Closing suffixes in Bulgarian, Russian and German: the role of semantics

Dr. Stela MANOVA

Elise Richter Fellow

Department of Slavic Studies

University of Vienna

Email: stela.manova@univie.ac.at

URL: http://homepage.univie.ac.at/stela.manova/

Goal

- To establish the role of semantics in closing suffixation, i.e. whether closing suffixation can be seen as driven by universal semantic constraints.

The structure of this talk

- Definition of a closing suffix
- Examples of closing suffixes from German
- Establishing the semantics of the German closing suffixes and their corresponding Bulgarian and Russian suffixes
- Checking the Bulgarian and Russian suffixes for being closing
- Discussion
- Conclusions

Closing Suffix: Definition

- Closing suffixes are suffixes that closed the word to the addition of further suffixes.

- There are closing suffixes in derivation and in inflection.
- This talk concentrates on closing suffixes in the derivational word slots.

Test for + /- closing

Logically,

    [BASE + SUFF]$_{N, A, V}$ →   NOUN (N)

                                   →   ADJECTIVE (A)

                                   →   VERB (V)

If none of the three expected derivations is possible, SUFF is a closing suffix.

Closing Suffixes in German

Lehrer 'teacher' → *Lehrerin* 'female teacher'

Lehrer → *Lehrer-chen* ‚little teacher'

Lehrerin → **Lehrerin-chen* 'little female teacher'

Although diminutivization is a productive morphological rule in German, *Lehrerin* cannot be diminutivized. Actually, no derivational suffix can be attached to the suffix *-in* (i.e. neither verbs nor adjectives can be derived from nouns terminating in the suffix *-in*), which allows us to conclude that *-in* is a closing suffix.

Reopening

If *Lehrerin* is used as a first constituent of a compound or before the suffixoids *-shaft* and *-tum*, a linking element 'reopens' it, thus *Lehrerinn-en-zimmer* 'a room for female teachers', *Lehrerinn-en-schaft* and *Lehrerinn-en-tum*.

(Aronoff & Fuhrhop 2002)

Cf. *Muttertag* 'mother's day'

German Closing Suffixes

- Aronoff & Fuhrhop (2002: 461) point out the following German suffixes as being closing:

-e$_{suff}$, -heit/-keit/-igkeit, -in, -ish, -ling, and *-ung*

German Closing Suffixes in Detail

V + *-e*_{suff} → N

A + *-heit/-keit/-igkeit* → N

N males + *-in* → N females

N person + *-isch* → A

V, A + *-ling* → N

V + *-ung* → N

G. *-e*suff

V + *-e*suff → N

G. *pflegen* 'to care for' → *Pflege* 'care', PL *Pflegen*

Cf. Bg. *griža se* '(I) care for' → *griž-a* 'care', PL *griž-i*

R. *zabotat'* → *zabot-a*

The parallel suffix in Bulgarian and Russian is inflectional and therefore doesn't allow further attachment of WF suffixes.

G. *-heit/-keit/-igkeit*

A + *-heit/-keit/-igkeit* → N

schön ‚beautiful' → Schön-heit ‚beauty'

Bg. xubav ‚beautiful' → xub-ost ‚beauty'
R. krasiv-yj → krasiv-ost'

N is an an abstract noun expressing
    property of A.

Bg./ R. *-ost*

Bg. *cjal* ‚whole' → *cjal-ost* ‚wholeness' → *cjalost-en* ‚complete' → *cjalostn-ost* ‚completeness'

R. celyj → *celost'* → *celostnyj* → *celostnost'*

Bg. *xubav* ‚beautiful' → *xubost* ‚beauty' → *xubost-nik* ‚rascal'

Bg. & R. suffix *-ost* is not closing

! G. *Ein-heit-lich*

G. *-in*

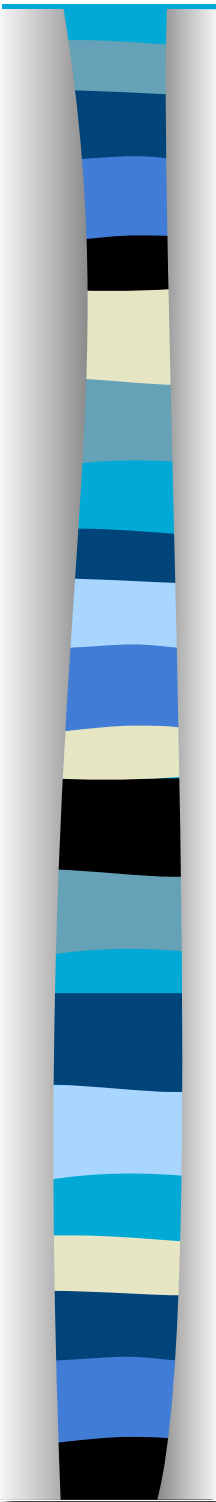(derivation of female humans from male humans)

- N males + *-in* → N famales

Over 90 % of all *Movierung* formations in German are derived through the attachment of this suffix.In other words, the fact that the suffix *-in* is closing is enough to determine German *Movierung* as closing in general.

Except *-in*, modern German uses for Movierung also *-(i/e)sse*, *-euse*, *-ine*, *-esse* and *-sche* (dialectal, North German), formations with these suffixes, however, often have *-in* doublets or allow addition of *-in*, e.g. *Baron-esse* and *Baron-in*, as well as *Prinzess-in* (cf. Wellmann 1975: 107ff).

Bulgarian suffixes for derivation of female humans from male humans (1)

- *-k-a* (e.g. *učitelka* ← *učitel* 'teacher')
- *-in-ja* (e.g. *boginja* ← *bog* 'God')
- *-kin-ja* (e.g. *srăbkinja* ← *sărbin* 'a Serbe')
- *-ic-a* (e.g. *kralica* ← *kral* 'king')
- *-es-a* (e.g. *poetesa* ← *poet* 'poet')
- *-is-a* (e.g. *aktrisa* ← *akt'or* 'actor') and
- *-v-a* (only in *svekărva* ← *svekăr* 'father-in-law')

Bulgarian suffixes for derivation of females humans (2)

These suffixes are closing only if the suffix is native and added to a base denoting a male person. Suffixes deriving female animals are not closing.

(Manova 2008)

Female animals in Bulgarian

magare ,donkey' → *magarica* → DIM *magarička* (Google – 683 occurrences)

lăv ,lion' → *lăvica* → DIM *lăvička* (Google – 8 occurences)

The only instance of a derivation involving a human being is *svekăr* 'father-in-law' → *svekărva* 'mother-in-law' → *svekărvička* (rather ironical) (Google – 82 occurrences), *svekărva* being derived with the unique suffix *-v-a* (note that nouns such as *etărva, zălva*, though terminating in *-v-a* are non-derived)

Female humans from foreign bases (Bg.)

princ 'prince' → *princesa* → DIM *princeska* (Google – 528 occurrences)

poet 'poet' → *poetesa* → DIM *poeteska* (Google – 236 occurrences)

baron 'baron' → *baronesa* → DIM *baroneska* (Google – 1 occurrence)

akt'or 'actor' → *aktrisa* → DIM *aktriska* (Google – 54 occurrences)

Lexicalizations

- *daskal* ,teacher (archaic)' → *daskalica* → DIM *daskalička* ,little female teacher & little female pupil'

- *princesa* 'warm sandwich' → DIM *princeska*

Female humans in Russian

- Cannot be diminutivized but allow the possessive *-in*, though rare in the standard language.

- *učitel'* 'teacher' → *učitel'-nic-a* 'female teacher' → *učitel'-nič-in* 'female teacher's'

<div align="right">(Sitchinava & Plungian 2009 based on RNC)</div>

- *direktor* → *direktor-š-a* → *direktor-š-in*

G. *-isch*

N person, animals + *-isch* → A

Schriftsteller ‚writer' → *schriftsteller-isch* ‚writer's'

Bg. *pisatel* ‚writer' → *pisatel-ski* ‚writer's'

R. *pisatel'* → *pisatel'-skij*

! R. *rus-sk-ost', svet-sk-ost' det-sk-ost'*

Bg. *-ski* / R. *-skij*

The Bg. suffix *-ski* is closing.

N + *-ski* → ADJ → *N

→ *V

→ *ADJ

The R. suffix -skij, however, allows -ost'
suffixation.

G. *-ling*

V, A + *-ling* → N

However:

prüfen ‚to examin' → *Prüfling* ‚the examined person' → FEM *Prüflingin*

lehren ‚to teach' → *Lehrling* ‚the thaught person' → FEM *Lehrlingin*

Source: Google

(Native speakers evaluate such forms as impossible.)

G. *-ling* does not have an equivalent in Bulgarian and Russian.

G. *-ung*

V + *-ung* → N

piša → *pis-ane* ‚writing'→ ø

  → *pis-anie* ‚a piece of writing' → DIM *pis-ani-jce*

dviža (se) ‚(I) move' → *dviž-ene* ‚moving' → ø

  → *dviž-enie* ‚moving, movement'→ DIM *dviž-eni-jce*

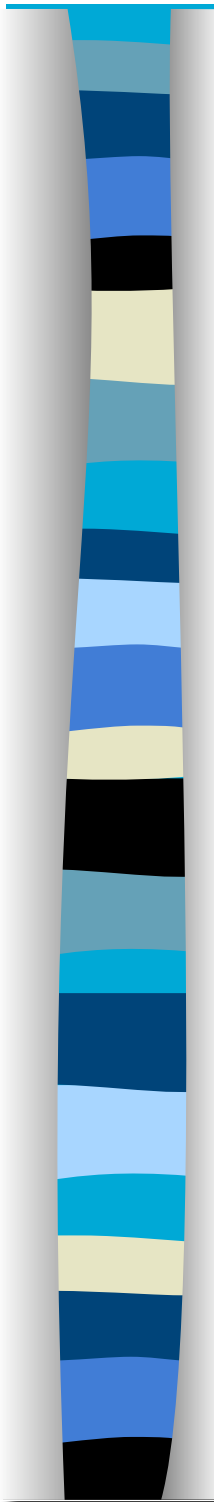*Bg.* *-Vne* is clsoing but *-Vnie* is not!

Bg. *-Vne* and *-Vnie* action nouns

The suffix *-Vne* attaches only to IMPFV bases whereas the suffix *-Vnie* takes both IMPFV and PFV bases.

+/- closing does not depend on the semantics of the derivative and therefore lexicalitzed *-Vne* nouns cannot be further diminutivized:

prane ‚loundry', *piene* ‚drink', *jadene* ‚food'

Russian *-nie* nouns

Russian *-nie* nouns, like Bulgarian *-ne* nouns, do not diminutivize.

However some R. *-nie* nouns can be further suffixed:

- *upravljat'* → *upravlenie* → *upravlenec*

Lexicalized *-n'je* forms in R. diminutivize, i.e. like *-nie* nouns in Bulgarian:

var-en'je 'jam' → *var-en'j-ce*

BUT *var-enie* 'cooking' → Ø

Diminutivization

- Aronoff & Fuhrhop (2002 : 460) exclude German diminutive suffixes (*-chen, -ei/-erei,* and *-lein*) from their analysis since a diminutive suffix is not expected to be followed by another suffix. This observation, however, does not hold for Bulgarian and Russian:

Bg. *dete* ,child' → DIM1 *det-ence* → DIM2 *det-enc-ence* → DIM3 *det-enc-enc-ence*

R. *den* 'day' → DIM1 *den-ek* → DIM2 *den-eč-ek*

Conclusions (1)

- Semantics that is closing in German is not always closing in Bulgarian and Russian;
- Semantically equal siffixes in Bulgarian and Russian are not closing in both languages, e.g. *-ski* is closing only in Bulgarian.
- A (set of) suffix(es) can be closing with a semantically restricted type of bases (e.g. female humans derived from male humans). However, if the base has another, though semantically related meanig (e.g. male animal), the suffix(es) is(are) not closing.

Conclusions (2)

- Semantics is of importance to closing suffixation, but semantic restrictions alone cannot define a suffix as +/-closing.

- Closing suffixation cannot be defined in terms of universal semantic constraints.

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