Morphosyntactically conditioned morphophonological variation

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presuffixal vowels

COMPARATIVE	trɛndi-bː	kuːl-abː	pryːd-ɛbː	friʃː-ɛbː
PLURAL	okapi-k	ɛlɛfaːnt-ok	ɛtyːd-øk	nɛt-ɛk
2SG POSSESSIVE	okapi-d	ɛlɛfaːnt-od	ɛtyːd-ød	nɛt-ɛd
ACCUSATIVE	okapi-t	ɛlɛfaːnt-ot	ɛtyːd-øt	nɛt-ɛt
SUPERESSIVE	okapi-n	ɛlɛfaːnt-on	ɛtyːd-øn	nɛt-ɛn[1]

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[1]glosses: trendy, cool, prudish, fresh, okapi, elephant, etude, net

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$\downarrow$

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notes

▶ after a vowel-final stem there's no vowel, else

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- ▶ after adjectives we find a low and/or unrounded vowel (ɑ ɛ)
- ▶ after nouns we find a mid and/or rounded vowel (o ø ɛ)
- ▶ the mid vowel is missing before ACC if the resulting cluster is unmarked word finally (nt ɲt jt rt lt st ʃt): bɑnaːn-t 'banana-ACC', vɑlkyːr-t 'valkyrie-ACC', fɛs-t 'fez-ACC'

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2SG POSSESSIVE	kuːl-od	pryːd-ɛ/ød	friʃ-ɛd
ACCUSATIVE	kuːl-(a)t	pryːd-ɛ/øt	friʃ-(ɛ)t
SUPERESSIVE	kuːl-on	pryːd-øn	friʃ-ɛn

notes

- ▶ adjectives with "nouny" suffixes have a variable presuffixal V
- ▶ this variability is itself variable: no variation with COMPARATIVE and SUPERESSIVE

claims

1. there is no clear borderline between adjectives (A) and nouns
   (N) in Hungarian: their syntactic and morphological
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4. based on their semantic properties lexical entries are more and less typically assignable to the categories A and N
5. the scales in 2–4 interact in selecting the linking vowel

adjectives (and nouns) in different syntactic positions

position	typical	nontypical	adjective example	noun example
attributive	A	N	az uːj haːz the new house	a somseːd haːz the neighbour house 'the neighbouring house'
predicative	A, N		a haːz uːj the house new 'the house is new'	a haːz iʃkolɑ the house school 'the house is a school'
NP-head	N	A	az uːj the new 'the new one'	a somseːd the neighbour 'the neighbour(ing one)'

- ▶ "adjectivalness" decreases from top to bottom
- ▶ "nouniness" increases from top to bottom
- ▶ "NP-head" means the NP does not contain an (overt) noun

adjective suffixes in different syntactic positions

position	suffix categories				examples
	CMPR	PLUR	POSS	CASE	
attributive	+				az uːj-abː haːz-ɑi-d-ban the new-CMPR house-PL-POSS.2SG-INE 'in your newer houses'
predicative	+	+			a haːz-ai-d uːj-abː-ak the house-PL-POSS.2SG new-CMPR-PL 'your houses are newer'
NP-head	+	+	+	+	az uːj-abː-ai-d-ban the new-CMPR-PL-POSS.2SG-INE 'in your newer ones'

▶ no agreement of attribute and head in NP (⇒ only CMPR)

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- ▶ the number of potential adjective suffixes increases from top to bottom

- ▶ the number of syntactic positions where an adjective suffix occurs decreases from left to right (COMPR > PLUR > POSS, CASE)

occurrences of suffixes

suffix	typical	nontypical	occurrence
comparative	A	N	attrib, predic, NP-head
plural	A, N		predicative, NP-head
possessive, case	N	A	NP-head

▶ the "adjectivalness" of suffixes decreases from top to bottom
▶ the "nouniness" of suffixes increases from top to bottom

adjectivalness of the suffix

functions	typical categories	suffixes				
		CMPR	PLUR	POSS	ACC	SUPE
attributive	A	+				
predicative	A, N	+	+			
NP-head	N	+	+	+	+	+
typical stems		A	A, N	N		
back linking vowels		a	a/o	a/o	a/o/∅	o

linking vowel is

▶ low only before the typically adjectival COMPARATIVE

▶ variably low/mid before the nouny suffixes: PLUR, POSS, ACC

▶ mid only before the typically nouny SUPERESSIVE

adjectivalness of the stem

subclasses	A status	CMPR	PLUR	POSS	ACC	SUPE	examples
irregular A (& regular N)	A/N	ɑ	o	o	o	o	vak 'blind' gazdag 'rich'
hesitating A	A/?N	ɑ	ɑ/o	o ɑ/o	o ɑ/o	o	sabad 'free' boldog 'happy'
regular A (& irregular N)	A	ɑ	ɑ	ɑ	ɑ	o	uːj 'new' magaʃ 'tall'
typical stems		A	A, N	N			

- ▶ nouny A: low V only before the most adjectival COMPARATIVE

- ▶ prototypical A: mid vowel only with the most nouny SUPERESSIVE

- ▶ hesitating A: COMPARATIVE with stable low V, SUPERESSIVE with stable mid V, suffixes in between are more or less variable

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regular A (& irreg. N)	A	ɑ	ɑ	ɑ	ɑ	o	uːj 'new' mɑgɑʃ 'tall'
irregular A (& reg. N)	A/N	∅	∅	∅	∅	∅	hindu 'Hindu' nɛtːoː 'net'
regular A (& irreg. N)	A	∅	ɑ/∅	∅/?ɑ	∅/?ɑ	∅	hijuː 'vain' fɑkoː 'pale'
typical stems		A	A, N	N			

The first three rows are braced together as **C#**; the last two rows are braced together as **V#**.

- ▶ V-final regular A stems exhibit variation with non-prototypical suffixes (nb a vowel may appear even after the stem-final vowel!)

- ▶ other V-final stems also exhibit stem-final V deletion, we do not have the space to look at the patterns here

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this would be theoretically problematic,
and probably no, at least not directly

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a usage-based explanation
syntax governs the frequency of adjective and noun stems taking
adjectival and nouny suffixes, which in turn governs the selection
of the linking vowel

- prototypically adjective suffix: CMPR $\Rightarrow$ only low linking vowel
- protypically noun suffix: SUPERESSIVE (lexical case) $\Rightarrow$ only mid linking vowel
- "borderline" suffixes: PLURAL, POSSESSIVE, ACCUSATIVE $\Rightarrow$ low and mid V depending on the nouniness of the stem
    - regular N and irregular ("nouny") A: only mid linking V
    - regular A and irregular N (closed class): only low linking V
    - borderline cases: hesitation between low and mid linking V
- or the other way round: in non-prototypically adjectival or nouny items hesitation occurs with "borderline suffixes"

thanks to

- you
- the organizers
- NKFIH #119863 (Experimental and theoretical investigation of vowel harmony patterns)