i> ‘ache’	<i>xiizha</i> ‘to ache for a while’
<i>q’eeqa</i> ‘to shine’	<i>q’ieqa</i> ‘to shine continuously’
<i>khwarzhu</i> ‘to choose’	<i>khwerzhu</i> ‘to choose for a while’
<i>d.odu</i> ‘to run’	<i>ydu</i> ‘to run for a while’
<i>zowzu</i> ‘to cramp’	<i>ziiza</i> ‘to cramp for a while’
<i>loqu</i> ‘to play/sing’	<i>loequ</i> ‘to play/sing for a while’
<i>teqa</i> ‘to crawl’	<i>tieqa</i> ‘to crawl for a while’
<i>lakha</i> ‘to look for’	<i>liekha</i> ‘to look for a while’
<i>q’aekhka</i> ‘to avoid’	<i>q’iakhka</i> ‘to avoid for a while’

c. Some Notes:

- Most of the verbs in (12b) are translated into English as activities:
  - ache, shine, run, cramp, play/sing, crawl, look for, avoid.
- A few, however, seem to be translated as achievements or accomplishments
  - attempt, choose
- Yu (2003: 300) reports that a frequentative/habitual interpretation is simply not possible for these verbs. (No negative data given.)

(13) **Key Puzzle: Interaction Between ‘Durative Interpretation’ and *For NP<sub>time</sub>***

If a verb has a pluractional counterpart, *and* that pluractional verb has only a ‘durative interpretation’, then the unmarked verb cannot be modified by durative adverbials like *jaalx swohxtiahx* ‘for six hours’.

- a. Ahxmed jaalx swohxtiahx idira / \*vedira.  
Ahxmed six hours.LOC run-PLURAC run  
*Ahxmed rand for six hours (nonstop).*

#### 4. Towards an Analysis: Pluractional Morphology and ‘Mass Interpretation’

##### (14) Key Puzzle: Interaction Between Pluractionals and Overt Event Quantifiers

If an adverb specifies the exact number of times an event of the type denoted by the VP occurs, then a pluractional verb *cannot* be used.

a. Illustration

Adama	takhan	yttaza	chai	melira	/	*miilira
Adam.ERG	today	ten.times	tea	drank		drank.PLURAC

*Adam drank tea ten times today.*

b. Some Notes

- This kind of pattern is reported by Xrakovskij (1997) for many other languages with pluractional morphology.
- There seems to be a similar set of fact in English; durative adverbials are not possible with VPs modified by adverbs like ‘six times’.

(i) Dave clapped (\*four hundred times) for ten minutes.

##### (15) Some Hypotheses Regarding This Phenomenon

a. Xrakovskij (1997):

Pluractionals denote pluralities of events that are uncountable or indefinite in principle.

b. Yu (2003):

Event pluralization (*i.e.*, pluractional marking) must yield a ‘mass interpretation’

- Just as we cannot modify a mass noun with a numeral (\*three mud), we cannot modify a pluractional (mass) verb with a modifier like *three times*.

##### (16) A Parallel with the Nominal Domain

Yu (2003: 304) notes that Chechen plural NPs cannot be modified by numerals.

a.	(i)	qwo	twop	(ii)	tuepash	(iii)	*qwo	tuepash
		three	gun		gun.PL		three	gun.PL
		<i>three guns</i>			<i>guns</i>			

It seems that there is a general incompatibility between ‘plural marking’ and numerical modification Chechen, perhaps because the former induces a mass interpretation?

(17) **Some Critical Comments**

- Yu (2003) is not entirely clear about what he means by a ‘mass interpretation’. This notion is generally left at a rather informal level.
- It’s also somewhat difficult to see how certain more well-known theories of the mass/count distinction would apply here:
  - Do pluractional verbs lack atoms (Link 1983)? How, exactly?
  - Are pluractional verbs in some sense ‘inherently pluralized’ (Chierchia 1994)?
    - Since they are derived verbs, that doesn’t seem applicable.
  - Are the atoms of pluractional verbs ‘vague’ (Chierchia 2010)? How so?
- It’s well known that mass nouns *can* combine with numerals through the mediation of measure phrases (*e.g.* three **cups of** mud). Is there anything comparable for pluractional verbs?

(18) **Yu’s New Analytic Goal**

Show how the hypothesis in (15b) might shed light on some of the preceding puzzles.

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**5. The Mass Interpretation of Chechen Pluractional Verbs**

Yu (2003: 306) begins by categorizing Chechen verbs according to the kinds of readings their pluractional variants allow for.

- Note that the actual Chechen verbs are not listed, only their English translations.



(18) **Distribution of Pluractional Readings**

	Verb	Frequentative	Distributive	Durative
a.	run			X
b.	show			X
c.	ache			X
d.	crawl			X
e.	choose			X
f.	look for			X
g.	avoid			X
h.	respect			X
i.	listen	X		X
j.	frown	X		X
k.	drive	X		X
l.	laugh	X		X
m.	sit down	X		
n.	pour	X		
o.	chase	X		
p.	drink	X		
q.	squint	X		
r.	catch	X		
s.	sift	X		
t.	stop	X		
u.	sing	X	X	X
v.	hug	X	X	
w.	stand	X	X	
x.	fall		X	
y.	lie		X	

z. The Six Classes of Chechen Verbs (Yu 2003)

- (i) ‘Pure Duratives Pluractionals’ (a)-(h):  
run, show, ache, crawl, choose, look for, avoid, respect
- (ii) ‘Pure Frequentative/Habitual Pluractionals’ (m)-(t):  
sit down, pour, chase, drink, squint, catch, sift, stop
- (iii) ‘Pure Distributive Pluractionals’ (x), (y): fall, lie
- (iv) ‘Mixed Frequentative and Durative’ (i)-(l): listen, frown, drive, laugh
- (v) ‘Mixed Frequentative and Distributive’ (v), (w): hug, stand
- (vi) ‘All Three Interpretations’ (u): sing

Following Yu (2003), we will examine each of these classes in turn...

## 5.1 Pure Frequentative/Habitual Pluractionals

### (19) Yu's Generalization for This Class

The verbs whose pluractionals have only a frequentative/habitual interpretation are all either accomplishments (*pour, drink*), achievements (*sit down, catch, stop*), or semelfactives (e.g. *squint, sift*).

#### a. Some Notes:

- Some 'frequentative/habitual pluractionals' in (8) also fit this generalization: *thunder, throw/spit, sneak up, capture, ask, pass/climb over*
- However, some verbs in (18zii) and (8) seem to be translated as activities: *chase, play/sing, push, pump/blow*
- Unlike Kalaallisut (van Geenhoven 2004), Chechen *does* allow bare achievements/semelfactives to be modified by durative adverbials like *for NP<sub>time</sub>* (19b). Of course, pluractionalization of these verbs is also possible.

- b.   xyyrana       nannas       swohxtiahx   dama leesira /   liisira  
      morning.ADV mother.ERG hour.LOC   flour sifted       sifted.PA  
      *Mother sifted flour for an hour in the morning.*

### (20) Frequentative/Habitual Reading and 'Mass Interpretation'

How is the frequentative/habitual interpretation in line with the proposal in (15b) that 'pluractionalization' must produce a 'mass interpretation' on the VP?

- Semelfactives, achievements and accomplishments share the property of having a 'clear endpoint'. Yu (2003) uses the following diagram: I ..... F<sub>def</sub>
- When these verbs are pluractionalized, they end up denoting activities; the events they describe have 'arbitrary final points': I.....F<sub>arb</sub>
  - Note:  
To my knowledge, Yu's claim that there is Aktionsart contrast between these pluractional verbs and their bases is (though plausible) not empirically demonstrated.
- "A mass, by definition is amorphous, without natural boundary. Thus, a mass interpretation of events naturally yields a boundless outcome, hence atelicity."
- Thus, the emergence of the frequentative/habitual interpretation of these verbs is held to result from a more basic, 'core' meaning of the pluractional: that it turns the converts the event predicate into a 'mass' term.

(22) **Some Unresolved Questions**

- a. Why is a distributive interpretation not possible for these pluractional verbs?
  - b. Why is a durative interpretation not possible?
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**5.2 Pure Durative Pluractionals**

(23) **Yu's Generalization for This Class**

The verbs whose pluractionals have only a durative interpretation are all either activities (run, show, crawl, look for, avoid), statives (respect), or inceptives/inchoatives (ache).<sup>1</sup>

a. Some Notes:

- o Some 'durative pluractionals' in (12) also fit this generalization: *shine, cramp, play/sing*
- o However, some verbs in (18zi) and (12) seem to be translated as achievements: *choose, attempt*

(24) **Main Puzzle:** Why does this class of verbs only receive a *durative* pluractional reading?

(25) **The Analysis, Part 1: Statives**

- Stative verbs have 'no inherent initial or final state. Yu uses the following diagram:  
(I) \_\_\_\_\_ (F)
- Since there is no real end point to a state, having many such states in sequence will simply lead to one single, uninterrupted sequence  
(I) \_\_\_\_\_ (F)

(26) **The Analysis, Part 2: Inceptives/Inchoatives**

- Inceptive/inchoatives lack an inherent end point; they denote transitions from one state to another; Yu uses the following diagram: I \_\_\_\_\_ (F)
- When we have many such events in a sequence, we get a structure like the following:  
I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ (F)
- "Without a final endpoint, the recurrence of an event will not be ... possible... at each point of recurrence, the original state is equal to the resulting state; the end result is a string of events that pertain to the same state, hence the prolongation."
- In subsequent events of (*e.g.*) 'opening', the initial state is one of the door already being open; thus, we don't get a change of state in subsequent inchoative events. Rather, we get a prolonged state of being open...

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<sup>1</sup> Though the verb *xowzhu* is translated as 'ache', it apparently means something closer to 'begin aching'.

(27) **A Worry:**

Does this explanation commit us to the view that an event of ‘the door opening’ could be one where the door is and remains open for some period?

(28) **Some Potentially Supporting Evidence**

- The most salient reading of sentence (28a) is one where the door goes from a closed to an open state, and then remains in the open state for three minutes.

a. The door opened for three minutes.

- Perhaps, following Yu (2003), what is going on with this ‘durative’ reading is that we have multiple events of the door opening, but in each the initial state is the same as the end state of the preceding event...
- Thus, there is one change-of-state from closed-to-open, followed by several repeated states of being open.

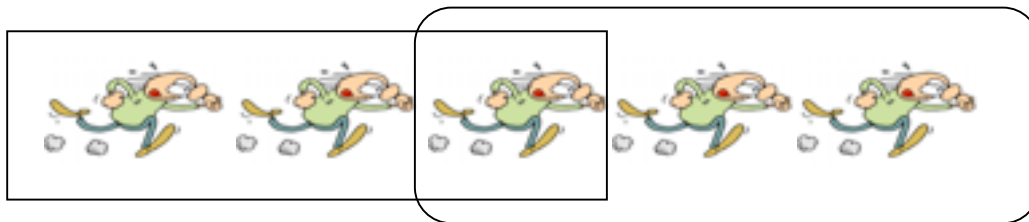
( closed ) I (open) \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ I \_\_\_\_\_ (F)

(29) **The Analysis, Part 3: Activities**

- An activity is a series of ‘stages’; e.g. ‘running’ is a series of ‘paces’.



- The endpoint of an activity is any one of these stages; it is homogenous in this regard
- Thus, the endpoint of any activity event could very well be the initial point of another



- Thus, when we string activity events end-to-end, we end up getting something that could also qualify as a single activity.
- Thus, the pluractionalization of an activity will naturally lead to a ‘durational reading’

### 5.3 Mixed Frequentative/Habitual and Durative Pluractionals

(30) **The Members of The Class** listen, frown, drive, laugh

(31) **The Analysis**

- Some activity verbs may in some contexts be understood as denoting events with natural endpoints.
- “It is, therefore, entirely appropriate that when an endpoint can be established...then all else being equal, an inherently durative pluractional might yield a frequentative reading instead.”
- “For example, the non-pluralized event of driving is compatible with either a telic or an atelic reading, depending on whether a destination of the driving event has been established.”
- “Thus, when a driving event with a destination... is pluralized, it naturally yields a frequentative situation type. However, if a destination is not specified, no endpoint is supplied. When such an event is pluralized, the resulting situation is analogous to the pluralization of activity verbs and yields a durative reading.”

(32) **Some Points of Criticism**

- Yu (2003) never explicitly shows that the kind of ‘context dependency’ mentioned above is indeed what controls whether the pluractional verb gets a durative or frequentative reading.
- It’s not obvious how the story told in (31) is to apply to verbs like *listen*, *frown*, *laugh*. What are the ‘telo’ they can be understood to have in context?
- Many other activity verbs besides *drive* also have the property mentioned in (31). For example, ‘running’ can either have a destination or not. So why aren’t these other activity verbs listed as belonging to the *drive*-class?

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### 5.4 Pure Durative Pluractionals

(33) **Verb Classes Left to Explain**

- a. Pure distributive pluractionals (18x,y): fall, lie
- b. Mixed frequentative/habitual and distributive pluractionals (18v,w): hug, stand
- c. All three interpretation pluractionals (18u): sing

(34) **Yu's Observation for This Class**

The verbs allowing distributive pluractional readings don't seem to fall within any one Aktionsart class.

- Activities: fall, sing, hug, stand, lie, embrace
- Achievements: catch, wake-up
- Semelfactives: step

(35) **Yu's Proposal Regarding Distributive Readings**

Distributive readings of Chechen pluractionals are not productively, semantically derived. Rather, they are simply lexically stipulated for various verbs.

(36) **Earlier Unresolved Questions About Distributions of Pluractional Readings**

- a. Why is a distributive interpretation *not* possible for the verbs in (18a)-(18t)?

Answer: Because they aren't specified in the lexicon as having one.

- b. Why is a durative interpretation not possible for the verbs in (18m)-(18y)?

Answer: Because the events they denote all have definite endpoints.

- c. Why is a frequentative/habitual interpretation not possible for the verbs in (18a)-(18h) and (18x,y)?

Answer: Because the events they denote all either (i) lack definite endpoints, or (ii) are merely a homogeneous succession of 'stages'.

(37) **Distributive Reading and 'Mass Interpretation'**

How is the distributive interpretation in line with the proposal in (15b) that 'pluractionalization' must produce a 'mass interpretation' on the VP?

(38) **The Analysis**

- Recall that verbs with distributive pluractional interpretations must appear in their pluractional form when their absolutive argument is plural (9a)
- Interestingly, if their absolutive argument is a *conjunction of singulars*, the pluractional verbs *cannot* be used.
  - (i) xyyrana johana'a elita'a so'a niaxur ullie dxa-hwettira / \*hittira  
morning.ADV Johanna.and elita.and I.and door by stand stand.PA  
*Johanna, Elita and I stood by the door in the morning.*
  - Moreover, if at least one of the conjuncts is a plural NP, then the pluractional verb must again be used.
    - (ii) xyyrana beerash'a elita'a so'a niaxur ullie dxa-hittira / \*hwettira  
morning.ADV children.and elita.and I.and door by stand.PA stand  
*The children, Elita and I stood by the door in the morning.*
  - As facts like the following from English show, conjunctions of singular DPs are 'quantized' expressions. Thus, if they are arguments of the verb, they will lead to 'quantized' (non-mass) VPs
    - (iii) I met with (students / \* Dave and Frank and Tom) for an hour
  - Thus, we can understand the contrast between (i) and (ii) in terms of the condition in (15b); the VP in (i) [but not (ii)] will not have a mass denotation, and thus will be incompatible with a pluractional verb.

(39) **Some Still Unresolved Questions We Are Left With**

- a. What *is* this 'distributive interpretation'? How does it differ really from the 'absolutive plural' marking in (6b)?
- b. For verbs whose pluractional variant has a 'distributive reading':
  - Why *must* the pluractional be used if the absolutive argument is plural?
  - Why is a frequentative or durative interpretation *impossible* if and only if the absolutive argument is plural? (*i.e.*, the are OK if the argument is singular)
- c. What is going on with the facts in (11)? We still don't have an explanation!
- d. What is going on with the contrast in (13) and (19)?
  - If the pluractional variant only has a 'durative interpretation', then the pluractional variant *must* be used then the verb is modified by *for NP<sub>time</sub>* (13)
  - If the pluractional variant has a frequentative/habitual interpretation', then either the pluractional variant or the base can be modified by *for NP<sub>time</sub>* (19)