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Author(s): Elena Bratishenko

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DENOMINAL ADJECTIVE FORMATION AND SUFFIX HIERARCHY IN OLD EAST SLAVIC

Elena Bratishenko, University of Calgary

1. Introduction. The Possessor Hierarchy

The purpose of this study is to show that formation of denominal adjectives as attested in Old East Slavic (OESl) original texts of the eleventh to fifteenth centuries¹ is regulated, on the one hand, by semantic proximity of their stem to the possessor prototype, and, on the other, by the degree of definite or individual personal reference characteristic of the adjective-forming suffix itself.

For terminological clarity, the term *denominal* is preferred here over the more familiar *possessive*. Morphologically transparent ‘denominal’ simply indicates that the adjective in question is formed from a stem of a noun.² Whenever a further distinction within the group of denominal adjectives needs to be made along lexical or referential features, the term *individual personal* will be applied to adjectives formed from personal noun stems with such reference. As will become evident in the course of the examination below, the meaning of the adjective greatly depends not only on the features³ of the corresponding nominal stem, but also on the actual adjective-forming suffix added to it.

The idea of a prototype has been drawn upon by a number of linguistic frameworks, ranging from markedness theory and natural morphology to cognitive grammar.⁴ The possessor prototype is relevant for the present investigation insofar as it allows one to go beyond establishing correlations between various suffixes and groups of stems. It makes it possible to rank these correlations in semantic terms. Prototype effects also work best at explaining the gradient nature of the suffix hierarchy: there are no clear-cut boundaries separating each suffix’s sphere of productivity, while the core differences between these spheres of productivity are nonetheless evident.

Nouns associated with denominal adjective formation comprise fairly homogeneous classes, each to a greater or lesser extent similar to the possessor prototype. According to Taylor (quoted in Cienki (81)), prototypical possession includes the following “semantic indicators”: the possessor as a specific human and the possessed as an inanimate object or a collection of objects. By

extension, all other constructions formally equivalent to possession can be considered non-prototypical instances of this phenomenon.⁵

The nouns/noun stems examined in this paper may be defined as forming a continuum from POSSESSOR to POSSESSED. They comprise a hierarchy according to the varying degree of prototypicality:

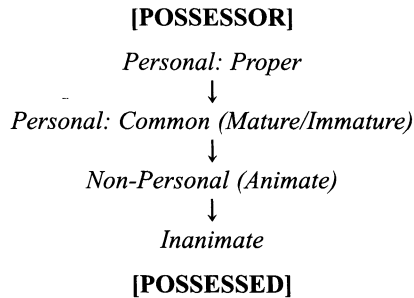


Fig. 1. The Possessor Hierarchy⁶

The principal morphological feature of the most prototypical POSSESSOR nouns is the ability of their stems to form individual personal adjectives. The stems gravitating towards the POSSESSED pole are most often attested in OESl in the form of a noun in the genitive case (genitive of possession).

All the manuscripts from which the data have been collected are original East Slavic writings, not translations. These documents represent the earliest available East Slavic sources. Apart from this, they are widely varied in terms of both style and geographical origin within the area of Rus. The choice of texts was motivated by the need to reduce the task of separating native East Slavic from Church Slavonic (OCS) elements, even though such a task could not be avoided completely. The relationship between OCS and OESl is complex, and a degree of convergence is apparent in Russian to the present day. Unfortunately, considerable amounts of valuable East Slavic data (including entire manuscripts) have often been disregarded because of supposed “contamination” from OCS elements.

Every attestation in the corpus has, of course, been taken into account in the course of the analysis. The selection of examples in the discussion below illustrates the clearly discernible tendencies in the formation of denominal adjectives. It is believed to be sufficient for the argument to have identified typical and atypical examples in each category. Due to the infrequency of the latter, it was possible to cite most of them within the text.

2. Adjective-Forming Suffixes and their Combinability with Nominal Stems

Denominal adjectives are formed in OESl from the stems of **o/jo*-stem nouns by the addition of the following suffixes: **-j-*, *-ov/-ev-*,⁷ *-bj-*, *-bñ-*, *-bšk-* and *-bn-*.

2.1 Individual Personal Reference: -ov- & -in-

The suffix *-in-*, semantically equivalent to *-ov-*, combines with stems of feminine as well as masculine nouns from other declensions (Frolova 1972, 272). The majority of these are **a*-stem nouns, such as the proper personal noun *Putьša* ‘Put’ša’ in (1):

- (1) рече испоусти ѡлыи гласъ *Путьшинъ* чади
 ‘he said, having let out an evil cry to Put’ša’s servants’ (B&G 10в.27)

Despite this morphologically controlled distribution, some masculine stems of this declension are attested in Slavic with the suffix *-ov-* instead of the expected *-in-* (Vaillant 604). Compare the attestations in (2) and (3), found in the same document within a page of one another:

- (2) и да немноги еси быти в тысящах *Июдовахъ*
 ‘and you be not many among the thousands of Judah’ (Laur. Chron. 986, l 34)
- (3) Иеремиа же рече тако гл<аголе>тъ Г<о>с<под>ъ положю дому *Июдину* завѣ<ъ> новъ
 ‘and Jeremiah said, “Thus says the Lord: I shall give a new covenant to the house of Judah”’ (Laur. Chron. 986, l 33v)⁸

To Corbett (325), this indicates that grammatical gender plays a role in the selection of a particular formant. Perhaps not only gender, but also the lexical features of the nominal stem participate in this morphological expansion.⁹ Accordingly, personal or personified masculine stems of other declensions must have been the first to combine with *-ov-* in denominal adjective formation (Zverkovskaja 38).

Besides **a*-stems, **i*-stems (e.g. *gostь* ‘guest, merchant’) also form adjectives with the suffix *-in-*:

- (4) и отдати же първѣ *гостины* куны
 ‘and first the merchant’s money should be returned’ (Pr. Rus. 55, l 623v)

Thus, the choice between *-ov-* and *-in-* is principally dependent on morphological features of the adjective-forming nominal stem. This relates to the noun’s declensional membership, although in the case of the suffix *-ov-*, lexical features of the nominal stem may rank higher than declensional membership.

2.1.1 Productivity of Younger -ov- vs. Older *-j-

The suffix *-ov-* is a relatively young morpheme—perhaps a specifically Slavic formation—in contrast to the older Indo-European **-j-*. From historical evidence it can be concluded that *-ov-* replaced the older **-j-* in the same stems (Frolova 1960, 326, 329; 1963, 12). Variation between adjectives such as *Adamovъ* (5) and *Adamlъ* (6) ‘Adam’s’ is widely attested in OCS and OESl:

- (5) *Адамо^{6b} же бы^c<тъ> ызыкъ не отъа^tтъ у Авера*
 ‘but Adam’s tongue was not taken away from Eber’ (Laur. Chron. 986, l 30)
- (6) *Адамле преступленье прости*
 ‘forgave Adam’s transgression’ (Laur. Chron. 1093, l 74v)

Some suggest, however, that these two suffixes are not quite synonymous.¹⁰ Večerka (1963, 196) remarks that it is primarily animate noun stems that combine with *-ov-* or *-in-* to form the corresponding adjective. In his opinion, these suffixes have a more individualizing meaning than **-j-*.¹¹

Others observe that the suffix **-j-* is less productive with dental stems, which would imply that there may be phonological constraints on its productivity (Vaillant 598). Conversely, this suffix is noticeably more frequent among noun stems in *-k-* (Večerka 1963, 196; Zverkovskaja 6–10), including former velar stems which underwent a velar-dental shift /k/ → /c/ pre-historically, e.g. *otecь* ‘father’ — *otecьь* ‘father’s’, *чьрньсь* ‘monk’ — *чьрньсьь* ‘of a monk’. Most of these nouns are of adjectival origin, and thus share certain semantic features. Namely, they tend either to have a generic reference to the class of individuals denoted by the adjective stem, or to denote a quality lexically inherent in this stem. Perhaps the frequent correlation of such velar stems with the suffix **-j-*, originally prompted by phonological features, resulted in the eventual acquisition of a less individualizing meaning by the suffix itself. This may also underlie the increasing correlation of proper personal stems with the suffix *-ov-*.

In contrast to **-j-*, *-ov-* is most widely attested in adjectives formed from highly individualized stems. The same suffix is also predominant in adjectives formed from borrowed proper personal noun stems, such as *Аврамовь* ‘Abraham’s’ and *Адамовь* ‘Adam’s’ (5) (Meillet 148; Frolova 1963, 68).¹² Due to their lexical features (Personal, Proper and Mature) and inherent definiteness, these two noun groups denote prototypical possessors. Such noun stems as *Христос-* ‘Christ’ (which, strictly speaking, is not a proper name, but a title) are also highly definite, because of the uniqueness of their referents. The stem *Христос-* also forms an individual personal adjective with the suffix *-ov-*:

- (7) *ѣко не въсхотѣ противити сѧ любьве ради Х<пустосо>вы*
 ‘as you did not wish to resist for the sake of the love of Christ’ (B&G 11r.6)

Clearly, the suffix *-ov-* is most productive with proper personal stems, and hence tends to be correlated with prototypical possessor status. There are, however, adjectives formed by this suffix from stems denoting animals as well, as in (8):

- (8) *и скруши главы змиевыя*
 ‘and he struck off the heads of the dragons’ (Laur. Chron. 1103, l 94; Suzd. Chron. 1185, l 134)¹³

The frequency of its attestation with recent borrowings not only indicates that the suffix *-ov-* was highly productive at the time of the records (since many Greek names were exported into Slavic with Christianity via the first translations), but may also suggest that it was preferred over **-j-* due to ease of formation, since no consonant alternations were involved (Frolova 1959, 95). Therefore, phonological constraints may have played a role in the distribution of the two suffixes.

2.2 Non-personal/Immature: *-bj-*

The suffix *-bj-* is often viewed as genetically related to the suffix **-j-* (Meillet 375, Zverkovskaja 10, Brodowska-Honowska 29), their distribution possibly motivated by differences in the syllabic composition of stems.¹⁴ However, Marojević (54–55) hesitates to equate them, justly pointing out that *-bj-*, in contrast to **-j-*, is never added to proper stems. As for the semantics of *-bj-*, it is actually closer to the suffix *-bšk-* (which will be discussed shortly), in that the corresponding adjectives mean ‘pertaining to a group of people or characteristic of a class of persons or animals’.

It is noteworthy that the *-bj-* adjectives are relatively infrequent among denominal adjectives (Meillet 377, Zverkovskaja 10), and that they are lexically peculiar. They include the following OCS adjectives: *otročьbь* ‘of infants’, *božьbь* ‘of God’, *vražьbь* ‘of an enemy’, *rabьbь* ‘of a slave/of slaves/slave-like’, as well as a few formed from animal stems (Trubetzkoy 17–18). Trubetzkoy believes that these adjectives, due to a derogatory connotation in most of them, must have been considered swearwords. In addition, he notes the sense of social inequality in the stems of such adjectives as *otročьbь* ‘of infants’ and *rabьbь* ‘of a slave/of slaves’.¹⁵ Unbegaun (340) too observes that this suffix in OESl is specific for animal noun stems, while the other “possessive suffixes” are typical for personal noun stems. The examples in (9)–(15) demonstrate these lexical features of *-bj-* adjectives:

- (9) а за смердиу холопъ 5 гривень
‘and 5 grivnas for a bond slave’ (Pr. Rus. 16, 17, l 616v)
- (10) по холопъи речи дль и
‘arrested him according to the word of a servant’ (Pr. Rus. 85, l 625v)
- (11) аже боудуть робье дѣти оу моужа
‘if a husband has children by a (female) slave’ (Pr. Rus. 98, l 626)
- (12) тоже того блаженни съ радостию приимъ оучаше и никако же
раслабѣти вражиами къзньми
‘and the blessed one received that one too with joy, and taught him not
to weaken by any means through the intrigues of the enemy’ (Th. 49v.
28–29)
- (13) въ его же вѣруемъ в Перуна и въ Волоса *скотьѣ* б<ог>a
‘in that one we believe, in Perun and in Volos, the God of animals’
(Laur. Chron. 971, l 22v)

- (14) и попусти Б<огъ> [...] 4 *песъи* муки [*sic*]
 ‘and God sent [...] four dogs’ flies’ (Laur. Chron. 986, l 31v)
- (15) в чересла бѣ ѣму *рыбии* хвостъ прирослъ
 ‘a fish tail had grown from his loins’ (Laur. Chron. 1065, l 55v)

It is apparent that the nominal stems in the above citations do not closely resemble the prototypical possessor. On the contrary, they are characterized by the absence of either the lexical feature Mature (in a physical and/or social sense), or of the feature Personal (since they denote supernatural beings and animals). Moreover, these adjectives tend to lack individual reference, referring instead to the whole class of entities denoted by the stem, or to a random member of this class.

It can be held then that the adjectives with the suffix *-ьj-* do not typically have individual personal reference, while they may have such reference contextually or pragmatically.

2.3 Kinship Relations and Physical Space: *-ьн-*

The suffix *-ьн-*, in its turn, also appears to be productive with a lexically narrow group of common noun stems — only kinship and clan terms, irrespective of the declensional membership (and gender) of the corresponding nouns (Zverkovskaja 12–24, Trubetzkoy 16–17):

- (16) то мѣстити [...] *братню* сынови
 ‘then a brother’s son is to avenge’ (Pr. Rus. 1, l 615v)
- (17) Ростовци посадиша оу собе Мстислав Ростовѣ на столѣ *дѣдни* и *отни*
 ‘Rostovians made Mstislav their ruler in Rostov on the throne of his grandfather and his father’ (Suzd. Chron. 1175, l 126v)
- (18) а заднича ей *мужниа* не надобѣ
 ‘and she doesn’t need the inheritance of her husband’ (Pr. Rus. 93, l 622)
- (19) начатъ молити сѧ зрѧ къ иконѣ *господьни*
 ‘he began to pray, looking towards the icon of the Lord’ (B.&G 116. 34–11v.1)
- (20) зрѧ на икону на образ *вл<a >^o<ьн>ч<e>нь*
 ‘looking at the icon, at the image of the Master’ (Laur. Chron. 1015, l46)
- (21) а *матерниа* часть дѣтемъ не надобѣ
 ‘and a mother’s share her children do not need’ (Pr. Rus. 103, l 622v)
- (22) про *женъню* татьбу
 ‘about the theft from the wife’ (BBL 213, 13th c.)

Notably, the same suffix is attested as part of a compound suffix forming adjectives from inanimate noun stems, particularly those with spatial and

temporal reference, which may have been its original domain: *dolъňьjъ* ‘lower/earthly’, *gorъňьjъ* ‘upper/celestial’, *srědъňьjъ* ‘middle’, etc. (Meillet 380–83, Zverkovskaja 12, Brodowska-Honowska 165–71). Through metaphor the suffix may have become productive with kinship terms denoting consanguineous or spiritual proximity.¹⁶

The deictic nature of the suffix *-ň-*, rooted in its association with locational adjectives is further intensified by the deictic nature of kinship terms themselves. This may explain the higher degree of definiteness observed in such adjectives, as compared to adjectives formed from the identical stem with the help of other suffixes.

2.4 Random and Group Reference: *-ъsk-*

Within the group of denominal adjectives, adjectives in *-ъsk-* are considered “relational in the broadest meaning of the word” (Večerka 1957, 30), and thus stand apart from those in **-j-*, *-ov-*, *-in-*, *-ň-* and *-bj-*—“unambiguously possessive adjectives” (Richards 260). Of course, as has been already shown, there are varying degrees to which the latter suffixes themselves may be considered as forming individual personal adjectives.

The main difference between the two groups is that denominal adjectives with the suffix *-ъsk-* are most regularly formed from common personal noun stems (including those denoting social ranks and occupations, as well as supernatural beings). Also, just as not all adjectives that are considered “possessive” *per se* invariably have individual reference, so adjectives with *-ъsk-* cannot be considered as never having such reference. They may have individual (although random) as well as group reference, or can even denote a quality. The examples in (23)–(27) illustrate this:

- (23) азъ мнѣхъ въбързѣ оузърѣти лице твоѣ анѣ<е>льское
‘I thought to see your angelic face soon’ (B&G 13в.10)

The denominal adjective *анѣ<е>льское* ‘angelic’, despite the lexical meaning of its stem (*angel-* ‘angel’), refers to the recently murdered Boris, who is addressed here by his brother Gleb. This is indicated by the possessive pronoun *твоѣ* ‘your’. The grieving Gleb obviously wishes he could see Boris’s face—not that of any actual angel. Such qualitative interpretation is further illustrated in (24):

- (24) и приѣтъ с<вѣ>т<а>го и анѣ<е>льскаго образа мънишьскаго
‘and he assumed the holy and angelic image of a monk’ (Th. 67a.19–20)

The two identically formed adjectives *анѣ<е>льскаго* ‘angelic’ and *мънишьскаго* ‘of a monk/monastic’ modify the same head noun *образа* ‘image’. They thus cannot refer to two separate entities denoted by their nominal stems standing for ‘angel’ and ‘monk’ respectively. Instead, they both refer to qualities, exactly like *анѣ<е>льское* in (23). It is the angelic quality

of a monk's image — a cliché in ecclesiastical writing — rather than any specific angel or monk that (24) speaks of. In both of the above citations, the adjective *angelьскѣѣ* can only be translated as 'angelic'.

On the other hand, this doesn't mean that the adjective *angelьскѣѣ* cannot occasionally mean either 'of angels' or 'of an angel'. Such non-qualitative interpretation is evident in (25), especially in juxtaposition with accusative plural of the noun *анг<е>лы* 'angels' in (26) — the two being parallel passages from the same text:

- (25) и пакы пѣнниа *анг<е>льскаа* слышаахоу
'and again they heard the singing of the angels' (B&G 156.22–23)
(26) и овогда *анг<е>лы* поюща слышаахоу
'and at times they heard the angels singing' (B&G 18r.20)

An unmistakably qualitative meaning of the *-ьск-* adjective is exemplified in (27):

- (27) престависа бл<а>говѣрнаа великаа княгини Всеволожаа имене^М
М<а>риа бывши въ *мнишьскомь* чину
'the faithful great princess, wife of Vsevolod, by the name of Maria, being of monastic rank, died' (Laur. Chron. 1206, l 244v)

The fact that the referent in the above passage is female makes it impossible for the adjective *мнишьскомь* 'monastic' (formed from the stem of the masculine noun *тнѣхъ* 'monk') to have any individual personal meaning. Contrast, however, the adjective in (28) formed from the same stem but with the help of a different suffix:

- (28) *нако же то вса ноци обиходити юмоу келиѣ мниховы* въсѣ
'thus every night he would go around all the cells of the monks' (B&G 38r.9)

The adjective *мниховы* stands for 'of the monks', and denotes the monks residing in a monastery specified in the text. Frolova (1963, 63) mistakenly cites this example as having group — as opposed to individual — reference. The group reference here is expressed not by means of the adjective-forming suffix, but by means of the plural ending of the adjective as it agrees with the plural head noun *келиѣ* 'cells'. This adjective could conceivably have individual reference, were it in the singular.¹⁷

The final development of the tendency for a particular suffix to be associated with a certain type of reference is witnessed in modern Russian. It has been said that *-ov-* and *-in-* bear the meaning of "personal, personified possession" (Frolova 1960, 324). Borodič (192) writes that in OCS, the addition of these suffixes makes the corresponding nominals definite. It is almost as if these features became transposed onto the suffixes from the nominal stems with which they were most often combined.¹⁸

Returning to the *-bšk-* adjectives, there are a few attestations indicating the possibility of individual reference. Although usually cited as such, the attestation in (29) is admittedly ambiguous. The phrase could mean ‘in the manner of monks’. The example in (30), however, is straightforward:

- (29) оуцини же погрѣбаніе чьрнеческое
‘and perform the burial of the monk’ (BBL 681, 12th c.)
- (30) оубоите сѧ рекъшааго усты ап<о>^с<то>льскы
‘fear the one who said through the lips of the Apostle’ (B&G 14a.25)

Since *-bšk-* adjectives can be interpreted as referring to an individual as well as a group, genitive plural of the noun may be used instead to avoid potential ambiguity when plural reference is intended, for example:

- (31) іако же пишеть сѧ въ дѣяніихъ [sic] ап<о>^с<то>ль
‘as is written in the Acts of the Apostles’ (Th. 356.10–12)

The *-bšk-* adjective ч<е>л<о>в<ь>ч<ь>^ск<о>му ‘of man’ when it denotes Jesus, can, on pragmatic grounds, only be interpreted as having definite reference:

- (32) іако подобаеть с<ы>ну ч<е>л<о>в<ь>ч<ь>^ск<о>му пострѣдати
‘that the Son of man shall suffer’ (Laur. Chron. 986, l 34v (103))

Most regularly, this adjective has random reference and stands for ‘of a man’ (33), or generic reference — ‘of men/people’ (34):

- (33) никакже разумь ч<е>л<о>в<ь>ч<ь>^скъ не можетъ исповѣдати
чюде<ь> твоихъ
‘in no way can the mind of a man comprehend your miracles’ (Laur. Chron. 1096, l 79v)
- (34) како образи розноличнии въ ч<е>л<о>в<ь>ч<ь>^скыхъ лицахъ
‘what variety of appearances are there among the faces of men’ (Laur. Chron. 1096, l 79v)

Vaillant (602) considers the suffix *-bšk-* (a borrowing from Germanic¹⁹) as signifying “une pluralité ou une collectivité [a plurality or collectivity].” A well-known sphere of productivity of *-bšk-* adjectives is in the formation of ethnonyms and toponyms:

- (35) подѣ пискоупомѣ ризкимъ ... и подѣ горожаны ризьскими прѣдъ
всеми латинескими коупци
‘under the bishop of Riga ... and under the citizens of Riga in front of
all the Latin merchants’ (1229 Tr., 93–94)

Such usage manifests the “two-dimensional semantic plane” of these adjectives in that, although their stem may be inanimate (as in *rizьskъjь* ‘of Riga’

in (35)), they inevitably have indirect reference to a group of persons (either inhabiting a certain place or sharing an ethnic identity). Even the *-ьsk-* adjectives formed from certain common inanimate stems (of such nouns as *monastyрь* ‘monastery’) have the same indirect personal reference to a group (Zverkovskaja 53):

- (36) токмо остана дворъ *манастырьскыи* Печерьскаго манастыря
 ‘only the monastery courtyard of the Pečersky monastery remained (intact)’ (Laur. Chron. 1096, l 86)

The denominal adjective *манастырьскыи* ‘monastery’ denotes not just a physical location, but a community of people residing at this location — illustrating the simultaneous personal and inanimate reference just discussed. Note that the genitive case modifier *манастыря* ‘of the monastery’ is used here because it is modified in its turn by another adjective.

Considering further historical development, it appears that the suffix *-ьsk-* becomes more and more closely correlated with the meaning of quality, thus acquiring an increasingly “adjectival nature” — relating to the description of an object rather than its denotation.

2.5 Inanimate Stems: *-ьп-*

The adjective-forming suffix *-ьп-*²⁰ is sometimes attested interchangeably with *-ьsk-* in inanimate noun stems:

- (37) на дворъ *теремьстьмь*
 ‘in the courtyard of the palace’ (Laur. Chron. 945, l 15v)
 (38) надъ горою дворъ *теремьныи* бѣ
 ‘the courtyard of the palace was over beyond the hill’ (Laur. Chron. 945, l 15)

It is even less productive than *-ьsk-* with common personal or animate stems, and completely unattested with proper stems. The attestations like (39) and (40) are infrequent:

- (39) тоу же *соупостатная* рать въставлага не прѣстаѣтъ
 ‘and here the enemy’s hostility arising does not stop’ (Th. 66v.18–19)
 (40) горькую и *неч<е>л<о>в<ь>чьную* съмърть приа
 ‘he received a miserable and inhumane death’ (B&G 16a.28)

In contrast, the suffix *-ьп-* is extremely versatile with inanimate stems of various genders and declensions:

- (41) аже межю перетнеть *борьтьюною* или *рольиноюю* разореть или *дворноюю* тыномъ перегородить то 12 гривнѣ продаже
 ‘if (someone) hacks a bee-hive boundary, or ploughs the boundary of a

ploughed field, or puts up a fence across an estate/house boundary — he is to pay a 12-grivna fine' (Pr. Rus. 71, 72, l 621)

- (42) *звъздное хоженъе*
 'the movement of stars' (Laur. Chron. 986, l 31v)
- (43) *и предъидаше предъ ними ношью столпъ огненъ а въ день облаченъ*
 'and there went before him at night a column of fire and during the day, of cloud' (Laur. Chron. 986, l 32)
- (44) *изнемогоша водною жажею*
 'exhausted by thirst for water' (Laur. Chron. 988, l 37v)
- (45) *стр<а>сти злыа ицѣлающа каплами кровными с<ва>тыми*
 'curing evil suffering with holy drops of blood' (Laur. Chron. 1015, l 47v)

Many adjectives formed by this suffix are truly qualitative, lacking any meaning of individual possession ((41), (43–45)), as well as referential definiteness. Witness especially the following attestation:

- (46) *вышедъ въ дворъ теремныи отень*
 'having gone out into the courtyard of his father's palace' (Laur. Chron. 980, l 24v)

The contrast between the two denominal adjectives in (46) lies not only in the difference between the personal and inanimate stems, but is further reinforced by the difference in the suffixes: *-ьн* and *-ьн-* respectively. The adjective *отень* 'father's' denotes possession and is definite, while *теремныи* 'of the palace' can be almost considered as forming a compound with its head noun *дворъ* 'yard', together standing for 'courtyard'. The yard can only exist within the palace. A similar degree of semantic fusion is observable in (42).²¹

3. The Suffix Hierarchy as an Extension of the Possessor Hierarchy

The nearly exclusive combinability of *-ов-* and *-ин-* with personal (especially proper) stems, on the one hand, and the scarcity, verging on a complete lack of attestations, of *-ьн-* with such stems, on the other, are two sides of the same coin. The pattern of distribution of various suffixes closely follows the POSSESSOR–POSSESSED hierarchy, and can itself be organized as a hierarchy.

A highly definite meaning of the personal nominal stem tends to be correlated with a high degree of definiteness conveyed through the addition of a particular adjective-forming suffix. It appears that the adjectival suffixes themselves form a hierarchical continuum, depending on their semantic and/or morphological compatibility with certain types of nominal stems and the degree of referential definiteness conveyed.

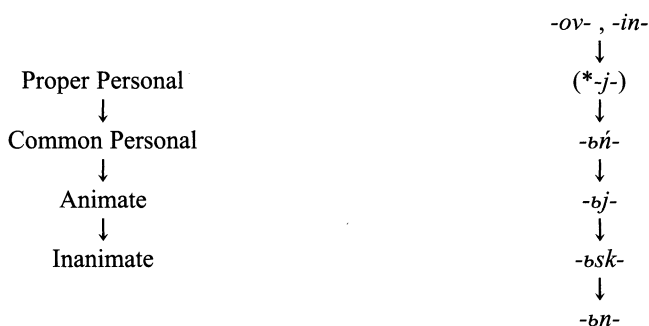


Fig. 2. The Possessor Hierarchy and the Suffix Hierarchy

4. Conclusion

The prototypical possessive suffixes are *-ov-* and *-in-*. Gradually less individualizing are **-j-*, *-bñ-* and *-bj-*. Those lexical features of the nominal stem (Proper, Personal and Mature) that have been singled out as relevant for the prototypical possessor, as well as the referential feature Definite, regulate the selection of the adjectival suffix. A decrease in the presence of these features towards the bottom of the hierarchy, for instance, explains the inability of nouns lower on the hierarchy to form an individual personal adjective. The majority of denominal adjectives formed from noun stems in this position are those in *-bsk-*. The former usually express “generic, categorial possession or affiliation” (Zverkovskaja 51), though other suffixes such as **-j-* and *-bj-* are attested low on the hierarchy as well (depending on the type of stem with which they combine).

Furthermore, while rare, *-bsk-* adjectives formed from proper personal stems acquire a similar meaning, having nothing to do with individual possession. These are instances in which the meaning of a proper noun becomes “almost common, generalized”, such as in the example cited by Zverkovskaja (51) from the Ryazan Nomocanon of 1284: *o<m> adamьсѣкаго грѣха* ‘from Adam’s sin’.

The adjectives formed by *-bn-* are predominantly attested with inanimate stems; most typically express qualitative meaning (rather than denoting a particular referent), and are, so to say, the most adjectival of all the groups discussed.

It is significant that the lack of referential definiteness in both the corresponding nominal stem and the adjective-forming suffix is compensated for by the use of a bare genitive modifier in the form of a noun instead of the denominal adjective, when it is necessary to express definiteness.

The gradual nature of this hierarchy and the mutual encroachment of suf-

fixes onto neighbouring (and sometimes even distant) domains should be particularly emphasized. Prototype effects are further revealed by the absence of exclusive combinability among adjective-forming suffixes and particular kinds of nominal stems. It is easier to determine the opposite poles of the hierarchy than to arrange the suffixes in between. The difference is most striking at the poles, while in the middle it is more difficult to draw borders between adjacent levels.

Particularly interesting is the elusive, seemingly omnipresent suffix **-j-*. Depending on the lexical features of the nominal stem to which it is added, it may appear at every level of the hierarchy (e.g. *Jaroslavlъ* 'Jaroslav's', *Faraonъ* 'Pharaoh's', *knjažъ* 'of a prince', *proročъ* 'of a prophet', *medvěžъ* 'of a bear').

However, as previously explained, this suffix exists only residually at the time of the records. This perhaps accounts for its fluctuation along the hierarchy. The rudimentary suffix was becoming increasingly scarce. Instead, a newer suffix *-ov-* was productive with proper personal stems at the top of the hierarchy. Based on this downward trend, **-j-* should be assigned a relatively lower (although uncertain) place.

Clearly, one can speak only of discernible tendencies in adjective formation.

To conclude, the OESl adjective-forming suffixes examined in this paper comprise a hierarchy regulated largely by lexical features Proper, Personal and Mature. It thus directly corresponds to the possessor hierarchy with the possessor prototype at the top. Morphological features (declensional membership) of the nominal stem may influence its compatibility with certain suffixes, particularly *-ov-* and *-in-*. Conversely, morphological features sometimes rank lower than lexical. This is suggested by such formations as *Iudovъ* 'of Judah' (2), as well as by the productivity of the suffix *-bŋ-* with stems denoting kinship and clan terms, irrespective of their declensional membership.

Although the selection of a particular suffix tends to be controlled by the morphological and lexical features of the nominal stem, there is no strict correlation with a certain lexical or even morphological type of nominal stem among these adjective-forming suffixes.

Phonological features, such as stem-final consonant or the syllabic composition of the nominal stem, may have been initially relevant for the formation of adjectives with the help of the suffixes **-j-* and *-bj-*. Stems ending in a labial or nasal consonant tend to combine with the suffix **-j-*, while dental stems rarely do (Vaillant 598). Stems of adjectival origin ending in *-k-/c-* also show a preference for this suffix (which can be interpreted both as a lexical and a phonological feature). Finally, referential features (definite/indefinite) are also prominent in the hierarchical organization of these suffixes. Thus, adjectives with *-bšk-* hardly ever have definite reference.

NOTES

I am grateful to the two SEEJ anonymous reviewers whose comments and suggestions have contributed to the final version of this article. I am solely responsible for any errors that may remain.

- 1 See back matter for the list of primary sources.
- 2 Eckhoff (20) expresses similar dissatisfaction with the term *possessive*.
- 3 In its description of the data this article employs the device of a feature not necessarily in a binary, but rather a scalar sense. Hence—a feature could be said to be present to a varying degree.
- 4 The extensively developed markedness theory has long been concerned with problems of asymmetry in related linguistic categories. One member of an opposition always appears psychologically more basic (“unmarked/more natural”) than the other, thus representing a prototype. For a comprehensive review of markedness theory see Andersen.
According to Mayerthaler, the formal model for linguistic prototypes comes to natural morphology from mathematics, namely: catastrophe theories, which help to account for discontinuities (“catastrophes”) in otherwise smooth systems. This may be applied to many diachronic phenomena in language. The incremental character of the suffix hierarchy proposed in this study also reflects continuity that engenders discontinuity.
- 5 The cognitive approach is laid out in Langacker and is based on the tenet that linguistic categories are structured radially and form a network with a prototype at the centre, while “membership in a category is determined by perceived resemblance to typical instances” (59). Rosch is considered the founder of the prototype theory in psychology.
See Corbett (302, 329), Lomtev (453), Borkovskij (149), Zverkovskaja (39). Potebnja (410) comments on the difficulty of deciphering the meaning of possessive adjectives (similar to genitive of possession) formed from proper personal noun stems. The subject or object function of the modifier in such instances can only be determined pragmatically or contextually. Moreover, Uryson (122) claims that the ambiguity inherent in such usage may sometimes be advantageous. He provides an example from a text in which *božij dar* could mean both ‘gift of God’ and ‘gift to God’.
- 6 In its analysis in terms of hierarchical structures, this study shares a number of theoretical foundations and conclusions with previous works on Slavic and non-Slavic material. Various hierarchies involving nominal and pronominal categories have been proposed, mainly taking into account lexical features, but in some cases also elaborating on the referential feature of definiteness. See, for example, Flier, Comrie, Corbett, Silverstein and Zaliznjak. Huntley’s (1993, 137) hierarchy represents the first attempt at an integrated account of the OCS pattern of attestations of genitive-accusative and nominative-accusative, and of the ability of a nominal stem to form a denominal personal adjective. My article on OES1 genitive-accusative is conducted from a similar perspective.
- 7 The phonetic variant of this suffix will henceforth be omitted, and both will be represented by the single notation *-ov-*.
- 8 Frolova (1963, 24) lists the more recent East Slavic *prědtečevъ* and *prědtečinvъ* ‘John the Baptist’s’ (from *prědteča* ‘forerunner, precursor’).
- 9 Compare Frolova (1963, 24). Meillet (459) also concludes that “le choix du suffixe dépend [...] du sens du mot [the choice of a suffix depends [...] on the meaning of the word]”. Support for this idea is provided by the reported limitation of the suffix *-bŋ-* to adjectives formed from the stems of kinship terms of both masculine and feminine gender.
- 10 See Večerka (1963, 196), who refers also to Brodowska-Honowska’s opinion that **-j-* adjectives represent an intermediate type, a ‘connecting link’ between the *-ov-* and *-bŋ-* adjectives.
- 11 Zverkovskaja (10) agrees. With respect to the **-j-* adjectives, she emphasizes that the lexical meaning of the nominal stem influences the semantic meaning of the adjective, which could

- have an “individual-possessive meaning [индивидуально-притяжательное значение]” if the nominal stem is personal (this includes proper noun stems), or “categorical-possessive or possessive-relational [категориально-притяжательное или притяжательно-относительное]” if the nominal stem is common (including names of professions as well as animal nouns).
- 12 Zverkovskaja (38) goes so far as to say that the majority of the *-ov-* adjectives in the earliest sources were formed from borrowed noun stems of Greek or Scandinavian origin, irrespective of either declensional membership, or the already existing **-j-* adjectives formed from these stems.
 - 13 See Meillet (369–71) and Brodowska-Honowska (11–29) for a list of OCS *-ov-* adjectives, including those formed from animal and even inanimate stems. Frolova (1963) and Zverkovskaja (38–45) discuss OESL attestations.
 - 14 Frolova (1959, 1963) thinks that this is a phonetically motivated variant of **-j-*.
 - 15 In grouping nouns denoting animals together with those denoting children, slaves and gods, Trubetzkoy also notes that the same tendency is observed in some classifier languages.
 - 16 Compare Cienki on similarities and differences concerning locational relationships between physical objects of the outside world, and relations of possession involving humans. See also Flier (59).
 - 17 Flier (91) observes, with regard to the shared nominal stem of OCS attestations of the adjectives *fariseiskъ* and *fariseovъ* ‘of Pharisees’, that the suffix *-ъsk-* is used if the adjective refers to a group of Pharisees, while *-ov-* is employed for reference to one particular member. See also Frolova (1963, 15) and Brodowska-Honowska (21).
 - 18 Brodowska-Honowska (28) says that *-ov-* could not in itself have had a possessive meaning, but acquired it only gradually, by being used mostly with personal stems.
 - 19 See also Meillet (332).
 - 20 This suffix forms adjectives not only from nominal, but from verbal stems as well (Zverkovskaja 24).
 - 21 Compare Huntley’s (1984, 218) examples from OCS: *uzdy koňnyę cěsarę* ‘the bridle of the emperor’s horse’, and *obrazotъ krestъnyimъ xristosovotъ* ‘with the sign of the cross of Christ’.

ABBREVIATIONS FOR PRIMARY SOURCES

BBL	Birch bark letter <i>Novgorodskie gramoty na bereste (iz raskopok 1984–1989 gg.)</i> . Ed. V. L. Janin and A. A. Zaliznjak. Moskva: Nauka, 1993.
B&G	<i>Life of Boris & Gleb</i>
Th.	<i>Life of Theodosius</i> <i>Uspenskij sbornik XII–XII veka</i> . Ed. O. A. Knjazevskaja, V. G. Dem’janov and M. V. Ljapon. Moskva: Nauka, 1971.
Laur. Chron.	Laurentian Chronicle
Suzd. Chron.	Suzdal Chronicle <i>Lavrent’evskaja letopis’/Suzdal’skaja letopis’ po Akademičeskomu spisku. Polnoe sobranie russkix letopisej</i> . Vol. 1. Moskva: Izdatel’stvo vostočnoj literatury, 1962.
Pr. Rus.	<i>Pravda rus’skaja (Sinodal’nyj vid)</i> <i>Pravda russkaja</i> . Ed. B. D. Grekov. 3 vols. Reprint ed. Vol. 1: <i>Teksty</i> . The Hague: Europe Printing, 1940/1967.

- 1229 Tr. *1229 Smolensk-Riga Trade Treaty*
Smolenskie gramoty XIII–XIV vekov. Ed. R. I. Avanesov. Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1963.

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