

1. outline I propose that comparative suffixes are composed of two separate heads. I also suggest that there are classes of roots that differ in terms of their structural size within a nanosyntactic approach of spell-out. This explains the morphosyntactic forms of the comparative suffix in Ukrainian across different adjectival classes.

2. the data Ukrainian comparative adjectives are formed by adding a comparative suffix, which follows the root and precedes the agreement marker *-yj*, to the positive degree. This suffix can be either *š*, as in *star-yj–star-š-yj* ‘old’–‘older’, or *-iš*, as in *čyst-yj–čyst-iš-yj* ‘clean’–‘cleaner’. There is a very limited set of

adjectives with the apparent *-č* and *-šč* suffixes. I follow Bevzenko (1960) and Plušč (2010) in analysing them as allomorphs of the *-š* suffix. A number of comparative adjectives have the so-called augments (AUG) *-k* or *-ok* in the positive and in the comparative (1a-b). There are other adjectives that have augments in the positive and lose them in the comparative (1c-d).

Theoretically there are six possible patterns for the comparative formation: three possible augment situations (no augment, augment retention, augment drop) for

	POS	CMPR	example	gloss	two suffixes
	a. root	root-š	star-yj–star-š-yj	old	(-š and -iš),
	b. root	root-iš	čyst-yj–čyst-iš-yj	clean	summarized in
(2)	c. root-AUG	root-š	korot-k-yj–korot-š-yj	short	(2). The last two
	d. root-AUG	root-AUG-iš	dzvin-k-yj–dzvin-k-iš-yj	voiced	patterns are
	e. root-AUG	root-iš	<i>unattested</i>	<i>unattested</i>	unattested. When
	f. root-AUG	root-AUG-š	<i>unattested</i>	<i>unattested</i>	an adjective has

an augment in the positive form and loses it in the comparative it cannot be followed by the suffix *-iš* (2e). When it has an augment in the positive form and keeps it in the comparative it cannot be followed by *-š* (2f).

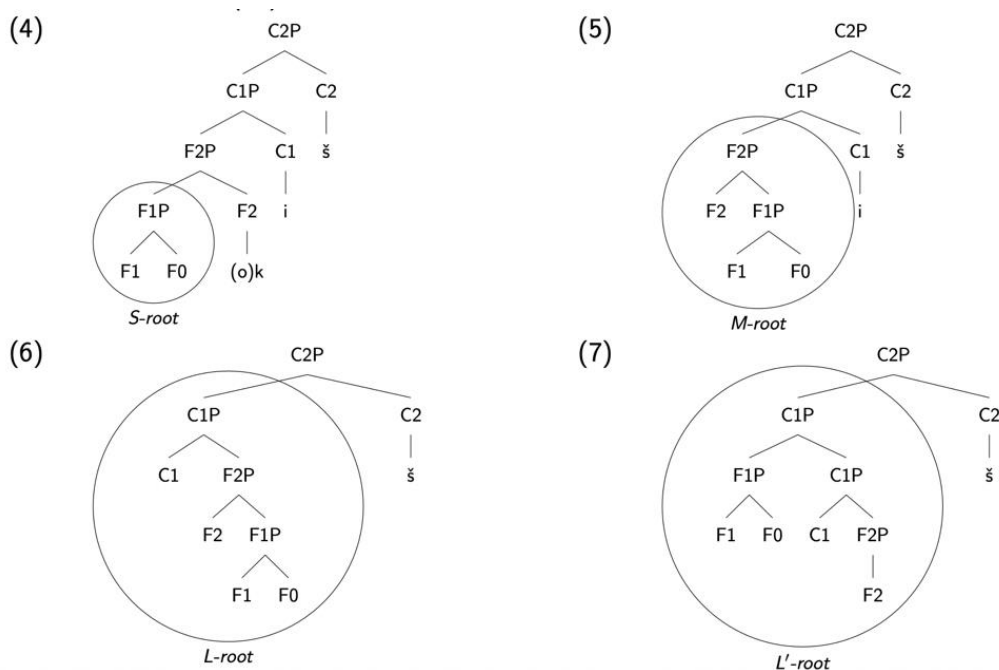
3. DM analysis Bobaljik (2012) proposes that the comparative form of an adjective contains the positive. Under this assumption there is one comparative head that attaches to the positive degree. However, certain Slavic languages have

	POS	CMPR -š	CMPR -iš	gloss	two comparative suffixes
(3)	dešev-yj	dešev-š-yj	*dešev-iš-yj	cheap	where one is a phonological subset of the other, as <i>-iš/-š</i> in Ukrainian.
	važlyv-yj	*važlyv-š-yj	važlyv-iš-yj	important	The table in (3) has two

bi-syllabic adjectival roots, both

ending in labiodental [v], but the first one takes the *-š* suffix, while the second one can only take *-iš*. Meanwhile, certain adjectives can take both suffixes *-š* and *-iš*, as *bahat-yj–bahat-š-yj/bahat-iš-yj* ‘rich’–‘richer’. Both of these observations suggest that this alternation is not phonological. Thus, there has to be more to the structure of the comparative instead of one comparative head. Secondly, these languages have augments in the positive that sometimes disappear in the comparative (1c-d), violating the containment relation.

4. Nanosyntactic analysis I propose a nanosyntactic analysis (Starke 2009) for the Ukrainian data. It has two key notions that are relevant for this analysis: submorphemic syntax and phrasal spell-out. The first one is built on the observation that there are more featural distinctions than there are morphemes available, e.g. the Ukrainian agreement marker *-yj* stands for Masculine, Singular, and Nominative. The second one assumes that if multiple heads make up a single morph, “then it must be possible for spellout to target phrases (XPs) and not just heads” (Baunaz and Lander 2018:16). Caha et al. (2019) propose that the comparative morpheme is represented in syntax not by one but by two functional heads: C1 and C2. I propose that *-iš* is to be decomposed into two morphemes *-i* and *-š*, where *-i* is a spellout of C1 and *-š* is a spellout of C2. I will be also using such labels as F1, F2 (feature 1, 2) for the trees in (4-7). I propose that there are four different root types in Ukrainian comparatives, each differing in the amount of structure that they spell out. Vanden Wyngaerd et al. (2020) divide roots of adjectives into three types: ‘small’, or S-roots, ‘medium’, or M-roots, and ‘extra-large’, or XL-roots. I will be using a similar notation for the root sizes in Ukrainian.



5. deriving the empirical patterns S-roots (4) are ‘small’ as they spell out only F1P. They need an augment to spell out F2P, and both C1P and C2P to spell out the comparative. Such adjectives show the pattern in (2d). It also explains the impossibility of (2f), where an AUG is followed by *-š*: F2P is spelled out by an augment which is then followed by C1P *-i*, and then by C2P *-š*; a C1P has to be lexicalized. M-roots (5) are ‘bigger’ as they spell out more structure, not only F1P, but also F2P. As a result, they do not take augments, but need C1P and C2P in the comparative; this explains the pattern in (2b). L-roots (6) spell out C1P in addition to F1P and F2P. Such adjectives only need C2P in the comparative; this explains the pattern in (2a). The last type of the roots is what I call L'-roots (7). They spell out the same amount of structure as L-roots in the comparative, but their positive degree is different. L'-roots need an augment in the positive, but lose it in the comparative, as in (2c). I will show how this pattern can be derived using Movement Containing Trees (inspired by Blix 2021).

6. conclusions The difference in comparative morphology and the distribution of augments is the result of the difference in adjectival root sizes: the bigger the root, the less morphology it needs. The nanosyntactic approach presented above not only helps to explain the mechanism behind allomorphy in Ukrainian, but also explains patterns of augment drop, augment retention, and augment absence.

references: **Baunaz, L. and Lander, E. 2018.** Nanosyntax: the basics. In Lena Baunaz, Karen De Clercq, Liliane Haegeman and Eric Lander (eds.), *Exploring nanosyntax*, 3–56. Oxford: Oxford University Press. **Bevzenko, S.P. 1960.** *Istoryčna morfologija ukrajins'koji movy*. 'The historical morphology of the Ukrainian language'. Uzhhorod: Zakarpats'ke Oblastne Vydavnytstvo. **Blix, H. 2021.** Phrasal Spellout and Partial Overwrite: On an alternative to backtracking. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 6(1):62. 1–17. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5334/gjgl.1614>. **Bobaljik, J.. 2012.** *Universals In Comparative Morphology*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press. **Caha, P., et al. 2019.** The fine structure of the comparative. *Studia Linguistica* 73(3). 470–521. **Plušč, M. 2010.** *Hramatyka Ukrajins'koji Movy*. 'The Grammar of the Ukrainian Language'. Kyiv: Slovo. **Starke, M. 2009.** Nanosyntax: A short primer to a new approach to language. *Nordlyd* 36. 1–6. **Vanden Wyngaerd, G., et al. 2020.** How to be positive. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 5(1): 23.1–34.