



# LINGUISTICS

Department Colloquia

## The Department of Linguistics is pleased to present

**Draga Zec**  
(Cornell University)

speaking on

### Phonology within morphology in South Slavic: the case of *ov* augmentation

Friday, May 24, 2024

1:20 - 3:00 PM

in HUM 1 - 210

(This is an in-person event. For accessibility issues, please contact Sarah Amador ([samador@ucsc.edu](mailto:samador@ucsc.edu)))

#### Abstract:

This talk focuses on alternate modes of plural formation in South Slavic languages: all nominal roots in (1)-(2) combine with inflectional affixes marking number/gender/(case), but LIGHT roots, in (1), also include the sequence *OV*.

#### (1) LIGHT roots

	Singular	Plural	Dual	Gloss
a. Bulgarian	park	parkove		'park'
b. Macedonian	grad	gradovi		'city'
c. Slovenian	glas	glasovi	glasova	'voice'
d. BCS	rak	rakovi		'crab'

#### (2) HEAVY roots

	Singular	Plural	Dual	Gloss
a. Bulgarian	mesec	meseci		'month'
b. Macedonian	junak	junaci		'hero'
c. Slovenian	korak	koraki	koraka	'step'
d. BCS	jelen	jeleni		'deer'

In all four languages, there are two crucial types of restrictions on the distribution of *OV*. The role of *OV* is obviously prosodic: it co-occurs exclusively with LIGHT roots, those that have at most one syllable, or two in some cases (cf. McCarthy and Prince 1986 and many others). A most striking aspect of *OV* augmentation, however, is the bounding role of its morphology: *OV* augmentation is morphologically restricted, occurring only with LIGHT roots that belong to the *masculine* declension class, and only in their plural/dual forms. Although the other two declension classes, *feminine* and *neuter*, include monosyllabic roots, such roots are not augmented.

It is of interest to note that, diachronically, *OV* can be traced back to morphological reanalysis in Late Common Slavic, whereby this sequence detached from a nominal form within a declension class of mostly monosyllabic roots, becoming a formative in search of a function, and ultimately integrating into the South Slavic grammatical systems. The morphological fate of *OV*, however, is not uniform across South Slavic, although its size effect is. We provide a detailed investigation of the status of *OV* in BCS (relying on the framework of Distributed Morphology, Halle & Marantz 1993; Embick 2010, Oltra-Massuet & Arregi 2005), which strongly suggests that *OV* serves as the realization of the masculine declension theme and, as such, participates in complex phonology/morphology interactions within not only inflectional and but also derivational morphology; while retaining its prosodic conditioning. But while in BCS *OV* is an independent formative with a morphological function, as it is also in Macedonian, in Bulgarian *OV* is incorporated into the plural inflection, having no independent status; and in Slovenian *OV* is restricted to the plural/dual forms of a small set of monosyllables, with no clearly detectable role. Significantly though, regardless of its morphological fate, *OV* invariably remained within the bounds of the declension class from which it originated diachronically. Thus, the essential traits of the case of phonology/morphology interface presented here, despite variation in language-specific accommodations, are its failure to generalize beyond the masculine declension class on the one hand, and its persistent prosodic size effect on the other.