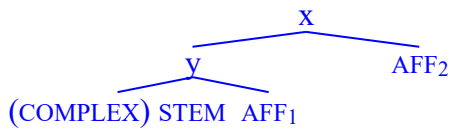


## VERY COMPLEX AFFIXATION

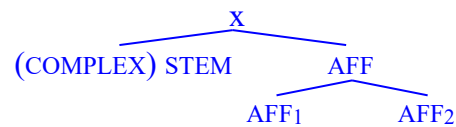
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Syntactic derivation makes available two ways of composition: a head with a derived structure (head-complement relation) and a derived structure with another one (Spec-head relation), with the latter presupposing the possibility of constructing two complex structures in parallel. While the former method of composition has been liberally applied for morphological derivation (1a), the latter (1b) has generally been disregarded (though see Bochner 1993, Soukka 2000, Luís and Spencer 2005, Stump 2017a, b, 2023, among others). I will argue that the structure in (1b) with concomitant constraints on semantic and phonological composition, can explain a number of cases puzzling from the point of view of the more traditional structure in (1a), although the main focus will be on the ways of determining whether such an analysis is required.

(1) a. **iterative affixation**



b. **complex affix**



**Semantics:** Evidence for complex affixes comes from affix conglutination (Haspelmath 1995): a cross-linguistically widespread scenario illustrated in (2), where two productive suffixes (the agentive nominalizer *-telʹn-* (3)-(4) and the general adjectivizer usually surfacing as *-n-* (5)–(6)) yield together cases like (2), where the interpretation of the whole is missing the contribution of the inner suffix. More specifically, as noted by Itkin and Leont'eva 2019, among others, the meaning of *-telʹn-* adjectives may lack any agentive component (7) and in its productive use the complex suffix *-telʹn-ŋn-* behaves like the suffix *-ŋn-* alone, yielding pure category change. I will further argue that these facts cannot be derived from allosemy (i.e., semantic allomorphy) of *-telʹ-* conditioned by the suffix *-ŋn-*.

- (2) a. *starát'sʹja* ‘to try’ → *stará-telʹn-ij* ‘assiduous’, #*staratelʹ* ‘prospector’ Russian  
 b. *prosítʹ* ‘to ask’ → *prosi-telʹn-ij* ‘imploring’, *prositelʹ* ‘petitioner’  
 c. *opravdáti* ‘to acquit’ → *opravdátelʹnij* ‘exculpatory’, \**opravdátelʹ*
- (3) a. *lʹubítʹ* ‘love-IMPV’ (4) a. *viklučá-tʹ* ‘turn off.IMPV-IMPV’  
 b. *lʹubi-telʹ* ‘an amateur’ b. *viklučá-telʹ* ‘a light switch’
- (5) a. *piʹlʹ* ‘dust’ (6) a. *kompʹúter* ‘computer’  
 b. *piʹlʹ-n-ij* ‘dust-y-MSG’ b. *kompʹúter-n-ij* ‘computer-ADJ-MSG’
- (7) a. *plávateľnij basséjn* ‘a swimming pool’ (*plávati* ‘swim.IMPV’, \**plávateľ*)  
 b. *poznavateľnij* ‘educational’ (*poznaváti* ‘learn.IMPV.IMPV’, \**poznavateľ*)  
 c. *zamečateľnij* ‘remarkable’ (*zamečáti* ‘notice.IMPV.IMPV’, \**zamečateľ*)

I will argue that the formation of a complex suffix forces semantic deletion of the inner suffix: a last-resort operation occurring in the structure in (1b) because otherwise the structure would be uninterpretable.

**Phonology:** The second test case (Matushansky 2025) involves a closed subclass of nouns that require the augment *-ŋj-* in the plural (8)–(9) and the plural suffix *-a-*. In Russian this suffix is accentually dominant when combining with non-neuter nouns (Coats 1976, Zaliznjak 1985, Alderete 1999:166, Timberlake 2004:136, Munteanu 2021, Iordanidi 2020, etc.). Strikingly, it loses this property in the presence of the augment *-ŋj-* (9): only human nouns augmented with this suffix appear with inflectional stress (10a-b), while one exhibits stem stress (10c). Non-human augmented plurals, on the other hand, systematically have stem-final stress, whatever their stress in the singular (8)–(9).



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