

Understanding Morphological Rules

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Stela Manova

Understanding Morphological Rules

With Special Emphasis on Conversion
and Subtraction in Bulgarian, Russian
and Serbo-Croatian

 Springer

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Foreword

Conversion and subtraction are morphological operations which have not aroused as much concern in morphological theories and descriptions as concatenative operations, but have proven to be of great theoretical interest. One main goal of Stela Manova's monograph is to achieve a theoretically deeper analysis of both operations (techniques) and to describe them in more detail and more exhaustively at least in three languages. One example of her results is the well-argued distinction between conversion proper, formal conversion and syntactic conversion in its application to several languages, also beyond Bulgarian, Russian and Serbo-Croatian.

Manova's approach is functionalist and integrates basic tenets of Cognitive Linguistics with semiotically-based Natural Morphology. The main contribution of Natural Morphology to her approach consists in differentiating, and elaborating on, relevant dimensions of its three subtheories:

- (a) In regard to universal morphological preferences she deals especially with the parameters of iconicity and transparency and develops a new scale of constructional iconicity, which helps her to refine and subclassify the concepts of conversion and subtraction.
- (b) In regard to typological adequacy, she elaborates on various morphological aspects of the inflecting-fusional type which is rather closely approached by Russian, Serbo-Croatian (both especially in nominal inflection) and Bulgarian (especially in verb inflection).
- (c) In regard to language-specific system adequacy, she deals with language-specific generalisations, for example in the domain of similar Russian and Bulgarian, as opposed to Serbo-Croatian, agent formation or of Bulgarian diminutive formation. In this respect she can explain also why diachronic rule inversions have emerged, resulting in subtractive morphology. Thus universal and typological preferences can be overridden, if the solution fits to clear generalisations of language-specific system adequacy. It should also be noted that Manova, in contrast to many other morphologists, systematically pays attention to prosodic patterns, including Serbo-Croatian intonation.

The main contribution of Cognitive Linguistics to her approach lies in Manova's appeal to standard prototype theory, whereby all members of a

category clustered around the most salient prototype must share at least one single property. Here she equates the prototype of a category of morphological technique with the most salient representative of it. First she establishes a scale of prototypical morphological techniques, according to constructional iconicity, ranging from pure affixation (the most natural one on the parameters of iconicity and transparency) over partial substitution, modification, conversion or zero affixation to subtraction (with emphasis on the latter techniques), thus excluding suppletion as a non-morphological technique. Then she describes graded clines between these prototypes, e.g. affixations accompanied by more or less substitution or modification.

Manova applies the concept of the prototype again in contrasting prototypical word-based morphology to non-prototypical stem-based and root-based morphology and in using the concept of a cline from prototypical inflection (similar to G. Booij's later contextual inflection) over non-prototypical inflection (cf. Booij's inherent inflection) to non-prototypical derivation (e.g. in diminutive formation) to prototypical derivation. This allows her, furthermore, to apply prototype theory to her concept of the morphological template of Slavic words and word forms which has the format: (prefix)-base-(derivational suffix)-(thematic marker)-(inflectional suffix). As expected, prototypical derivational suffixes fill only the derivational-suffix slot, prototypical inflectional suffixes only the inflectional-suffix slot, whereas non-prototypical ones may violate such strict one-to-one mappings. In such ways Manova can ascribe to clines subtle gradualness, which consists in discrete steps, not a rather unmanageable real continuity. Such elaborate interplay among her concepts adds consistency to her accounts and preempts potential objections of circularity. Moreover, interesting new generalisations are possible, e.g. that subtraction appears to be excluded from both prototypical inflection and root-based morphology.

This monograph felicitously mixes properties of item-and-arrangement grammars and of item-and-process grammars. For the former I want to cite again the concept of a morphological template of Slavic words and word forms, which is useful for the inflecting-fusional morphological type at large. The latter dimension holds, beyond the thorough theoretical and descriptive analysis of morphological operations, also for the subtle and innovatory discussion of criteria for establishing the direction of change in conversion and subtraction (vs. addition). Another example is Manova's detailed account of rule competition/rivalry. Her account predicts that more natural and especially prototypical operations have precedence over less natural ones in terms of productivity, semantic scope or stylistic restrictions.

The descriptive focus is on three Slavic languages which are typologically similar but differ in their proximity to the inflecting-fusional morphological type (Bulgarian less so than Russian and Serbo-Croatian) and pose so far underrated challenges to morphological analysis. Both conversion and subtraction, plus various shortening devices, exhibit different patterns than those well-known from discussions of English and other Western European languages.

Manova's analysis is not strictly bound to any linguistic school, but easily accessible to readers of any linguistic persuasion. Thus she is able to bridge the gap between contemporary West European and North American approaches and East European Slavicist traditions.

Vienna, Austria

Wolfgang U. Dressler

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This book is dedicated to my family and to the memory of the Bulgarian poet Михаил Берберов¹ (1934–1989). (I can still hear your voice: “Птици паят. Нека паят. Птиците са оптимисти.”)²

¹ Mihail Berberov and Mikhail Berberov in Latin script on the Internet.

² ‘Birds are singing. Let them sing. Birds are optimists.’

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Abbreviations

ACC	accusative
ACT	active
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverb
AOR	aorist
ASUFF	aspectual suffix
attr.	attributive
AUG	augmentative
Bg.	Bulgarian
colloq.	colloquial
COMP	comparative
DAT	dative
DEF ART	definite article
DIM	diminutive
DSUFF	derivational suffix
E.	English
FEM	feminine
F.	Finish
Fr.	French
G.	German
GEN	genitive
GSUFF	gender suffix
H.	Hungarian
HYP	hypocoristic
IMP	imperative
IMPF	imperfect
IMPFV	imperfective
IMPFV1	primary imperfective
IMPFV2	secondary imperfective
INSTR	instrumental
ISUFF	inflectional suffix
It.	Italian
Lat.	Latin

LOC	locative
MASC	masculine
metaph.	metaphoric
N	noun
NEUT	neuter
NM	Natural Morphology
NOM	nominative
OCS	Old Church Slavic
OBg.	Old Bulgarian
PART	participle
PASS	passive
PEJ	pejorative
PF	perfect
PFV	perfective
PL	plural
PRES	present
PRO	pronoun
PT	Prototype Theory
R.	Russian
REFL	reflexive
S.	Serbian
SC.	Serbo-Croatian
SG	singular
Sp.	Spanish
SUFF	suffix
SUP	superlative
T.	Turkish
TM	thematic marker
V	verb
VOC	vocative
WF	word-formation
Ø	zero

Transliteration from Cyrillic

Language	Letter	Transliteration
	<i>a</i>	<i>a</i>
	<i>б</i>	<i>b</i>
	<i>в</i>	<i>v</i>
	<i>г</i>	<i>g</i>
	<i>д</i>	<i>d</i>
S.	<i>ђ</i>	<i>đ</i>
	<i>е</i>	<i>e</i>
R.	<i>ё</i>	<i>ë</i>
	<i>ж</i>	<i>ž</i>
	<i>з</i>	<i>z</i>
	<i>и</i>	<i>i</i>
S.	<i>ј</i>	<i>j</i>
Bg., R.	<i>љ</i>	<i>j</i>
	<i>к</i>	<i>k</i>
	<i>л</i>	<i>l</i>
S.	<i>љ</i>	<i>lj</i>
	<i>м</i>	<i>m</i>
	<i>н</i>	<i>n</i>
S.	<i>њ</i>	<i>nj</i>
	<i>о</i>	<i>o</i>
	<i>п</i>	<i>p</i>
	<i>р</i>	<i>r</i>
	<i>с</i>	<i>s</i>
	<i>т</i>	<i>t</i>

S.	<i>h</i>	<i>ć</i>
	<i>y</i>	<i>u</i>
	<i>φ</i>	<i>f</i>
Bg., R.	<i>x</i>	<i>x</i>
S.	<i>x</i>	<i>h</i>
	<i>u</i>	<i>c</i>
	<i>ч</i>	<i>č</i>
S.	<i>μ</i>	<i>dž</i>
	<i>uu</i>	<i>š</i>
Bg.	<i>uy</i>	<i>št</i>
R.	<i>uy</i>	<i>šč</i>
Bg.	<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ǎ</i>
R.	<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ѣ</i>
R.	<i>ѣl</i>	<i>y</i>
Bg., R.	<i>ѣ</i>	<i>'</i>
R.	<i>ѣ</i>	<i>è</i>
Bg., R.	<i>ю</i>	<i>ju</i>
Bg., R.	<i>я</i>	<i>ja</i>

Additional Old Church Slavic / Old Bulgarian characters used in the text:

<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ě</i>
<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ѣ</i>
<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ѣ</i>
<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ѣ</i>
<i>ѣ</i>	<i>ѣ</i>

Notes

1. In this book, all examples from languages that use Cyrillic script (i.e. Bulgarian (Bg.), Russian (R.) and Serbian (S.)) are transliterated, according to the table above.
2. A blank language column indicates that the respective Cyrillic character is found in the alphabets of all three languages, Bulgarian, Russian and Serbian.
3. In the current book, Serbo-Croatian is meant as representing Bosnian, Croatian and Serbian. Of these, only Serbian uses Cyrillic script, Bosnian and Croatian use Latin script, i.e. the transliteration of Serbian is the Bosnian/Croatian spelling (see, however, Section 1.2.1).