This paper discusses the structure of the Slavic word (with data from Bulgarian, Russian and Polish) in the light of recent advancements in affix order research (Manova & Aronoff 2010). The analysis is based on suffix order peculiarities typical of the different word domains.

It is argued that the Slavic word has three domains, two derivational, non-evaluative and evaluative, and one inflectional. (The term ‘evaluative’ is used here in the sense of Scalise 1984.) Each domain can accommodate more than one suffix and exhibits suffix order peculiarities of its own (cf. Manova 2010).

The non-evaluative derivational domain allows for suffix permutations of the type XY and YX (illustrated in (1)) and in this domain a suffix can be used recursively on non-adjacent cycles, i.e. XYX (see (2)). In the evaluative derivational domain, a suffix may, depending on the language (e.g. in Bulgarian), participate in mirror image combinations of XY and YX type (3), i.e. like in the non-evaluative domain. However, evaluative suffixes, unlike the non-evaluative ones, can be used recursively on adjacent cycles only, i.e. the combination XX is fine in evaluative derivations (4). In Bulgarian, even XXX is attested in diminutives (5). Intriguingly, not all diminutive suffixes can be used to derive second- and third-grade diminutives. Of the relatively large set of diminutive suffixes that a Slavic language possesses, only up to three suffixes occur in recursive diminutives. Thus, the combinations of two (or more) evaluative suffixes are fixed (Manova 2009), which is not the case in non-evaluative derivations. All suffix order peculiarities in derivation are explicable as due to layered morphological organization, i.e. governed by semantic scope, which means step by step derivation of morphological structure whereby the suffix scopes semantically over the structure it attaches to (Rice 2000). The instances of recursive suffixation on adjacent and non-adjacent cycles and the mirror image combinations make the structure of the Slavic word rather strange. Plag & Baayen (2009), for example, found only one instance of mirror image combination in a study of 31 English suffixes and their combinations. Additionally, in the literature so far suffix permutations have been seen as typical only of lesser-known languages (Amerindian, Australian, African), see the discussion in Caballero (2010). Thus, Slavic derivational morphology contributes examples of suffix permutations from well-known languages to morphological theory.

As regards inflectional suffixes, they neither participate in mirror image combinations nor can be repeated. The Slavic inflectional morphology is templatic, in the sense that the combinations of inflectional suffixes are fixed, i.e. resemble the combinations of diminutive suffixes. Inflection is also semantically governed, though scopal relations between inflectional suffixes do not always hold.

Finally, all three word domains have closing suffixes of their own (Manova 2008). Closing suffixes are suffixes that close the word to the addition of other suffixes of the same type (Aronoff & Fuhrhop 2002).
Examples

(1) XY & YX order of -(l)iv & -ost
a. sân-liv 'sleepy' → sân-liv-ost 'sleepiness' (Bulgarian)
b. mil-öst 'merciful' → mil-öst-iv 'merciful'

(2) XYX order
revn-iv-yj 'jealous' → revn-öst-yj 'jealousy' → revn-öst-n-yj 'devoted' → revn-öst-n-öst 'devotedness' (Russian)

(3) XY & YX order of -ica & -ka
a. răč-ica 'small hand' → răč-ic-ka 'very small hand' (Bulgarian)
b. kniž-ka 'small book' → kniž-č-ica 'very small book'

(4) XX order
dom 'house' → DIM1 dom-ek (Polish)
   → DIM2 dom-ecz-ek

(5) XXX order
dete 'child' → DIM1 det-ence (Bulgarian)
   → DIM2 det-enc-ence
   → DIM3 det-enc-enc-ence

References


