

Phonology within morphology in South Slavic: The case of *OV* augmentation

This paper focuses on alternate modes of plural formation in South Slavic languages: all nominal roots in (1)-(2) combine with inflectional affixes marking number/gender/(case), but LIGHT roots, in (1), also combine with the formant *OV*.

(1) LIGHT roots

	Root	Singular	Plural	Dual	Gloss
a. Bulgarian	σ	park	park-ov-e		‘park’
b. Macedonian	σ	grad	grad-ov-i		‘city’
c. Slovenian	σ	glas	glas-ov-i	glas-ov-a	‘voice’
d. Croatian / Serbian	σ	rak	rak-ov-i		‘crab’

(2) HEAVY roots

	Root	Singular	Plural	Dual	Gloss
a. Bulgarian	σσ	mesec	mesec-i		‘month’
b. Macedonian	σσ	junak	junac-i		‘hero’
c. Slovenian	σσ	korak	korak-i	korak-a	‘step’
d. Croatian / Serbian	σσ	jelen	jelen-i		‘deer’

In all languages in (1)-(2), there are two crucial types of restrictions on the distribution of *OV*. First, the role of *OV* is clearly prosodic, since it co-occurs exclusively with LIGHT roots, those which have at most one syllable (or two, in some cases), and serves to enhance their size. Second, *OV* is morphologically restricted: it occurs only in LIGHT roots that belong to the *masculine* declension class, and only in their plural/dual forms. Although the other two declension classes, *feminine* and *neuter*, include monosyllabic roots, such roots remain LIGHT in both the singular and the plural/dual.

The prosodic distribution of *OV* is comparable to other cases of size enhancement in morphological forms in which minimal size is computed in terms of prosodic branching (McCarthy and Prince 1986, 1993, Downing 2006). But what distinguishes *OV* augmentation from typical size enhancement cases is the bounding role of morphology. In the proposed Optimality Theoretic analysis, the relevant size constraint makes reference to the stem, that is, to the morphological constituent smaller than the word, and mandates that it should have branching structure; this is interpreted as the general condition on the complexity of morphological heads. The augment *OV* is analyzed as an affix, in particular, an exponent of productive root allomorphy in the *masculine* declension class: LIGHT roots such as (1a) have the allomorphs (i) *park* and (ii) *parkOV*, with (ii) serving the specific role of the plural allomorph. This restricts the effects of the size constraint which, due to high ranking faithfulness constraints combined with morphological restrictions, emerges only in the plural forms of the *masculine* declension nouns. That *OV* is indeed an affix is further demonstrated by its pattern of productivity, and by a phonotactic co-occurrence restriction: after palatal consonants, *OV* is absent in Slovenian, and is realized as [ev] in all other languages. Thus, *OV* combines the properties of two types of empty morphs: it serves both as a phonologically beneficial size enhancer, and as a marker of a morphological class. In sum, the case of *OV* augmentation points to a general conflict between the phonological and morphological components. While phonology maximizes the domains of phonological processes, morphology exerts a minimizing effect by restricting them to, and making them markers of, morphologically defined lexical classes.