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**LONG ADJECTIVAL INFLECTION AND SPECIFICITY
IN SERBO-CROATIAN***

ABSTRACT

This article is concerned with the interpretation of noun phrases containing short and long adjectives in Serbo-Croatian. It is argued that the short/long distinction among Serbo-Croatian adjectives correlates with the semantic opposition between the non-specific and specific readings, respectively. The article further investigates the syntactic source of the long inflection, proposing that an AP occupying the Specifier of a nominal functional head will appear with an additional mark, i.e. a long inflection. Finally, the morphological parallelism between the inflection on pronouns and that on adjectives is discussed, suggesting that both are linked to the same nominal projection – possibly DP.

KEYWORDS

Adjectives, adjectival inflection, DP, (in)definiteness, specificity, Serbo-Croatian.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is twofold: firstly, it seeks to demonstrate that the semantic contrast reflected in Serbo-Croatian (S-C) attributive adjectives (short vs. long) involves the notion of specificity (presupposition), and not that of definiteness as previously assumed; secondly, it tries to answer, in syntactic terms, the following two related questions: (1) Why can only short forms be used predicatively? and (2) What is the source of the long inflection which appears on so-called ‘long’ adjectives?

Most Slavonic languages (except Bulgarian and Macedonian) preserve (more or less) the distinction between short and long adjectival forms (inherited from Old Church Slavonic, and traditionally called indefinite and definite adjectives). This is illustrated for S-C in (1a, b) with *lijep* ‘nice/pretty’¹ ([:] long vowel, [ː] falling tone, [ˑ] rising tone):

	(1) a. <i>lijep</i> (M)	<i>lijépa</i> (F)	<i>lijépo</i> (N)	Short		NomSg
	b. <i>lijepi</i> (M)	<i>lijèpa:</i> (F)	<i>lijèpo:</i> (N)	Long		

The long forms in (1b) are longer in that their inflection is longer. Both forms can be used attributively, (2a), but only short forms permit predicative use, (2b):

(2) a.	<i>lijep</i>	<i>/lijepi</i>	<i>momak</i>	
	nice (short)	/nice (long)	young-man	‘a nice/the nice young man’
b.	Goran je <i>lijep</i>	<i>/*lijepi</i>		
G.	is nice (short)/	nice (long)		‘Goran is nice’

In what follows I will examine S-C adjectives in attributive use that distinguish a short from a long form, trying to understand why the long adjective in (2a) forces a definite reading of its noun phrase, and why in (2b) only the short form is admitted. In Section 2, I present the morpho-phonological aspect of the short-long distinction among adjectives in modern S-C. In Section 3 it will be argued that the semantic opposition reflected by short and long adjectives involves the notion of specificity. Section 4 deals with the structure of S-C noun phrases hosting adjectives, arguing that long inflection originates in a structural layer above NumP. This analysis thus establishes a link between the structural properties of a noun phrase containing a long adjective and its interpretative properties (specificity). The label NP(s) will be used to denote ‘noun phrase(s)’ in general, regardless of their internal structure.

2. Short and long Gender-Number-Case inflection

In modern S-C, the short/long distinction is visible on qualifying adjectives². It primarily involves the prosodic properties of the inflection itself and may further involve some prosodic properties of the adjectival base as well. Sometimes the distinction is neutralized, as we will see shortly. Originally, the

distinction between short and long adjectives corresponds to the distinction between nominal and pronominal inflection. In modern S-C this distinction is only overt in the M/N singular³:

Table 1 : *crn* ‘black’, Masc. Sg. (+ animate/-animate)

		Nom	Gen	Dat	Acc	Inst	Loc
NOMINAL	<i>crn</i>	-Ø	-a	-u	-a/-Ø	-im	-u
PRONOMINAL	<i>crn</i>	-i	-og	-om	-og/-i	-im	-om

In all other contexts (M/N/F plural, Fsg), adjectives appear with the so-called pronominal inflection (morphologically ‘longer’ or more complex), but may however reveal the short/long distinction through other means – mainly prosodic – presented below:

1. Vowel quantity: In the Nominative and Accusative cases, for all adjectives (those which make the short/long distinction) the inflection of the long form has a long vowel; that of the short form has a short vowel. Examples:

- (3) *krasn-a* ‘beautiful-_{FNomSgShort}’; *krasn-a:* ‘beautiful-_{FNomSgLong}’

In the oblique cases (Gen, Dat, Inst, Loc), inflection always involves a long vowel. It follows that in these cases, for a certain number of adjectives, the short/long distinction is neutralized:

- (4) *krasn-i:h* ‘beautiful-_{M/NGenPlShort/Long}’

2. Tone⁴: For some adjectives, the short form has a rising tone, the long one a falling tone. Such adjectives make the short/long distinction regardless of case. Examples ([] falling tone, [́] rising tone, [:] vowel length):

- (5) a. *glá:dn-i:h* ‘hungry-_{M/N/FGenPlShort}’ *glà:dn-i:h* ‘hungry-_{M/N/FGenPlLong}’
 b. *glá:dn-e* ‘hungry-_{FNom/AccPlShort}’ *glà:dn-e:* ‘hungry-_{FNom/AccPlLong}’

3. Accent: For a class of adjectives, the accent of the long form moves one syllable to the left. Such adjectives exhibit the short/long distinction in all case contexts (stressed vowels are given in small capitals):

- (6) a. *zElen-a* ‘green-_{FNomSgShort}’ *zElen-a:* ‘green-_{FNomSgLong}’
 b. *zElen-o:m* ‘green-_{M/NDatSgShort}’ *zElen-o:m* ‘green-_{M/NDatSgLong}’

3. Long inflection and specificity

The aim of this section is to show that the short/long distinction among S-C adjectives largely correlates with the [± specific] semantic contrast, rather than with the [± definite] contrast, as often assumed (by, *e. g.*, Leko 1988, 1998, Progovac 1998, Zlatic @ 1997, and by traditional grammars such as Stevanović @ 1964). This latter assumption is based on (2a), repeated in (7):

- (7) *lijep*_{short} /*lijepi*_{long} momak 'a nice/the nice young man'

Before presenting empirical evidence that this view should be abandoned, I must make the semantic notions of (in)definiteness and of (non) specificity clear. I will adopt the notion of (in)definiteness defined for example by Heim (1982) and Kamp (1981), which is expressed by the Familiarity Condition and the Novelty Condition. All indefinite NPs in a sentence must be *novel*: they must introduce into the domain of the discourse referents that were not previously in the discourse; all definite NPs must be *familiar*: they must be mapped onto discourse referents which were already introduced in the previous discourse. The notion of (non) specificity is related to but distinct from that of (in)definiteness. According to Enç (1991), specific NPs, just like definite ones, have *familiar* referents (previously introduced in the discourse) – but they do not involve the same type of discourse linking: the relevant linking for specific NPs is the *inclusion* relation, and for definite NPs, the *identity* relation. Definite and specific NPs require that their discourse referents be linked to (*i. e.* identical to, and included into, respectively), previously established discourse referents. Indefinite and nonspecific NPs require that their discourse referents should not be linked to (*i. e.* be identical to, and be included into, respectively), previously established discourse referents. Significantly, formally indefinite NPs are ambiguous: in the sentence *Mary wants to meet two students* the NP *two students* can be interpreted as 'two of the students' (= 'there are two students that Mary wants to meet'), or 'some two students or other'. Sometimes the specificity of an indefinite NP is signaled overtly. While specific indefinite NPs are covert partitives, partitives such as 'two of the students' are overtly specific⁵. Turkish specific indefinite object NPs require overt case marking (Acc), while those that are not case-marked are interpreted as non-specific (see Enç 1991 : ex. 12).

Returning now to S-C, while it is true that short adjectives correlate with the notion of indefiniteness, it does not seem so obvious that long adjectives correlate exclusively with the definite interpretation of their NPs. Consider the following data:

- (8) a. *jedan* *vrijédan* student
 one diligent (short) student 'a diligent student'
 b. *jedan* *vrijèdn-i* student
 one diligent (long) student 'a diligent student'
 c. *taj* *vrijèdn-i* student
 that diligent (long) student 'that diligent student'
 d. **taj* *vrijédan* student

S-C does not have articles, but the (in)definiteness of an NP can be overtly signaled by such elements as *jedan* 'one', or by a demonstrative such as *taj* 'that'. The examples in (8a, d) show that the short adjective *vrijedan* 'diligent' can only occur in indefinite NPs; example (8b), however, should be unacceptable if long adjectives were compatible exclusively with definite NPs. Clearly then, the short/long distinction does not correlate with the indefinite/definite contrast. The

question is what the (semantic) difference between (8a) and (8b) is. I shall argue below that (8a) is invariably interpreted as non-specific, and (8b) most naturally as specific.

3.1. Strong vs. weak determiners

The first piece of evidence in support of this claim comes from the distribution of long and short adjectives with respect to strong and weak determiners, in the sense of Milsark (1974). Milsark's distinction is based upon the notion of *presuppositionality* (*i. e.* specificity): strong determiners (*the, every, all, etc.*) presuppose the existence of the referent; weak determiners are ambiguous between this reading and a nonpresuppositional (or existential or cardinal) reading in which they simply assert the existence of the referent. Interestingly, short adjectives in S-C unwillingly combine with strong determiners⁶, while long adjectives are perfectly compatible with them. Compare (9a) and (9b):

- (9) a. onaj/ svaki/ koji bilo kratki_{long} /zanimljivi_{long} esej
 that/ every/ any short /interesting essay
 b. *onaj/ *?svaki/ * koji bilo kratak_{short} /zanimljiv_{short} esej

This suggests that short adjectives are not compatible with a presupposed referent.

3.2. Specificity and wide scope

Describing the notion of specificity, Enç (1991) reminds us that an NP is considered specific if it can have wide scope over an operator (*e. g.* a universal quantifier, sentence negation, a modal or propositional attitude verb). If my assumption that NPs containing long adjectives in S-C are most naturally interpreted as specific is correct, we expect such NPs, but not those containing short adjectives, to take wide scope over other operators in the sentence. The following data (inspired by Enç 1991) seem to confirm this hypothesis:

- (10) a. Svaki profesor je sreo jednog vrijednog_{short} studenta
 every professor Aux. met one diligent student
 'Every professor met some diligent student or other'
 b. Svaki profesor je sreo jednog vrijednog_{long} studenta
 1. 'There is a diligent student such that every professor met him', or
 2. 'Every professor met one of the diligent students'

The example in (10a) has only one interpretation: that in which the object NP is under the scope of the universal quantifier. The example in (10b) has two interpretations: either the object NP has wide scope over the universal quantifier, or it receives a partitive interpretation and is construed under the scope of the universal quantifier. The two interpretations of (10b) presuppose the existence of either one diligent student, or of a group of diligent students. The availability of this second interpretation suggests that a specific indefinite NP does not necessarily take wide scope over an operator⁷. What is important here is that the

partitive interpretation implies the specific reading of the NP, which is completely unavailable in (10a).

The same intuition about NPs containing long adjectives seems to be confirmed in the context of sentence negation, (11), and of a modal or propositional attitude verb, (12):

- (11) a. Marija na podu nije vidjela jednu *dĕbelu*_{long} knjigu,
 Mary on floor *ne. g. Aux seen one* thick book
 pa se spotakla i pala.
 and Refl. tripped and fell
 ‘Mary didn’t see a thick book on the floor, and she tripped and fell’
- b. Marija na podu nije vidjela jednu *debelu*_{short} knjigu,
 # pa se spotakla i pala.

When the indefinite object NP contains a short adjective [*cf.* (11b)], the continuation ‘and she tripped and fell’ is odd (contradictory), suggesting that the short adjective forces a nonspecific reading (implying that there was no thick book on the floor that Mary could have tripped over). On the other hand, the same continuation is perfectly natural in (11a) where the object NP contains a long adjective⁸. Now consider the following data:

- (12) a. Marija mora/zeli sresti jednog *visokog*_{short} studenta.
 Maria must/wants meet one tall student
 ‘Mary must/wants to meet some tall student or other’
- b. Marija mora/zeli sresti jednog *visokog*_{long} studenta.
 1. ‘There is a tall student that Mary must/wants to meet’, or
 2. ‘Mary must/wants to meet one of the tall students’

In the presence of a short adjective (12a), the object NP cannot have wide scope over the verbs ‘must’ or ‘wants’: the NP *jednog visokog studenta* does not presuppose the existence of any tall students. The object NP in (12b), on the other hand, does imply the existence of one tall student, or of a group of tall students. If wide scope over an operator is a property of specific NPs, then only the object NPs in (11a, 12b) should be considered as specific.

As shown by Diesing (1992) the two possible interpretations of indefinite NPs (specific or presuppositional and nonspecific or nonpresuppositional) can be brought out in an interesting way in contexts involving using and creation verbs, combined with adverbs of quantification. These verbs differ in the semantic interpretation they most readily allow for an indefinite object: using verbs (*e. g.* read) permit some sort of preexistence of their objects; creation verbs (*e. g.* write) denote the bringing of their objects into existence and are therefore incompatible with the notion of preexistence; their indefinite objects are unambiguously interpreted as nonspecific (nonpresuppositional). With a using verb, an adverb of quantification [*e. g.* *always* in (13a)] may either bind a variable created by the indefinite object NP (receiving a specific reading), as in (13b), or one created by the abstract spatiotemporal argument (characterizing stage-level predicates; *cf.*

Kratzer 1989), thus referring to some implicit context time, as in (13c). With a creation verb [*e. g.* (14a)], only one binding relation obtains – that of the abstract spatiotemporal argument, illustrated by (14c); (# semantically odd):

- (13) a. I always read a poem by Coleridge.
 b. Whenever I find a poem by Coleridge, I read it.
 c. (*e. g.* Before going to bed,) I always read a poem by Coleridge.
- (14) a. I always write a poem about tigers.
 b. #Whenever I find a poem about tigers, I always write it.
 c. (*e. g.* Every time I go to India,) I always write a poem about tigers.

These contexts provide an interesting test for Serbo-Croatian indefinite NPs containing short and long adjectives. If NPs containing long adjectives tend to be specific, and those containing short adjectives nonspecific, then only long adjectives should be expected to trigger an ambiguity with using verbs in such contexts as (13). With creation verbs long adjectives should be infelicitous since none of the two possible interpretations would be available: the interpretation illustrated by (14b), because it is unnatural in the context of a creation verb; the interpretation illustrated by (14c), because a long adjective forces a specific reading of its NP, which in turn blocks that interpretation which requires a nonspecific object NP. These predictions seem to be confirmed, as witnessed by the following examples [? = and ≠ mean ‘available’ and ‘unavailable’, respectively, for the object NP of the sentence due to its (non)specificity]:

- (15) a. On uvijek procita jedan zanimljiv_{short} članak.
 he always reads one interesting article
 ≠ b. Whenever he finds an interesting article he reads it.
 = c. (*e. g.* Before going to bed,) he always reads an interesting article.
- (16) a. On uvijek procita jedan zanimljivi_{long} članak.
 = b. Whenever he finds an interesting article, he reads it.
 = c. (*e. g.* Before going to bed,) he always reads a certain interesting article/one of the interesting articles.

The example in (15a) only receives the interpretation in (15c), which involves a nonspecific object NP⁹. The example in (16a) is ambiguous, as predicted if the adjective in the object NP is long. Besides, even when the adverb in (16a) is interpreted as referring to some implicit context time [*cf.* (16c)], the object NP triggers a specific (presuppositional) reading: it is interpreted either as partitive (‘one of the...’), or as referring to one particular interesting article.

Now consider the same object NP with a creation verb:

- (17) a. On uvijek napise jedan zanimljiv_{short} članak.
 he always writes one interesting article
 ≠ b. #Whenever he finds an interesting article he writes it.
 = c. (*e. g.* Before going to bed,) he always writes an interesting article.

- (18) a. ??On uvijek napise jedan zanimljivi_{long} članak.
 = b. #Whenever he finds an interesting article, he writes it.
 = c. #(e. g. Before going to bed,) he always writes a certain interesting article/one of the interesting articles.

Object NPs with long adjectives are not natural with creation verbs [*cf.* (18a)] since their specific (presuppositional) reading allows them either to act as variables bound by the adverb of quantification, an interpretation unnatural with a creation verb (#18b), or to be interpreted as partitive or discourse-linked even if they are not bound by the adverb, which again is unnatural with a verb of creation (#18b). Only NPs with short adjectives are licensed with creation verbs, as illustrated by (17a-c)¹⁰.

4. Positions occupied by attributive adjectives

Two configurations have been proposed in the literature to account for the position of adjectives (APs) in an NP: (i) APs occupy the Specifier of various functional projections within the noun phrase (*cf.* among others Cinque 1994, Scott 1998; Leko 1998 and Progovac 1998 for Serbo-Croatian), and (ii) APs adjoin to a maximal projection in the noun phrase (*cf.* among others Bernstein 1993, Bosque & Picallo 1996, Bouchard 1998, Stavrou 1996, Valois 1991; Zlatić 1997 for Serbo-Croatian). In what follows I would like to argue that long adjectives in S-C correspond to the first strategy (Specifiers), whereas short adjectives involve the second strategy (adjunction), as illustrated in (19a, b), (where FP stands for some functional projection of the noun phrase, and NumP for the number projection, *cf.* Ritter 1991, and Aljović 2000 for Serbo-Croatian):

- (19) a. [_{FP} [_{Spec} AP_{long}] [_{F°} [_{NumP}...]]]
 b. [_{NumP} AP_{short} [_{NumP}...]]

A crucial difference between the two strategies (19a) and (19b) is revealed by the linear order among multiple adjectives: when more than one adjective is present in an NP they may follow a fixed order (stacking adjectives), or not (asyndetically coordinated adjectives). I follow Scott (1998) in assuming that only the first strategy (Specifiers) predicts a fixed order among multiple adjectives, while adjunction offers no means of explaining this fact. Interestingly, long adjectives in S-C (as well as universal quantifiers, demonstratives, and possessives), but not short adjectives, must respect a fixed linear order. Compare (20a, b) and (21a, b):

- (20) a. ono njegovo pouzdano: _{long} mǎlo: _{long} crno: _{long} auto
 that his reliable small black car
 'that reliable small black car of his'
 b. *njegovo ono crno: pouzdano: mǎlo: auto

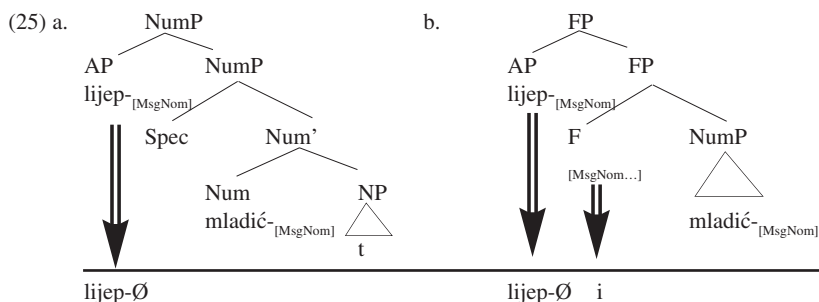
- (21) a. pouzdano _{short}, mǎlo _{short}, (i) crno _{short} auto
 'a reliable, small, (and) black car'

- b. crno_{short}, puzdano_{short}, (i) málo_{short} auto
 ‘a black, reliable, (and) small car’

In (20a) the adjectives are pronounced without pauses and interpreted as modifying the material on their right (not just the head-noun), which suggests a hierarchical configuration where every adjective c-commands asymmetrically the adjacent adjective to its left. In (21a), on the other hand, the adjectives are separated by pauses and interpreted as individually modifying the head-noun, as if coordinated.

4.1. Long inflection vs. short inflection

If we adopt the analysis proposed in (19), the source of long inflection could be explained in the following way: adjectives occupying Specifiers of functional projections are adjacent to the corresponding functional heads [*cf.* (22b)], while those that are adjoined are not adjacent to any head, *cf.* (22a). If we assume that such a functional head might be the structural locus of an additional inflection, then we predict that only an adjective occupying the Specifier of this head may appear with this additional inflection (*i. e.* exhibit long inflection)¹¹.



This mark is most visible in MsgNom/Acc (the morpheme *-i* on the adjectives in (7b, 8c,d, 9b, 16a, 18a)); in the Nom/Acc neuter and the feminine, as well as in the masculine plural, long inflection is spelt out by a long vowel which we might analyse as a string of two inflectional vowels. Furthermore, the prosodic phenomena observed on adjectives themselves (tone variation, accent shift) could also be understood as triggered by the addition of a morpheme to the adjectival base.

4.2. Ellipsis in the noun phrase

An independent piece of evidence in favour of the analysis in (19) is provided by contexts involving noun ellipsis. Lobeck (1995) argues that an elliptical element must be the complement of a head standing in an agreement relation with its Specifier (Spec-head agreement). The elliptical element («an empty arbitrary pronominal») must be licensed and identified: it is licensed if it is properly governed by such a head, and it is identified if the head is specified for

strong agreement (*i.e.* «morphologically realized in a productive number of cases»; Lobeck 1995 p. 51-52). The structures in (19) predict that noun ellipsis (*i. e.* NumP) should be acceptable only in the configuration in (19a), that is, in the context of a long adjective. such is indeed the case, as witnessed by the following data:

- (23) a. Marija je kupila 5 zelenih/zelenih kišobrana i 2 *šiva/šiva: [e]
 Maria bought 5 green (short)/(long) umbrellas and 2 gray (short)/(long)
 'Maria bought five green umbrellas and two gray ones.
- b. širok/siroki točak je stabilniji nego *uzak/uski [e]
 large (short)/(long) wheel is more stable than narrow (short)/(long)
 'A wide wheel is more stable than a narrow one'

5. Long (pronominal) inflection, DP and specificity

There is a significant parallelism between the inflection on pronouns, clitics, and the (long) adjectival inflection, as can be seen from Table 2:

Table 2

	MAccSg	FAccSg	MDatSg	FDatSg	M/F Gen/AccPl	M/F DatPl
pronoun	nje-ga	nj-u	nje-mu	nj-oj	nj-ih	nj-ima
clitic	ga	je/ju	mu	joj	ih	im
long infl.	-og (a)	-u	-om(e/u)	-oj	-ih (Gen)	-im (a)

This parallelism might suggest that these items have the same origin¹². Should this be correct, the same (functional) head within the nominal domain might be their common source. The question is: which head? To answer it, consider the following facts: (1) the inflection characterizes pronouns and adjectives¹³, elements occupying positions above NumP (for adjectives see above; for pronouns see Progovac 1998 whose major argument is that, in S-C, pronouns are always followed, but nouns preceded, by adjectives – in the non-marked word order); (2) the inflection is present on pronouns whether or not the noun phrase contains an adjective; (3) nouns never appear with this particular inflection; and finally (4) pronouns are very often analyzed as DPs, *i. e.* involving the DP layer (and clitics as Ds; see for example Cardinaletti & Starke 1994). Considering all this, the source of this pronominal and adjectival inflection (as well as of clitics) might be the projection DP, or more precisely the D head. How could this assumption account for the fact that long adjectives are associated with a specific (presuppositional) reading of the noun phrase? Crucial in answering this question is the common assumption that the DP phrase receives a quantificational interpretation (*cf.* for example Campbell 1996, Longobardi 1994): it contains an item (overt or covert), functioning as an operator (in Spec, DP) that binds a variable (an 'internal subject' in Spec, NumP according to Campbell). This operator-variable relation is what creates the specificity effect. The D head hosts an operator (-like) feature (for Campbell, this is some kind of topic feature, binding the internal subject of the noun phrase to an already established discourse

referent). If the pronominal inflection signals the presence of the DP layer, and if the DP layer involves the semantic effect called ‘specificity’, then we understand why NPs with long adjectives induce a specific (presuppositional) reading of their NP: whenever we have a long adjective this should mean that the DP layer is present as well, and that adjectives occupy Specifiers of functional projections between the D and Num heads. The fact that the same (pronominal) inflection is created in this zone suggests that the same feature (or features) characterize(s) these heads (but not the Num head where the nominal inflection is assumed to be created). As for the definite interpretation of a noun phrase containing a single long qualifying adjective [*cf.* (2a) above], this fact could be accounted for in the following way: the long adjective suggests the presence of the DP layer, whose Specifier, according to Campbell (1996), can host a phonologically null operator. I will assume that this null operator has a default interpretation in S-C: it cannot be interpreted like an existential quantifier (*jedan* ‘one’, or *neki* ‘some’), but only anaphorically (like a demonstrative or a definite article), thus yielding a definite reading of the NP. What about noun phrases with short adjectives? These could be analyzed as NumPs lacking the DP layer as well as other functional projections hosting APs, which are then simply adjoined to the topmost maximal projection of the noun phrase (in this case NumP). Such adjectives (or an adjective) will not have any additional inflection, and the noun phrase will not be interpreted as specific.

6. Concluding remarks

I have argued that the contrast between short and long adjectives in S-C should be described as the semantic opposition between the specific and nonspecific readings of noun phrases: when short adjectives appear in an NP, the latter may only be interpreted as nonspecific, while long adjectives trigger a specific reading. I have furthermore proposed a structural basis for the morphological short/long distinction: the short form is the lexical form of an adjective which is simply adjoined to NumP (which lacks a DP projection); the long form results when an AP occupies the Specifier of a functional projection located between D and Num, whose functional head is the source of an additional inflection feature which surfaces on the adjective. This analysis provides an answer to the question raised at the beginning of this paper: why can only short adjectives be used predicatively, [*cf.* (2b)]? The answer is the following: there being no noun phrase in predicate position, there is no functional head to host additional adjectival inflection.

The above assumptions have left open one final question: why cannot short and long adjectives combine within the same NP? Consider the following data¹⁴:

- (24) a. *ovaj /svaki /*jedan pametan_{short} visoki_{long} student
 this /every /one wise tall student
 b. *ovaj /*svaki /*jedan pametni_{long} visok_{short} student

Under the above analysis, we could try to explain this fact in syntactic terms: for some reason (yet to be explicated), adjunction of an AP (either to NumP or some other functional projection between D and Num) seems to be unavailable if the DP layer is projected. A potential problem for this idea is the pair of examples (ia/b) in footnote 6 where a short adjective appears with *svaki* (presumably occupying the topmost Specifier, *i. e.* Spec, DP) with the NP receiving some kind of generic interpretation. To the extent that such examples are acceptable (see also footnote 14), they might suggest that the problem illustrated in (24) is not of a syntactic nature (unavailability of the adjunction strategy), but might be caused by some restriction on the predicative reading of (short) adjectives in certain environments (in the presence of such elements as a demonstrative or another long adjective). I leave this question open for further research.

NOTES

* This paper is a write-up of material presented at “Journées d’étude *La syntaxe de la définitude*”, Université Paris 8, 8-9/02/2001, and a resumed version of the most important ideas presented in the second chapter of my doctoral dissertation. Thanks are due to the audience of the conference, especially to its organizers Anne Daladier et Anne Zribi-Hertz.

1. Abbreviations used in glosses Acc – accusative, Aux – auxiliary, Dat – dative, Gen – genitive, Inst – instrumental, Loc – locative, M/F/N – masculine/feminine/neuter, neg. – negation, Nom – nominative, Pl – plural, Refl. – reflexive (pronoun), Sg – singular.

2. Only (traditionally labeled) descriptive adjectives distinguish short and long forms. Among those many exceptions exist. For an overview and analysis of adjectives lacking one of the two forms see Aljović 2000 : 2.1.2, 2.2.3.

3. The pronominal declension (inflection) is quite natural in M/N singular contexts with short forms, especially for those speakers that make clear accentual and tonal distinctions (Bosnians most of all; Wayles Browne p.c.). The nominal inflection is often felt as old-fashioned, and as having a special stylistic effect. In standard grammar books, however, short M/Nsg adjectives are presented with the nominal inflection only. Here, I will follow my own linguistic intuition and will not restrain from using the pronominal inflection for short adjectival forms in M/N sg (*e. g.* 6b; see Aljović 2000 for more details).

4. For more details on prosodic phenomena in S-C see Browne & McCawley (1965). Four tone-vowel length combinations are traditionally signaled by the following diacritics: [ˆ] falling-long, [˘] falling-short, [ʔ] rising-long, and [ˊ] rising-short. Tone is not marked in S-C spelling, and, in this paper, it is only marked on those adjectives that use this means to distinguish the long from the short form.

5. Cf. Enç (1991) for more details. Dising (1992) also considers that paraphrasability by a partitive is one indicator of the presuppositionality (*i. e.* specificity).

6. In some special (generic) contexts, short adjectives seem to be able to combine with *svaki* (*svi*) ‘every (all)’:

(i) a. Boji se svakog visokog_{short} momka. b. Svaki kratak_{short} esej je itljiv.
 ‘He/she is afraid of every tall ‘Every short essay is readable’
 (short) young man’

c. Svi dobri_{short} operski pjevaci govore talijanski.
 ‘All good opera singers speak Italian’

7. The same point is argued by Enç (1991).

8. Some speakers accept a specific reading for the object NP in (11b) as well. I think that this is due to the presence of the determiner *jedan*: an object NP introduced by *jedan* ‘one’ (or *neki* ‘certain’), has wide scope over sentence negation, unlike the corresponding negative polarity determiner *nijedan* ‘any’, which always has a narrow scope with respect to sentence negation, even in the presence of a long adjective; (...=’and she tripped and fell’):

- (i) Marija na podu nije vidjela jednu knjigu,.../nijednu (debelu: _{long}) knjigu, #...
 ‘Maria on the floor didn’t see a (certain) book,.../any (thick) book, #...’ (=any of the thick books)

Crucially, only in (11b) the object NP can be interpreted as non-specific, contrasting with that in (11a) which is most naturally interpreted as specific.

9. An interpretation slightly distinct from (15b) can obtain for (15a), paraphrasable as (i): (i) If/when an article is interesting, I (will) always read it.

However, the existence of (a set of) interesting articles is not presupposed here, unlike what we have in (16a). To the extent that the relation of the short adjective *zanimljiv* with respect to the head noun *članak* in (15a) can be described as predicative, we might suppose that there is an abstract spatiotemporal argument linked to this predicate (relation) acting as a variable that can then be bound by *always* (for further discussion of the predicative nature of short adjectives see Aljović 2000 : 2.2-2).

10. Some particular adjective-noun combinations involving a long adjective, can actually appear in contexts parallel to that in (18a):

- (i) Ja uvijek napišem jedan kratki esej/??kratku: *recenicu*
 ‘(e. g. at the end of a semester) I always write one short (long) essay’

Without discussing such examples further, I just want to point out here that this seems to be possible only when the adjective-noun combination receives a compound-like interpretation: *kratki esej* in (i) may denote a literary genre. If the noun is replaced by, e. g., *recenicu* ‘sentence’, the oddity observed for (18a) reappears.

11. I adopt the Distributed Morphology framework (Halle & Marantz 1993) by which vocabulary items are inserted postsyntactically in slots provided by the syntactic component and defined as matrixes of features representing terminal nodes.

12. Originally the long inflection is an anaphoric pronoun *j*: (short) adjectives appearing with this pronoun become long adjectives (cf. Schenker 1993, Huntly 1993).

13. Attributively-used adjectives can appear with or without this inflection (in the latter case their inflection is nominal). This state of affairs has evolved in S-C: short adjectives actually exhibit the ‘pronominal’ inflection, and the nominal inflection is marked (Note 2).

14. A string including a short adjective preceding a long one might sound more acceptable (some speakers find 24a slightly better than 24b; Ž. Bosković p.c.); compare (i) and (ii); see also Leko (1998). However, the interpretation of such an NP seems problematic to me when appearing in a sentence, cf. (iii, b):

- (i) ?zgodan_{short} visoki_{long} student (ii) *zgodni_{long} visok_{short} student
 handsome tall student

- (iii) a. ??Zgodan_{short} visoki_{long} student (je poloz io ispit).
 ‘(A) handsome tall student (has passed the exam)’
 b. ?? (Vidim) zgodnog_{short} visokog_{long} studenta.
 ‘(I see a) handsome tall student’

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RÉSUMÉ

Cette article s'intéresse aux deux formes, courte et longue, des adjectifs épithètes serbo-croates. Il vise à montrer que l'opposition formelle 'court/long' est corrélée à l'opposition sémantique entre deux interprétations, non-spécifique vs. spécifique, d'un groupe nominal. L'article examine ce que peut être la source de la flexion longue, en proposant l'hypothèse qu'un adjectif occupant le Spécificateur d'une certaine tête fonctionnelle du domaine nominal apparaîtra avec une flexion supplémentaire: une flexion longue. La discussion finale concerne le parallélisme formel entre la flexion pronominale et la flexion adjectivale longue, suggérant que toutes les deux sont liées à la même projection nominale: DP.

MOTS-CLÉS

Adjectifs, DP, flexion adjectivale, (non) définitude, spécificité, serbo-croate.

