

The cycle modified: theory and case studies

In these two lectures, I present a class of almost-but-not-quite cyclic phenomena from Latin and Romance. I sketch an extension of the cycle that allows for their analysis.

The phonological cycle (Chomsky, Halle and Lukoff 1956) is the idea that complex expressions inherit phonological properties from the exponents of their constituents. In 15 years of exchanges over how best to reconstruct the mechanism of cyclic inheritance in OT (e.g. Benua 1997, Kenstowicz 1998; Kiparsky 2000, Wolf 2008, Bermúdez-Otero 2010) three generalizations have emerged as consequences of the classical cycle:

- Base Priority: bases are generated “first”, derivatives are engineered to resemble them.
- Containment: bases are syntactically contained in their derivatives.
- Locality: bases are immediate constituents of their derivatives.

These generalizations are true of English-style cyclic effects (e.g. stress inheritance from *peripheral* to *peripherality*) but are not true of other quasi-cyclic phenomena. Thus Containment is not true of bracketing paradoxes (Pesetsky 1985), of the Romance phenomena I will discuss, and of other forms of paradigm-internal similarities (e.g. Albright 2002, 2005; Garrett 2008; Steriade 1999, 2007). Locality is false of still other cases. I argue that we can obtain more extensive and flexible coverage of relevant phenomena if the effects of Containment and Locality, when they happen to hold, are generated by the activity of violable constraints on the two-way mapping between syntactic structure and exponents (Wolf 2008). As for Base Priority, I argue that most such effects are attributable to type or token frequency asymmetries (cf. Garrett 2008 and Kraska-Szlenk 2007 for older references); or from informativeness (Albright 2002) and semantic markedness differences (Garrett 2008). Below are summaries of what each lecture proposes to do, beyond spelling out the big picture summarized above.

Tuesday 4/16/2013: *The Cycle without Containment: Latin perfect stems*

I analyze a quasi-cyclic pattern of similarity between the stems of Latin perfect forms: tensed perfects and perfect participles. This similarity is surprising because the two classes of forms share no affix: the perfect participle uses different markers from the non-participial perfect, so neither stem is morphologically contained within the other. I argue that the similarity is enforced by a form of asymmetric Base-Derivative correspondence, with a significant modification: the correspondence between expressions is based on shared syntactic properties, but without any condition of Containment.

Wednesday 4/17/2013: *The Cycle without Containment in Romanian: perfects and agentives*

I analyze similar quasi-cyclic identities in the Romanian perfect and in Romanian deverbal derivatives. Aside from confirming the main aspects of the Latin analysis, the Romanian data provides clear evidence for the activity and the violability of exponence conditions that map syntactic structures to morphological exponents.

References

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