

Deverbal adjectives in Slovenian: First insights

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The talk focuses on deverbal adjectives in Slovenian. Previous work (see Simonović & Mišmaš (2022) for Slovenian, based on Aljović (2000) for BCMS) considered primarily adjectival participles with *-l* (derived from unaccusative verbs, as in (1)) and *-n/t* (derived from transitive verbs, as in (2)). This talk, however, focuses on three underexplored groups of Slovenian deverbal adjectives: (i) adjectives with the suffix *-ljiv*, (3), (ii) adjectives with *-ln*, (4), and (iii) present active participles with *-oč*, (5a), and *-eč*, (5b).

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|--------|---------------------------|----------|-----|----------------------------|-----------|
| (1) | o-slab-e-l-a | (mišica) | (2) | o-pis-a-n-a | (težava) |
| | around-weak-TV-l-F.SG.NOM | (muscle) | | around-write-TV-n-F.SG.NOM | (problem) |
| | ‘weakened (muscle)’ | | | ‘described (problem)’ | |
| (3) a. | paz-ljiv-a | (bralka) | b. | ber-ljiv-a | (zgodba) |
| | attend-ljiv-F.SG.NOM | (reader) | | read-ljiv-F.SG.NOM | (story) |
| | ‘attentive (reader)’ | | | ‘readable (story)’ | |
| (4) a. | var-ov-a-ln-a | (oprema) | b. | br-a-ln-a | (očala) |
| | protect-ov-TV-ln-F.SG.NOM | (gear) | | read-TV-ln-N.PL.NOM | (glasses) |
| | ‘protective (gear)’ | | | ‘reading (glasses)’ | |
| (5) a. | u-mir-a-j-oč-e | (drevo) | b. | bol-eč-a | (roka) |
| | in-dead-TV-j-oč-N.SG.NOM | (tree) | | hurt-eč-F.SG.NOM | (hand) |
| | ‘dying (tree)’ | | | ‘painful (hand)’ | |

The talk considers these groups of Slovenian deverbal adjectives in order to offer a systematic overview of the data as well as some initial observations and questions about their structure and meaning. But the bigger goal of the talk is to gain a better understanding of not just the structure of these items, but also verbal structure in Slovenian. The main source of data will be the *Annotated database of Slovenian adjectives* (Mišmaš et al. 2025).

Despite being deverbal, these adjectives do not form a uniform group, either in terms of their meaning or structure. For example, present active participles have an episodic interpretation, while adjectives with *-ljiv* and *-ln* do not. Instead, adjectives with *-ljiv* receive a dispositional, as in (3a), or a modal passive reading, (3b). Adjectives with *-ln*, on the other hand, can be interpreted as potential, as in (4a), or, as traditional grammars (e.g., Toporišič 2000) term it, having a purpose reading, (4b). Structurally, adjectives with *-ln* preserve the theme vowel, while adjectives with *-ljiv* do not and present active participles differ in terms of the theme vowel of their bases (*-oč* adjectives can have an overt theme vowel, *-eč* do not). Furthermore, adjectives with *-eč* and *-oč* both take present tense stems of imperfective verbs as their base, while *-ln* adjectives use the non-finite base (compare the root in (4a), *br-*, to the infinitive *br-a-ti* ‘to read’ and *ber-oč-a* (*javnost*) ‘reading (public)’ to *ber-em* ‘read.1SG’). The three groups also differ in terms of the morphological structure of their base: *ljiv*-adjectives can be derived from simplex or prefixed verbal forms but do not allow for verbal suffixes; adjectives with *-eč* do not include either verbal prefixes or suffixes; while those with *-oč* can include both. Finally, the groups also differ in terms of the aspect of their bases, as only those with *-ljiv* seem to take both perfective and imperfective bases, while those with *-ln* and *-eč/-oč* tend to take imperfective bases. In the talk, these asymmetries will be further explored to gain a better understanding of the interaction between the verbal and the adjectival domain.

References: Aljović, N. 2000. Unaccusativity and aspect in SerBoCroatian. In *Console VIII proceedings: Proceedings of the eighth conference of the student organisation of linguistics in Europe*, 1–15. Leiden: SOLE. Mišmaš, P., M. Simonović & S. Milosavljević. 2025. Annotated database of Slovenian adjectives [Data set]. Zenodo. Simonović, M. & P. Mišmaš. 2022. Lowest theme vowels or highest roots? An ‘unaccusative’ theme-vowel class in Slovenian. *Glossa: a journal of general linguistics* 7(1). Toporišič, J. 2000. *Slovenska slovnica*. Maribor: Obzorja.