Dissertation Information

Title: Vowel Harmony and Correspondence Theory

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The aim of this thesis is twofold. One goal is to give a broad overview of the patterns of vowel harmony that can be found in the world's languages. The second and central goal is to give a unified account of these patterns within Optimality Theory (henceforth OT, Prince & Smolensky 1993) and its extension to Correspondence Theory (McCarthy & Prince 1995).

With respect to the second aim the question is justified why this should be necessary, given the large amount of research that has been done on vowel harmony within the framework of OT in recent years. In all optimality-theoretic accounts of vowel harmony a rich inventory of theoretical devices has been applied and developed to explain various aspects of vowel harmony like vowel transparency, cyclicity and phonological opacity, relating to the question whether OT can be maintained as a non-derivational parallelist framework. I claim that this theoretical wealth is unnecessary and propose an account of the relevant patterns in terms of local constraint coordination (Crowhurst & Hewitt 1997, Itô & Mester 1999, Łubowicz 1999, Smolensky 1993, and others) and positional faithfulness (Beckman 1995, 1997, 1998). The phenomenon of vowel harmony proves an especially fruitful field for the application and further development of the theory of local constraint coordination, since it reveals some of the limits of constraint interaction and how these interactions and their restrictions can be motivated on external grounds. Moreover, this thesis gives additional arguments for the treatment of assimilation as syntagmatic correspondence (Krämer 1998, 1999, 2001).

The thesis is divided in two large parts. First, I will give an overview of vowel harmony patterns (chapter 1), showing in particular that we have to add the pattern of affix controlled harmony to the typology of vowel harmony. After this I will introduce the fundamentals of Optimality and Correspondence Theory (chapter 2). The introductory section is completed by the basic outline of my own proposal (chapter 3). In the second part I will apply the proposed theory to a range of languages. Each case study is intended to contribute a specific piece to the puzzle. Yoruba, Turkish, and Dëgëma show us how stem control works in languages with prefixation, suffixation, and both types of affixation, respectively. They provide insights into the intertwining of phonological faithfulness and morphological organisation. In Diola Fogni, this morphophonological interaction is broadly ignored by the phonology itself. Futankeore Pulaar is an illustration for the existence of the mirror image of stem control, affix controlled harmony, which was considered as unattested in the literature. To account for this pattern we have to assume a ranking of affix faithfulness above root faithfulness in the grammar of Pulaar, a ranking which was assumed to be non-existent by McCarthy & Prince (1995). Finnish and Wolof are two well-known cases of vowel transparency, one displaying backness harmony, the other tongue root harmony. Transparency is analysed as an effect of a local constraint conjunction of OCP and harmony constraints. Finally, Hungarian, Yoruba, Nez Perce, and Yawelmani all contribute a different aspect of phonological opacity to the multifarious picture. In all these languages the underlying form of vowels, though deviant from their surface form has an impact on the surface representation of their environment.

As vowel harmony is an iterative process that seems to 'spread through a word', it is important to delimit its domain, especially from this perspective. The processes of transparency (when a vowel allows harmony to pass through, but is unaffected) and opacity (when a vowel interrupts the spread of harmony, and in many cases, initiates its own domain of harmony) are exemplified and discussed. The implementation of assimilation as syntagmatic agreement is modeled through correspondence theory, which states that two elements (in this case, adjacent vowels) are in a privileged identity-striving relation. This correspondence relation is the force behind fully-agreeing vowel harmony. AUTHOR: Krämer, Martin

TITLE: Vowel Harmony and Correspondence Theory SERIES: Studies in Generative Grammar 66 PUBLISHER: Mouton de Gruyter YEAR: 2003 Announced at: http://linguistlist.org/issues/14/14-2848.html. Eric Bakovic, University of California, San Diego. The topic of this book is the analysis of various aspects of vowel harmony within Optimality Theory (OT; Prince & Smolensky 1993/2002), with particular attention to the Correspondence Theory of faithfulness (McCarthy & Prince 1995, 1999). The empirical and analytical issues addressed in the book are all ones that have received substantial attention in the vowel harmony literature regardless of theoretical orientation, but the author's overall approach differs in many interesting ways from previous work.