Role of Prosody in the Variable Realization of -ɪʈe Infinitival in Bangla

Shyamal Das

Professor

Tripura University (A Central University)

Abstract

In the Sadhu Bangla there are three verbal infinitive suffixes: -ɪa, -ɪʈe and -ɪle. Semantically, -ɪa is perfective adding to the verbal base a sense of 'having V-en'. The canonical infinitival in Bangla is -ɪʈe whose English equivalent is 'to'. -ɪle converts the verbal base into a conditional when suffixed to the latter. This paper attempts to project a comparative picture of the morphophonemic alterations that take place consequent upon suffixation of -ɪʈe to verbal roots in the three dialects Bangla: Noakhali Bangla (NKB), Tripura Bangla (TB) and Standard Colloquial Bangla (SCB). -ɪʈe has a V.CV shape. It undergoes various changes in its affixed state with the root primarily because of the varying treatments meted out to its initial high vowel ɪ: the three dialects are guided by their varied prosodic grammar.

Key words: Prosody, morphophonemics, infinitival, constraints

1.0 Introduction

Dialectal variation within a language is predominantly a consequence of variations at the levels of morphology and phonology. But such variations are not arbitrary deviations motivated by the difference-for-difference-sake principle. This is because it can be shown that there are some invisible principles of prosodic regularities to which each of the individual dialects subscribes and that such covert rules are the factors that determine dialectal variations. Additionally, some, not all though, of these prosodic principles pertaining as they do to the Universal Grammar, rein in the digressions within a certain morpho-prosodic limit which can be predicted. One such overarching controlling principle is the need for a trochaic foot as a prosodic template to organize the segmental inputs from the lexicon. To ensure this common goal, the three dialects of Bangla under study namely Standard Colloquial Bangla (SCB), Tripura Bangla (TB) and Noakhali dialect of Bangla (NKB) adopt varying strategies explainable in terms of their respective syllable form, coda moracity, moraic structure and allowable geminates.

The study formally begins by presenting a set of comparative data (section 2) taken from the three dialects and assumes, as is the convention, the Sadhu variety or SB as the common source for the dialectal cognates. Section 3 initiates a detailed discussion on the issues at stake i.e., the justification for assuming binary trochee as one of the core metrical units of Bangla, the reasons behind variable stress distribution noted in the three dialects, and the various strategies adopted by the respective dialects resulting in surface variations amongst lexical cognates. The discussion is built up around -ɪʈe suffixation. Section 4 offers a comparative picture of the strategies adopted by the three dialects to ensure a trochee of one form or the other. 5 summarizes the major findings of the paper.

2.0 Facts

There are three verbal infinitive suffixes in Sadhu Bangla (now on SB): -ɪa, -ɪʈe and -ɪle. Semantically, -ɪa is perfective or aspectual adding to the verbal base a sense of 'having V-en'. The canonical infinitival in Bangla is -ɪʈe whose English equivalent is 'to'. -ɪle converts the verbal base into a conditional when suffixed to the latter. There is scope for a potential debate on the exact phonological shape of each of the three suffixes and the morphophonemic alterations that take place consequent upon their concatenation to the verb root. The issue will be addressed in due course. In this article morphophonemics of -ɪʈe suffixation is taken up for investigation. Let us first look at the relevant data.

2.1 -ɪt̪e as a verbal suffix in TB, NKB and SCB
(IR=Intermediate Representation, SR=Surface Representation, UR=Underlying Representation)

1. -ɪt̪e in words with CV type verbal roots in TB: L]LL → (′HL)

Input	IR	SR	
ɟa]ɪt̪e	ɟa.ɪ.t̪e	zaɪ.t̪ɔ[1]	'to go'
d̪e]ɪt̪e	d̪e.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ɪ.t̪ɔ[2]	'to give'
d̪o]ɪt̪e	d̪o.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ʊɪ.t̪ɔ	'to milk'
lɔ]ɪt̪e	lɔ.ɪ.t̪e	lɔɪ.t̪ɔ	'to accept'

2.-ɪt̪e in words with CV type verbal roots in NKB: L]LL → (′HL)

Input	IR	SR	
ɟa]ɪt̪e	ɟa.ɪ.t̪e	zaɪ.t̪o[3]	'to go'
d̪e]ɪt̪e	d̪e.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ɪ.t̪o	'to give'
d̪o]ɪt̪e	d̪o.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ʊɪ.t̪o	'to milk'
lɔ]ɪt̪e	lɔ.ɪ.t̪e	lɔɪ.t̪o	'to accept'

3. -ɪt̪e in words with CV verbal roots in SCB: L]LL→ (′LL)

Input	IR	SR	
ɟa]ɪt̪e	ɟa.ɪ.t̪e	ɟe.t̪e	'to go'
d̪e]ɪt̪e	d̪e.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ɪ.t̪e	'to give'
ʃo]ɪt̪e	ʃo.ɪ.t̪e	ʃʊ.t̪e	'to sleep'[4]

4. -ɪt̪e in words with CVC verbal roots in TB: H]LL → (′HL)

Input	IR$_1$	IR$_2$	SR	
t̪ɪp]ɪt̪e	t̪ɪp.ɪ.t̪e	t̪ɪ.pɪ.t̪e	t̪ɪp.t̪ɔ	'to press/massage'
kaʈ]ɪt̪e	kaʈ.ɪ.t̪e	ka.ʈɪ.t̪e	kaʈ.t̪ɔ(/kaʈ.t̪ɔ)[5]	'to cut'
bɔk]ɪt̪e	bɔk.ɪ.t̪e	bɔ.kɪ.t̪e	bɔk.t̪ɔ	'to scold'
t̪ol]ɪt̪e	t̪ol.ɪ.t̪e	t̪o.lɪ.t̪e	t̪ʊl.t̪ɔ	'to lift'

In (4) suffix initial high vowel ɪ is noted to be deleted in words other than t̪ʊl.t̪ɔ where the [+High] feature is retained by the base vowel before the high vowel disappears.

5. -ɪt̪e in words with CVC verbal roots in NKB: H]LL→ (′H^{E}L) ~ (′HL)

Input	IR$_1$	IR$_2$	SR	
t̪ɪp]ɪt̪e	t̪ɪp.ɪ.t̪e	t̪ɪ.pɪ.t̪e	t̪ɪp.t̪o	'to press/massage'
kaʈ]ɪt̪e	kaʈ.ɪ.t̪e	ka.ʈɪ.t̪e	kaɪʈ.t̪o(/kaɪʈ.t̪o)[6]	'to cut'
bɔk]ɪt̪e	bɔk.ɪ.t̪e	bɔ.kɪ.t̪e	bɔɪk.t̪o	'to scold'
t̪ol]ɪt̪e	t̪ol.ɪ.t̪e	t̪o.lɪ.t̪e	t̪ʊɪl.t̪o	'to lift'

6. -ɪt̪e in words with CVC verbal roots in SCB: H]LL → (′HL)

Input	IR$_1$	IR$_2$	SR	
t̪ɪp]ɪt̪e	t̪ɪp.ɪ.t̪e	t̪ɪ.pɪ.t̪e	t̪ɪp.t̪e	'to press/massage'
kaʈ]ɪt̪e	kaʈ.ɪ.t̪e	ka.ʈɪ.t̪e	kaʈ.t̪e[7]	'to cut'
bɔk]ɪt̪e	bɔk.ɪ.t̪e	bɔ.kɪ.t̪e	bok.t̪e	'to scold'
t̪ol]ɪt̪e	t̪ol.ɪ.t̪e	t̪o.lɪ.t̪e	t̪ʊl.t̪e	'to lift'

7. -ɪt̪e in words with CV.CV type verbal roots in TB: LL]LL→ L(′HL)

Input	IR$_1$	IR$_2$	SR	
gʰʊma]ɪt̪e	gʰʊ.ma.ɪ.t̪e	gʰʊ.maɪ.t̪e	gʊ.maɪ.t̪ɔ[8]	'to sleep'
bana]ɪt̪e	ba.na.ɪ.t̪e	ba.naɪ.t̪e	ba.naɪ.t̪ɔ	'to make'
kaʈa]ɪt̪e	ka.ʈa.ɪ.t̪e	ka.ʈaɪ.t̪e	ka.d̪aɪ.t̪ɔ[9]	'to cut/reduce, CAUS.'

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[1] TB counterpart of the infinitival suffix -ɪt̪e is -ɪt̪ɔ.

[2] Since the UR suffix-initial high vowel is retained in TB and NKB it is sensible to treat d̪ɪ.t̪ɔ and d̪ɪ.t̪o as having CVV.CV structure where VV stands for a coalesced vowel ɪɪ tantamount to a diphthong. There is no vowel length distinction in any of the three dialects of Bangla under study here. Diphthongs and such coalesced vowels are found to constitute a heavy (H) syllable. This is not true of SCB wherein the output d̪ɪ.t̪e has a (LL) structure.

[3] NKB counterpart of the infinitival suffix -ɪt̪e is -ɪt̪o.

[4] A limited set of verb roots originally having the structure of CVh retain suffixal high vowel and relocate it into the base syllable resulting in HL type words: e.g., ga]ɪt̪e (<*gah]ɪt̪e) → gaɪ.t̪e *ge.t̪e 'to sing', ʃɔ]ɪt̪e (<*ʃɔh]ɪt̪e) → ʃoɪ.t̪e *ʃe.t̪e. This set of verbs also behaves likewise in respect of -ɪle in SCB. They are kept out of the present study because of their lexically marked status.

[5] kaʈ.t̪ɔ is practically realized as kaʈ.t̪ɔ via consonant assimilation.

[6] kaɪʈ.t̪o is actually realized as kaɪʈ.t̪o through consonant assimilation of -t̪.t̪-.

[7] kaʈ.t̪e is actually realized as kaʈ.t̪e because of assimilation of -t̪.t̪-.

[8] Voiced aspirates undergo deaspiration and a high tone is born as substitute both in TB and NKB.

[9] t̪ → d̪/V__V both in TB and NKB.

| d̪ɛkʰa]ɪt̪e | d̪ɛ.kʰa.ɪ.t̪e | d̪ɛ.kʰaɪ.t̪e | d̪ɛ.haɪ.t̪ɔ[10] | | 'to show' |

8. -ɪt̪e in words with CV.CV type verbal roots in NKB: LL]LL→ L('HL)

Input	IR₁	IR₂	SR	
gʰʊma]ɪt̪e	gʰʊ.ma.ɪ.t̪e	gʰʊ.maɪ.t̪e	gʊ.maɪ.t̪o	'to sleep'
bana]ɪt̪e	ba.na.ɪ.t̪e	ba.naɪ.t̪e	ba.naɪ.t̪o	'to make'
kat̪a]ɪt̪e	ka.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	ka.t̪aɪ.t̪e	ka.d̪aɪ.t̪o	'to cut/reduce, CAUS.'
d̪ɛkʰa]ɪt̪e	d̪ɛ.kʰa.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ɛ.kʰaɪ.t̪e	d̪ɛ.jaɪ.t̪o[11]	'to show'

9. -ɪt̪e in words with CV.CV type verbal roots in SCB: LL]LL → ('LL)L

Input	IR	SR	
gʰʊma]ɪt̪e	gʰʊ.ma.ɪ.t̪e	gʰʊ.ma.t̪e	'to sleep'
bana]ɪt̪e	ba.na.ɪ.t̪e	ba.na.t̪e	'to make'
kat̪a]ɪt̪e	ka.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	ka.t̪a.t̪e	'to cut/reduce, CAUS.'
d̪ɛkʰa]ɪt̪e	d̪ɛ.kʰa.ɪ.t̪e	d̪ɛ.kʰa.t̪e	'to show'

10. -ɪt̪e in words with **CVC.CV** type verbal roots in TB: HL]LL → ('HH)L

Input	IR	SR	
ʊlt̪a]ɪt̪e	ʊl.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	ʊl.t̪aɪ.t̪ɔ	'to reverse/turn upside down'
palt̪a]ɪt̪e	pal.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	ɸal.t̪aɪ.t̪ɔ	'to change/exchange'
kɔcla]ɪt̪e	kɔc.la.ɪ.t̪e	kɔs.laɪ.t̪ɔ	'to pester/molest'

11. -ɪt̪e in words with CVC.CV type verbal roots in NKB: HL]LL → ('HH)L

Input	IR	SR	
ʊlt̪a]ɪt̪e	ʊl.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	ʊl.t̪aɪ.t̪o	'to reverse/turn upside down'
palt̪a]ɪt̪e	pal.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	hal.t̪aɪ.t̪o	'to change/exchange'
kɔcla]ɪt̪e	kɔc.la.ɪ.t̪e	kɔs.laɪ.t̪o	'to pester/molest'

12. -ɪt̪e in words with CVC.CV type verbal roots in SCB: HL]LL→ ('HL)L

Input	IR	SR	
ʊlt̪a]ɪt̪e	ʊl.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	ʊl.t̪a.t̪e	'to reverse/turn upside down'
palt̪a]ɪt̪e	pal.t̪a.ɪ.t̪e	pal.t̪a.t̪e	'to change/exchange'
kɔcla]ɪt̪e	kɔc.la.ɪ.t̪e	kɔc.la.t̪e	'to pester/molest'

3.0 Analysis

The cross dialectal metrical facts that emerge from the data have been summarized in the tables in (13). The root of the verb concerned corresponds by and large to the form available in SB. In some isolated cases where SB does not instantiate an example, a potential form has been constructed in imitation of the latter e.g., bɛnd̪a 'to beat with a club', t̪ʰɛŋga 'beat with a stick' etc. Let us begin analysing the observed facts with -ɪt̪e suffixation.

3.1 Discussion

-ɪt̪e is the canonical infinitival suffix in Bangla made of two syllables. Its morphophonemics however varies across dialects pointing towards diverse prosodic requirements prevailing in the individual dialect.[12]

13.	Root+SFX	NKB	TB	SCB	
a.	ɟa]ɪt̪e	('zaɪ.t̪o)	('zaɪ.t̪ɔ)	('ɟe.t̪e)	'to go'
b.	kat̪]ɪt̪e	('kaɪt̪.t̪o)	('kat̪.t̪ɔ)	('kat̪.t̪e)	'to cut'
c.	bana]ɪt̪e	ba.(n'aɪ.t̪o)	ba.('naɪ.t̪ɔ)	('ba.na).t̪e	'to make'
d.	palt̪a]ɪt̪e	('hal.d̪aɪ).t̪o	('ɸal.d̪aɪ).t̪ɔ	('pal.t̪a).t̪e	'to change/exchange'

The suffixal morpheme -ɪt̪e has an internal structure of V.CV consisting of two light syllables i.e., LL. The suffix can form a foot by itself. But since a suffix is not a content word it cannot carry a stress which is an inevitable component of a metrical foot in a natural language. However, when added to a root the suffix gets incorporated into a prosodic word which has an inherent stress by virtue of containing a root morpheme. The resultant form after suffixation assumes various prosodic shapes depending on a) the total number of input syllables and segments; b) the compulsion to retain all the input elements including stress and its placement; c) the constraints invisibly enforcing a specific shape or template on the end product. These three compulsions again vary in respect of their mutual interaction i.e., who is more powerful, who is less and who is least. Dialects vary from each other due to the exact nature of the mutual relations holding amongst the conflicting demands.

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[10]Intervocalic k, kʰ weaken to h in TB.
[11]Intervocalic k, kʰ delete in NKB and a glide -- in this case j-- emerges in between the two vowels across syllable boundary to supply the obligatory onset in the second syllable.
[12] Variable realization of the final vowel e of -ɪt̪e as o/ɔ/e is as sub-prosodic phenomenon and hence is kept out of discussion.

The trans-dialectal realizations of the same underlying form -ɪte can be shown at a more abstract level as the following.

14.	Root+SFX	NKB	TB	SCB
a.	L]LL	(′HL)	(′HL)	(′LL)
b.	H]LL	(′HL)/?(′H^EL)	(′HL)	(′HL)
c.	LL]LL	L(′HL)	L(′HL)	(′LL)L
d.	HL]LL	(′HH)L	(′HH)L	(′HL)L

As (14/38a) shows, all the three dialects reduce the total number of input syllables by one and form syllabic trochees. But whereas the two eastern dialects NKB and TB constitute a (′HL) foot SCB does the job with (′LL). What is interesting however is that the two non-standard varieties retain the input moraic structure: the three input moras are distributed over the two syllables: H containing two moras and L consisting of just one. SCB on the other hand deletes one mora resulting in an ideal (′LL) trochee. In this respect SCB displays greater allegiance to the need for an ideal trochee and sacrifices the need for input faithfulness. NKB and TB being more faithful to the underlying moraic and hence segmental structure, constitutes syllabic trochee of (′HL) type (cf. Hayes 1987, 1991, 1994 among others). One thing common among all the dialects in respect of forming words with light monosyllables of the type (13a) is that they all respect the primacy of the root morpheme over the suffix in respect of stress placement and segment preservation.

This is however only half of the story. The remaining half has to address the issue of how SCB does strike a balance between championing a disyllabic foot template on the one hand and the demand for preserving the underlying structure of the input forms on the other. All the three dialects display a common tendency to relocate the suffixal high vowel [ɪ] into the base syllable. The two eastern dialects retain the high vowel and directly coalesce the latter with the base vowel creating a diphthong: ɟa→′ɟaɪ. Against this picture stands the radical assimilation of the a→e in SCB (′ɟe.te). Here the [-High] feature of the base vowel is converted to [-High, -Low]: ɟaɪte → (′ɟe.te). In other words, whereas SCB resorts to 'total' transformation of the base vowel in order to retain the feature [+High], NKB and TB retain the segment ɪ itself along with its [+High] feature. Same goal is attained – preservation of the [+High] feature – through different routes. All the dialects produce syllabic trochees: NKB (′HL), TB (′HL), and SCB (′LL).

The strong demand of the base morpheme primacy over the suffix noted so far is also attested in words with a heavy monosyllabic root as in (13b). This time the underlying base morpheme is of CVC type and coda is treated as moraic in Bangla (cf. Das and Mitra 2000).[13] Once again the three dialects share the property of reducing the trisyllabic base to a disyllabic one and fit the latter into a trochaic template. This time however the initial syllable of the syllabic trochee has to be a heavy one since the underlying structure of the base morpheme has to be respected and the result is (′HL) trochee. However, this appears to be partially justified for NKB. In this dialect, the heavy base syllable is converted into an extra heavy (H^E) one as the suffixal high vowel is incorporated into the latter: kaʈɪte → (k′aɪʈ.to). By contrast the two other dialects simply get rid of the suffixal high vowel. Thus, NKB stands out spectacularly by keeping intact the underlying suffixal high vowel even at the cost of compromising with the linearity order of the segments within the base morpheme: CVC → CVVC resulting in the emergence of (′H^EL). But is CVVC really an (′H^EL)? A disciplined answer is provided in (3.1.1).

3.1.1 Negotiating the NKB extra heavy syllable
The motivation behind such a metathetic transportation of the suffixal vowel into the base morpheme could be an issue for serious theoretical debate. Bangla in general does not attest super heavy or trimoraic syllables. In fact, such a syllable is a very marked one across languages. To negotiate with the representational problem of such potentially trimoraic syllables scholars often resort to the concept of universal core syllable, the principle of Sonority Sequencing Generalization (SSG) and a broad classification of languages into three types depending on whether the rhyme as a whole or part of it determines the weight of a syllable namely a) Rhyme-weight languages, b) Nucleus-weight languages, and c) Coda languages. (Hayes 1995, Ewen and Van der Hulst 2001 etc.) The core syllable refers to the part of the syllable that falls within the combined scope of onset, rhyme, nucleus and coda. Coda and nucleus constitute the rhyme; and rhyme and onset in turn constitute the syllable itself in an upside-down tree diagram. SSG in brief states that "Between any member of a syllable and the syllable peak, a sonority rise or plateau must occur." (Blevins 1995). SSG subsumes a universal scale of sonority amongst segments from the least to the most sonorous. The scale running from least-to-most order from bottom to top looks like the following in (15).

15. Sonority Scale

↑	Low vowels
	Mid vowels
	High vowels
	Glides
	Liquids
	Nasals
	Voiced fricatives
	Voiceless fricatives
	Voiced stops
	Voiceless stops

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[13] Bangla does not attest length distinction. But diphthongs treated as tantamount to heavy syllables are considered as long and hence bimoraic in many languages. In the present paper we uphold the same assumption for all the three dialects of Bangla.

Onset exhibits a sonority rise towards the peak occupied by the nucleus; and coda displays a sonority decline from the peak. In case there are branching onset and coda, ideally the sonority rise and fall or at least sonority *plane* amongst the clustering consonants are observed. Consider the English examples like *friend*, *slept*, *smelt*, *branch* etc. There are exceptions galore however. Any consonant falling further beyond on the periphery of the core part is termed as prependix if initial and appendix if final. Prependices and appendices usually stand to violate the SSG. The *s* in the initial position of a triconsonantal onset in English is an ideal example of prependix: *strong*, *spring*, *screw* etc. NKB and Bangla in general do not allow any triconsonantal cluster in the onset. The more relevant issue for us is whether it is only the coda which determines the syllable weight or the rhyme as whole. We have already noted that NKB does not treat vowel length as phonemic. Hence there is no presence of distinctive long vowels in NKB. However, there is ample presence of diphthongs in NKB which as per our treatment contribute to syllable weight and hence are deemed as long. However, the problem arises when there is a diphthong followed by a coda in the syllable. Should we treat the host syllable as trimoraic or bimoraic? A trimoraic syllable is a marked option universally.

In this respect the tripartite classification of world languages depending on the factors contributing towards syllable weight comes in handy. The types are enumerated below.

16a. **Rhyme-weight languages**

In rhyme-weight languages, the nucleus plays no role in the distinction between heavy and light syllables: if the rhyme as a whole contains more than one element the syllable is heavy. (Ewen and Van der Hulst 2001:34)

16b. **Nucleus-weight languages**

In nucleus-weight languages, the structure of the nucleus node determines syllable weight: branching nuclei are heavy; non-branching nuclei are light. (Hayes 1995)

16c. **Coda languages**

In a coda language, the sole determining factor of syllable weight is the coda consonant irrespective of whether the nucleus is branching or not.

Dutch is a coda language where vowel length has no contribution towards syllable weight: ′ko:l:bri: (LLL) 'humming bird' vs. a:′ɣenda: (LHL) 'diary' (Ewen and Van der Hulst 2001). The converse is true of the west Siberian language Selkup where only a syllable with a branching nucleus is heavy: ki.′pɔɔ (L′H) 'tiny'. In a rhyme weight language if the rhyme as a whole has more than one segment of which one is a vowel the syllable is heavy. English is a canonical example of this category: a single long vowel or a diphthong both having the structure VV and a nucleus followed by a coda consonant VC render the syllable heavy. By extension, a VVC structure rhyme is also a heavy one in English (skirting aside the view of C being extra syllabic for the time being). So, words like *law*, *lie*, *caught*, *light* are all constituted of a heavy monosyllable.

NKB is a rhyme-weight language: syllables with a diphthong (VV), with a coda (VC), or diphthong+coda (VVC) are all heavy. NKB words like ɖail 'pulses', sail 'rice', ɖair 'edge of a hut', air 'kind of fish' are all heavy monosyllabic words. They are not extra heavy. On the strength of the same argument the NKB word (′kaɽ.ʈo) has a syllable weight distribution of (′HL) within a foot and not as (′H^E L). The arguments also hold for the TB heavy syllables like the one in the initial position of (′ɖʊɪb.ba) 'having drowned'.

3.1.2 -ɽʈe in words with LL root

Verbal root of LL type in Bangla has a compulsory a vowel in the second syllable. Incidentally it is the same vowel which also constitutes the causative morpheme in the language. So pɔɽ 'to read' vs. pɔɽa 'to teach/make someone read', dɛkʰ 'to see' vs. dɛkʰa 'to show', khɑ 'to eat' vs. khɑ[w]ɑ 'to feed' etc. The verbs cited in the data above (Section 2) such as gʰuma 'to sleep', bana 'to make', gɔsa 'to cajole' have (at least some of them) an underlying sense of causativeness though it is difficult to ascertain the backformed root as a verb except in case of pɔɽa<pɔɽ 'to read'.

When suffixed with -ɽʈe the affixed form assumes the shape of four light syllables underlyingly. This ′LLLL sequence with stress on the root initial syllable is reduced by one syllable uniformly in each of the dialects. Once again there is a clear distinction in the morphophonemic behaviour of -ɽʈe in the eastern Bangla dialects as opposed to the western standard. In the former the resultant form is L(′HL) from ′LLLL. Also, we notice that the suffix initial high vowel is syllabified into the final syllable of the base resulting in the emergence of an H syllable born of the union of the second and third syllable of the underlying form. Emergence of the heavy syllable in due course enforces stress shift from the left most light syllable onto its own on account of the universal principle of 'heavy syllables must get stress' (Kager 1999). As far as input moras are concerned both the eastern dialects retain all four of them thereby displaying a stronger respect to the principle of input faithfulness. The four input moras are now redistributed over three syllables as l+2+1 as opposed to the underlying distribution over four syllables with one mora each for the four light syllables. The western dialect SCB sticks to its principle of reduction in the number of syllables of the input through deletion of the consonantless suffix initial syllable consisting of a single high vowel ɪ. The end product for SCB is (′LL)L without any need for stress shift or syllable structure change vis-a-vis the input. In NKB and TB the end product is expectedly L(′HL). The point of similarity between the two sets is once again the overarching need for a syllabic trochee although of varying internal structures: (′LL) vs. (′HL). Both the sets leave one light syllable unmetrified -- on the opposite edges of the prosodic word, however: initial for NKB and TB, and final for SCB[14]. So, input bana]ɽʈe → ba.(′naɪ.ʈo) in NKB, ba.(′naɪ.ʈɔ) in TB, and (′ba.na).ʈe in SCB meaning 'to make'.

3.1.3 -ɽʈe in words with HL root

The least preferred among the trochaic possibilities at the syllabic level is (′HH) while the most preferred is (′LL). (′HL) stands in between. We have already noted the emergence of the latter two. Now it is the turn of the third option i.e. (′HH) in the two eastern varieties of Bangla. To begin the comparison more formally, we notice that all the three dialects once again go for reducing the

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[14]The dialectal difference at the segmental level such as ɟ → z through fricativization, or the variant realizations of the phonological content of the suffix as -ɽʈo in NKB and -ɽʈɔ in TB are outside the purview of the present study and hence left out.

quadra-syllabic input into a trisyllabic one but they adopt variant strategies due to their individual prosodic constraints. SCB in this regard seems to appear more orthodox by preferring against the marked syllabic trochee of (′HH); SCB goes for (′HL). The SCB H however is not a consequence of any phonological process such as relocation of the suffixal high vowel; rather it is the inherent heavy syllable from the underlying representation. Belonging to the root morpheme its phonological contents including stress placement must be respected. The high vowel, the sole member of the suffix initial syllable, is subjected to deletion instead of relocation as is the strategy of the dialect observed so far. With the loss of this light syllable the end product in SCB gets reduced to a trisyllabic one namely palʈa]ɪʈe → (p′al.ʈa).ʈe.

NKB and TB display a uniform metrification with an (′HH)L surface form for the input HL]LL. Once again, we notice that the two eastern dialects retain the total moraic value of the input: both the input and output have five moras. The latter are however distributed differently since the number of syllables get reduced from four to three in the output. One mora attached to the suffix initial high vowel ɪ is accommodated into the immediately preceding syllable rendering the latter a heavy one. The end product being a trisyllabic one for all the three dialects and each having a trochee constructed on the two initial syllables, each dialect leaves one syllable extrametrical on the right edge. In other words, all the three dialects insist on maximal parsing of syllables into a foot as long as the latter is some version of a syllabic trochee.

They differ in the following way. SCB builds (′HL)L and NKB and TB build (′HH)L and the difference is primarily prosodic, and secondarily segmental. The two eastern dialects agree prosodically but differ segmentally and in respect of the realization of the suffixal morpheme: p → p in SCB, and p →h in NKB while p →φ in TB.

4.0 A Comparative Picture
The comparative picture of the prosodic facts in relation to the infinitive verbal inflective -ɪʈe in the three dialects of Bangla SCB, NKB and TB is presented below.

4.1 Common Prosodic Characteristics
17.   i. All the dialects show a tendency to reduce the number of input syllables minimally by one syllable and maximally by two. The former is the standard practice; the latter is restrictive in use.

ii. A disyllabic trochee is the most desired prosodic template for all the dialects.

iii. Emergence of heavy syllables is also common.

iv. Only a light monosyllable can remain unstressed and unfooted.

vi. No degenerate foot is allowed.

vii. Root morpheme enjoys primacy over suffix.

viii. A branching nucleus (diphthong) and branching rhyme (VC) are bimoraic and hence heavy.

4.2 Inter-dialectal Differences
18.

	Points of variance	SCB	TB	NKB
i.	Preferred trochee type	(′LL)	(′HL)	(′HL)
ii.	Moraic trochee (′H)	No	No	No
iii.	UR mora retention	Minimum	Maximum	Medium
iv.	Mora deletion	1 to 2	1	1 to 2
v.	Initial upbeat	No	Yes: 1	Yes: 1
vi.	Assimilation of the suffixal [+High] feature	Maximum	Restricted	Restricted

UR = Underlying Representation

5. Conclusion
This paper attempts to project a comparative picture of the prosodic behaviours of the non-finite verbal inflective in Bangla -ɪʈe. For this, three dialects of Bangla have been selected: two eastern dialects NKB and TB as spoken in Tripura, and SCB or the standard Bangla. -ɪʈe has clearly V.CV shape. It undergoes various changes in its affixed state with the root primarily because of the varying treatments meted out to its initial high vowel: the three dialects are guided by their varied prosodic grammar. From the findings of the paper, one can look forward to developing a typological grammar based on constraint interaction in a hierarchy – the main stay of Optimality Theory.

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