Slovenian verb

Structure: Root(√)-Theme(e)-Tense&Agreement Morphology(φ).

• Theme vowels:
  1. √-01-INF  √-02-1PL (3) √-01-INF  √-02-1PL
    a. sp-ar-i     b. sp-i-mo   a. pas-s-ti   b. pas-e-mo
    'to sleep'  'we sleep'  'to graze'  'we graze'
  2. √-01-INF  √-02-1PL (4) √-01-INF  √-02-1PL
    a. del-a-ti   b. del-e-mo   a. s-o-ti   b. s-e-mo
    'to work'  'we work'

• Roots display restrictions on their phonological form.
  In verbs without root allomorphy, (1-3), roots either have a vowel (e.g. del) or are consonantal (e.g. sp), but there are no verbs with a zero theme vowel and a consonant root, (4).
  In verbs with root allomorphy, there is always a combination of the two: one allomorph of the root contains a syllable, whereas the other is consonantal:

  1. √-01-INF  √-02-1PL (3) √-01-INF  √-02-1PL
    a. žanja-mo   b. sch-i-mo   a. pas-s-ti   b. pas-e-mo
    'to read'  'we read'  'to graze'  'we graze'
  2. √-01-INF  √-02-1PL (4) √-01-INF  √-02-1PL
    a. žens-ti   b. sch-e-mo   a. s-o-ti   b. s-e-mo
    'for'  'we are'

• Roots can have different theme vowels in finite and non-finite forms, but they do not have to:

- No verbs with two consonantal or two syllabic root allomorphs:

  1. √-01-INF  √-02-1PL (3) √-01-INF  √-02-1PL
    a. žanja-mo   b. sch-i-mo   a. pas-s-ti   b. pas-e-mo
    'to read'  'we read'  'to graze'  'we graze'
  2. √-01-INF  √-02-1PL (4) √-01-INF  √-02-1PL
    a. žens-ti   b. sch-e-mo   a. s-o-ti   b. s-e-mo
    'for'  'we are'


Structure of the verb with the focus on theme vowels

Theme vowels (TV) are typically assumed to be purely ornamental (Embick 2010, Oltira-Massuet 1999, Calabrese 2015).

• Too strong for Slovenian.

Correlations between TV-classes and argument structure.

The TV-class e-i (e.g. zven-e-i ‘to sound’, zven-i-mo ‘we sound’):
  • tends to correlate with inchoative argument structure (Marvin 2002),
  • lists the bottom of the acceptability of an ACC complement,
  • majority of unaccusative verbs identified in Ilic&Marin (2016).

Lesson? Not all theme vowels are alike.

Link to prosody

• Cue: TV-class e-i has a strong tendency for stressed TV
  • Simonović&Mišmaš (2020): Verbal stress follows from the structure.
  • Observation: Verbs have 2 positions for stress: on the TV or root-final.
  • Analysis: Two cycles and two positions for theme vowels (one within the root cycle and one outside of it).
  • Stress is always placed in the end of the root cycle.

Next stop: Root allomorphy

Cyclic Spellout predicts that the form of the root allomorphs will be decided based on the information available in the cycle.

Challenge 1: Can this account for the restrictions on the prosodic shape of allomorphs?

Challenge 2: Can it account for alleged cases of non-local allomorphy in Slovenian?

In verbs with root allomorphy:
  no verbs with two consonantal or two syllabic root allomorphs
  (e.g. žanja-mo or žens-ti)

In verbs without root allomorphy:
  no verbs with a zero theme vowel and a consonant root
  (e.g. žanja-mo)

What do we account for? Restrictions on the phonological form of root allomorphs.

In our model, each of these representations would lead to a regular, non-allomorphic paradigm.

(i) [žanja, žanja]: would always get inserted [žanja-e-ti-žanja-e-mo] (an attested pattern, e.g. im-e-ti-im-e-mo ‘to know, we know’).

(ii) [žanja, žanja]: would always get inserted [žanja-e-ti-žanja-e-mo] (an attested pattern, e.g. im-e-ti-im-e-mo ‘to know, we know’).

(iii) [žanja, žanja]: some kind of repair would have to apply, but it would apply to the first allomorph in both cases, hence no root allomorphy.

What do we account for? Restrictions on the phonological form of root allomorphs.

In verbs with root allomorphy:
  no verbs with two consonantal or two syllabic root allomorphs
  (e.g. žanja-mo or žens-ti)

In verbs without root allomorphy:
  no verbs with a zero theme vowel and a consonant root
  (e.g. žanja-mo)

Further issues: Our account only relies on the phonological restriction for 22 roots.
For 2 roots (bāł-bojjmo ‘to fear’ ‘we fear’ & stāl-stōjino ‘to stand’ ‘we stand’) we need to assume allomorphic V(t3) (still local).