The shape and syntactic place of long-form adjectival inflection in Bosnian/Croatian/Serbian(BCS)

I explore the connection between morphosyntactic structure and tone in BCS short-form adjectives (SFAs) (1a-b) and long-form adjectives (LFAs)(2a-b), and show that LFAs have an extra H(igh) tone serving as an exponent for an additional functional projection associated with them.

(1) SFA: a. pl**à:**v b. plá:v**a**
    blue..NOM.SG.M   blue.NOM.SG.F

(2) LFA: a. pl**à:**v i b. plà:v a:
    blue..NOM.SG.M   blue.NOM.SG.F

> ['] rising accent
> ['] falling accent
> [:] long vowel
> [**bold**] locus of the winning H

Two existing syntactic analyses place this functional projection in two different domains. While Aljović (2002) argues LFAs result from combining an AP generated in the SpecFP in the extended domain of N and the exponent of F (the LFA suffix)(3a), Talić (2015, 2017) argues LFAs result from combining an AP and the exponent of a functional head X in the extended domain of A (3b).

(3) a. $[_{FP}$ AP $[_{F'}$ **F** $[_{NumP}$ N+Num$_i$ $[_{NP}$ t$_i$ $]$ $]$ $]$ $]$ b. $[_{NP}$ $[_{XP}$ **X** AP $]$ $[_{NP}$ N $]$ $]$

I show how some seemingly unsystematic prosodic contrasts between LFAs and SFAs can be captured in a unified way, supporting the latter view. This reveals where specificity is encoded in BCS.

The puzzle. Contemporary BCS distinguishes LFAs from SFAs almost entirely by prosodic means (Aljović 2002). Only in NOM.SG.M an overt suffix [-i] occurs in LFA in addition to the prosodic contrast (glá:dan – glà:dni 'hungry'). The prosodic differences between SFAs and LFAs lack an account in the literature and at first do not look systematic: (i) a rising accent in SFA becomes falling in LFA (4a→5a); (ii) a rising accent in SFA shifts one syllable to the left and remains rising in LFA (4b→5b); (iii) the accentual difference is neutralized (4c→5c). In BCS, falling/rising accents result from the rules in (6) (Inkelas and Zec 1988).

(4) SFA: a. plá:v**o:**j - blue.DAT.SG.F b. visók**o:**j - tall.DAT.SG.F c. làbavo:j - loose.DAT.SG.F

(5) LFA: a. pl**à:**vo:j - blue.DAT.SG.F b. ví**s**oko:j - tall.DAT.SG.F c. l**à**bavo:j - loose.DAT.SG.F

(6) a. In a word with multiple underlying High(H) tones, the leftmost H wins.
    b. In the absence of underlying H tones, a default Initial H is inserted.
    c. A syllable has a rising accent if it precedes a winning H (due to H-spreading).
    d. An initial H is realized as falling.

Proposal. The messy picture in (4-5) reveals what the actual LFA inflection is, which turns out to be different from the standard view and Aljović's (2002) proposal, under which LFA inflection is assumed to be added on top of SFA agreement morphemes, with exponents: [-i] for NOM.SG.M and -ø elsewhere. I propose that the only LFA inflection is a phonemically null morpheme with a H tone (i.e. X in (3b)= $\varnothing^H$). SFAs and LFAs have the morpheme sequences in (7-8), with the underlying H tones indicated by $[^H]$.

(7) SFA: a. plá:v-**o**^{H}**:**j b. visók-**o**^{H}**:**j c. l**à**^{H}bav-o^H:j
    blue-DAT.SG.F   tall-DAT.SG.F   loose-DAT.SG.F

(8) LFA: a. pl**à:**v- $\varnothing^H$ -o^H:j b. ví**s**ok- $\varnothing^H$ -o^H:j c. l**à**^{H}bav- $\varnothing^H$ -o^H:j
    blue- X -DAT.SG.F   tall- X -DAT.SG.F   loose- X -DAT.SG.F

Crucially, the agreement(AGR) suffix [o^H:j] has an underlying H tone which spreads to the preceding vowel in the absence of other H tones (due to 6a&c)). This happens in (7a-b) where the vowel preceding [o^H:j] gets a rising accent (6c). In contrast, in (8a-b) the ADJ stem preceding [o^H:j] has an extra H tone, which bleeds H-tone-spreading from [o^H:j]. Where does this H tone come from? Given that LFAs are associated with specific interpretation (Aljović 2002), Talić (2017)
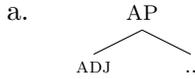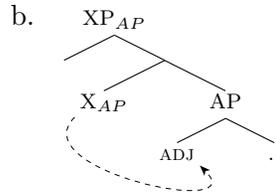
suggests that X in (3b) contributes the specificity feature. Following up on those two proposals, I suggest that $\boxed{\o^H}$ is the exponent of that functional head in the extended adjectival domain in LFAs, inserted in PF after X lowers to ADJ as in (9b) (m-merger; Marantz 1984; Bobaljik 1995).

(9) **short form A**

a.
```
        AP
       /  \
     ADJ   ..
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b. **long form A**
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        XP_AP
       /    \
    X_AP     AP
            /   \
          ADJ    ..
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The bleeding of H-tone-spreading from $[o^H{:}j]$ indicates the LFA morpheme $\boxed{\o^H}$ is located between ADJ and AGR in (8) (see 6a). Assuming that AGR nodes are inserted in PF since they do not have a semantic effect (Embick and Noyer 2007), AGR node attaches to the complex head, yielding the observed morpheme order ADJ-$\boxed{\text{X}}$-DAT.SG.F in (8). The extra H tone contributed by X is not realized in (8c) due to the underlying H tone on ADJ, resulting in the prosodic neutralization between (7c) and (8c). Finally, the ending [-i] that occurs only in NOM.SG.M (in addition to $\o^H$) is not LFA inflection. I argue there are two vocabulary items realizing agreement in NOM.SG.M: (i) [-i] is inserted in the context of X (NOM.SG.M→[-i]/X___); (ii) [-ø] is inserted everywhere else (NOM.SG.M→[ø]/elsewhere). Their choice is determined by the Elsewhere Principle (Kiparsky 1973). The analysis of LFA inflection as [$\o^H$] rather than [-i] entirely captures the messy prosodic pattern in (7-8).

Furthermore, regarding the overt realization of the difference between the two adjectival forms, traditional grammars usually illustrate the SFA with adjectives carrying nominal declension (ND) endings in masculine singular and the LFA with adjectives carrying pronominal declension (PD) endings, noting that that some adjectives also involve accent shift (see e.g. Jahić et al 2004). Table in (10) illustrates the adjective *nov* 'new' with two sets of endings in masculine singular.

(10)

	N - ND	ADJ - ND	ADJ - PD	PRN - PD
Gen/Acc$_{[animate]}$	šešir - a	nov - a	nov - o:g	nje-ga
Dat/loc	šešir - u	nov - u	nov - o:m	nje-mu

However, the only other context where two sets of suffixes appear in traditional descriptions is neuter singular. In all other gender-number combinations, there is only one set of suffixes, and, as noted above, contemporary BCS uses only one set of suffixes (pronominal declension) even in masculine and neuter. The ND suffixes are perceived as old-fashioned and found in poetic contexts. This intuition is confirmed by judgments from 45 speakers across the BCS speaking area, who I asked to judge the acceptability of adjectival forms with ND and PD suffixes in nonspecific contexts (scale=1(completely unacceptable)-7(completely acceptable)), through an anonymous online survey. The average acceptability score for an adjective with an ND suffix in the direct object position was 1.94, in contrast to the average acceptability of 6.82 for the form with a PD suffix. In postnominal qualifying genitive NPs, the acceptability of ND suffixes went up to 3.67, but PD suffixes were still preferred (6.51). It appears that ND suffixes (if used at all) are stylistically marked in contemporary BCS, which I also capture via contextual allomorphy.

References: Aljović, N. 2002. Long adjectival inflection and specificity in Serbo-Croatian. Recherches linguistiques de Vincennes 31. 27-42.●Bobaljik, J. 1995. Morphosyntax: The syntax of verbal inflection. MIT dissertation. ●Embick, D. & R. Noyer. 2007. Distributed morphology and the syntax morphology interface. In The Oxford Handbook of Linguistic Interfaces, 289–324, OUP.●Inkelas, S. & D. Zec. 1988. Serbo-Croatian Pitch Accent: The interaction of tone, stress, and intonation. Language 64 (2). 227-248.●Kiparsky, P. 1973. 'Elsewhere' in phonology. In Anderson, S. R. and Kiparsky, P. (eds.), A Festschrift for Morris Halle, 93–106.●Marantz, A. 1984. On the nature of grammatical relations. MIT Press. ●Schenker, A. 1993. Proto-Slavonic. In Bernard Comrie & G. G. Corbett (eds.), The Slavonic Languages, 60-123. Routledge.