On the universality principle

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handout available at http://seas3.elte.hu/szigetva/papers.html#Leiden_handout

(1) the issue: the phonological representation of phonetic facts

  a. by phonetic FEATURES of whatever flavour (binary, unary, scalar): the necessity of these is probably uncontroversial, their acceptance universal

  b. by PROMINENCE RELATIONSHIPS between the elements of the representation (A;B vs. B;A vs. A:B)

  a problem: according to the null hypothesis, any two (sets of) elements could be in a prominence relationship with each other, therefore either there must be very few elements or it must be stipulated which pairs cannot be thus related (e.g., the categorial and the articulatory gestures, or |O| and |G| or |O| and |K|, cf. Anderson & Ewen 1987; **H** and **L** can never be head, **Ɨ** is always head, etc., cf. Kaye & al. 1990)

  c. by SUBSEGMENTAL STRUCTURES (gestures, subgestures, feature geometries): an early occurrence of the idea is in Lass & Anderson 1975, it enjoyed great popularity in the past two decades

  a problem: according to the null hypothesis the structures in (i)–(iii) are different, i.e., nodes function as features and increase the number of features in the system, possibilities must be stipulatively curtailed, e.g., "there is no such thing as a representation with a bare Laryngeal node" Lombardi 1995 : 41 to exclude (ii)

    i. ×   ii. ×   iii. ×
       | |
    node   node
      |
    feature
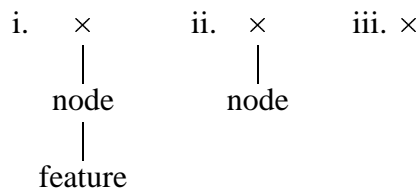
  d. by PROSODIC (SUPRASEGMENTAL) STRUCTURES (C, V, onset, nucleus, etc.)

    i. $[_O\textbf{I}] = $ j, $[_N\textbf{I}] = $ i, $[_O\textbf{U}] = $ w, $[_N\textbf{U}] = $ u

    ii. more elaborate implementations: all manner properties coming from the skeleton and/or from the relationships of skeletal slots, e.g., Jensen 1994, Rennison 1997, Szigetvári 2002, Živanović 2003, Bachmaier & al. *hic*; virtual geminates: Lowenstamm 1996, *voce*, Polgárdi *hic*

    iii. could we say $[_C{}^|] = $ ɫ on the analogy of (1di), i.e., without introducing any featural change?

(2) the representations produced in the ways described above and their phonetic manifestations are not in a biunique relationship: the Universality Principle ("the same physical object will receive uniform interpretation across phonological systems", Kaye & al. 1990 : 194) is rejected

  a. phonetic features: English t (alveolar) is different from Hungarian t (dental), but this difference is ignored in the representation, i.e., the same set of features is pronounced differently in the two systems

  NB GP does posit different representations for t and tʼ within the same system, but this discrimination is a result of a theory internal requirement, viz., that tʼ be less complex

than t̪ (or charmless as opposed to the negatively charmed t̪; cf. Harris 1990 and Kaye & al. 1990, respectively); Harris & Urua (2001) claim that released/nonreleased is a noncontrastive, but linguistically relevant opposition

    b. dependency relations: classical GP is unable to determine whether rounded front vowels are **I**- or **U**-headed; this is decided by the phonological behaviour of the system discussed

    c. prosodic structures

      i. $[_O\mathbf{U}]$ = w in some systems, but apparently ʋ in others

      ii. a virtual (phonological) geminate is represented in one system like a phonetic geminate in another

(3) the phonetic interpretation of a given representation is system specific

is there a principled way to determine the extent of possible system specificness? what tells us that two physically different speech signals are so different that they may not be represented identically? i.e., could $[_C\mathsf{I}]$ = ɬ, (1diii), hold in Standard Southern British English and European Portuguese, but not in Irish English and Standard Hungarian?

(4) Hungarian /h/

    a. the distribution: complementary

      i. h in prevocalic position (but see (4aiii))

        α. h / [−son]—V, e.g., *hó* [hoː] 'snow', *nátha* [naːtha] 'flu'

        β. ɦ / [+son]—V, e.g., *a hó* [ɑ ɦoː] 'the snow', *konyha* [koɲɦɑ] 'kitchen'

      ii. x in nonprevocalic position

        α. $\mathsf{x} \;/\; - \left\{ \begin{matrix} \# \\ \mathsf{C} \end{matrix} \right\}$ e.g., *sah* [ʃɑx] 'shah', *drachma* [drɑxmɑ] 'drachma', *Hrabal* [xrɑbɑl] name

        β. $\underset{+}{\mathsf{x}}/\mathsf{ç}\dagger \;/\; \left[\begin{matrix} \mathsf{V} \\ -\text{back} \end{matrix} \right] - \left\{ \begin{matrix} \# \\ \mathsf{C} \end{matrix} \right\}$ e.g., *pech* [pɛx̟x̟] 'tough luck', *ihlet* [ix̟lɛt] 'inspiration', *rüh* ry/ryx̟ 'itch'

      iii. xh → xx, x̟h → x̟x̟, e.g., *eunuch+hoz* [ɛunuxxoz] 'eunuch-allat'

    b. alternations

    sahot [ʃɑɦot] 'shah-acc', *céh* [t͡seːx̟] 'guild' — *céhet* [t͡seːɦɛt] 'guild-acc'

    c. the analyses (Siptár & Törkenczy 2000 : 274ff)

      i. h-fortition in coda (?)

      ii. x-lenition in onset (?)

      iii. both h and x underlying (strange gaps in the distribution of both)

(5) European Portuguese /r/ (Mateus & d'Andrade 2000 : 15f)

    a. the distribution: quasi-complementary

      i. $\textsc{r}/\mathsf{r}/\textsc{ʁ}/\chi \;/\; \left\{ \begin{matrix} \# \\ [\mathsf{V}, +\text{nas}] \\ \mathsf{l}\; \mathsf{ʒ} \end{matrix} \right\} -$ e.g., *roda* [ʁɔdɐ] 'wheel', *honrar* [õʁáɾ] 'honour-inf', *palra* [páɬʁɐ] 'chatter-pres-3sg', *Israel* [iʒʁɐɛ́ɬ] 'Israel'

      ii. $\mathsf{ɾ} \;/\; \left\{ \begin{matrix} -\{\#\,\mathsf{C}\} \\ \{\mathsf{p\,t\,k\,b\,d\,g\,f}\}- \end{matrix} \right\}$ e.g., *arco* [áɾku] 'arch', *atributo* [ɐtɾibútu] 'attribute', *praça* [pɾásɐ] 'square', *mar* [máɾ] 'sea'

      iii. minimal pairs only in intervocalic position: *carro* [káʁu] 'car' — *caro* [káɾu] 'dear', *coral* [kuɾáɬ] 'choral' — *curral* [kuʁáɬ] 'stable'

b. the analysis: intervocalic ʀ is /rr/ (a virtual geminate), hence postconsonantal and ɾʀ (→ ʀʀ) → ʀ (cf. (4aiii))

(6) Portuguese sibilant(s)

    a. contrasts in onset (Mateus & d'Andrade 2000 : 13)

        selo [sélu] 'seal'   *zelo* [zélu] 'care'   *assa* [ásɐ] 'roast-pres-3sg'   *asa* [ázɐ] 'wing'

        chá [ʃá] 'tea'   *já* [ʒá] 'already'   *acha* [áʃɐ] 'find-pres-3sg'   *haja* [áʒɐ] 'be-subj-3sg '

    b. no contrast in coda

        rasca   [ʀáʃkɐ] '(of) bad quality'   *rasga*   [ʀázgɐ]   'tear-pres-3sg'

        artista [ɐrtíʃtɐ] 'artist'   *carisma* [kɐrízmɐ] 'carisma'

        lápis   [lápiʃ]   'pencil'

    c. alternations

        mau[ʒ] *dias* 'bad days', *mau*[ʃ] *tempos* 'bad times', *mau*[z] *amigos* 'bad friends'

    d. what's going on?

        i. coda sibilant palatalizes, but no local source for palatality

        ii. s → ʃ as lenition is not usual

        iii. onset cannot be derived from ʃ, since it shows unpredictable place and voicing

(7) the analyses proposed here

    a. for (4): [_C h] = x or unlicensed h = x (or licensed x = h) in Hungarian

    b. for (5): ungoverned & licensed ɾ = ʀ, in European Portuguese

    c. for (6): [_C s] = ʃ or unlicensed s = ʃ in European Portuguese

(8) The Universality Principle must be rejected. What principle constrains the system specificness of phonological representations then?

<p align="center">⋆   ⋆   ⋆</p>

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YOUR ANSWER(S):