There are no Bracketing Paradoxes, or, How to be a Modular Grammarian

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Overview

Bracketing Paradoxes are argued to demonstrate a deep flaw in the line of reasoning that has produced both Lexical Phonology and the Prosodic Hierarchy. Phases, in conjunction with a linear theory of phonology account for the BP data without the need for ad hoc repairs.

Background Assumptions
(all independently-motivated)

Modularity

M-S and PF operations are double-blind. The phonology (post Vocabulary-Insertion operations) cannot have access to morphological information (incl. diacritics/levels).

Phonology is flat

There is no 'bracketing' in the phonology. Phonological domains are not determined by the Prosodic Hierarchy (we do not know what a 'word' is).

CVCV

Phonological strings are alternating CV structures on the skeletal tier. Government/licensing are operative.

Initial CV

Only languages that restrict onset clusters to TR sequences can mark the left edge of phases with an empty CV.

Liaison/Syllabification

Floating segments/resyllabification will cause the merger of phonological domains. Merged domains will behave like single domains.

General Syntax-Phonology

Category-defining heads, vP(voiceP/EventP), and CP are phases. Cyclic domains are not determined either lexically or in the phonology.

Allomorphy

Allomorphic statements of vocabulary-insertion may trigger Domain Suspension, extending a spell-out domain.

Adjunction

Left-branches are interpreted before merger. Adjuncts and specifiers are independent phono-syntactic domains.

Particle Verbs

Particles are part of an extended PP complement of the verb. The PP raises to Spec,AspP. The verb raises to Asp^0 (in Russian).

Semantic Interpretation

Default semantic interpretation is compositional. Idiomatic interpretation is generally restricted to the first phase. Particle-verb idiomaticity is no different from other vP-internal internal idiomaticity.

Reduplication

Reduplication is a function over linearized strings. It can reference phonological domains. It cannot reference morphological domains like 'stem'.

Words

Words are not restricted to the spell-out of (complex) syntactic heads. The spell-out of phrases may be found within words.

Selected References

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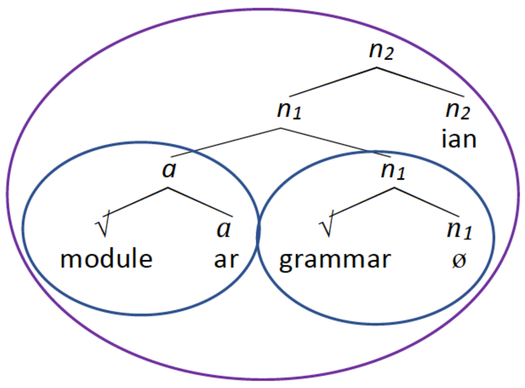
Full references and draft:
ling.auf.net/lingbuzz/003964

Level-Ordering paradoxes

(compounds, 'Level 1/2', comparative…)

(1) How to be a[[modular] [grammar]ian]



Phase 1: a. [mɔ́dʒələɹ] b. [gɹǽməɹ]

Phase 2: [mɔ́dʒələɹ] [gɹæméɹiən]

C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V
ø	ø	m	ɔ	dʒ	ə	l	ə	ɹ	ø	ø	g	ø	ɹ	ə	m	e	ɹ	i	j	ə	n	ø
initial CV									initial CV no domain merger									liaison merger of domains				

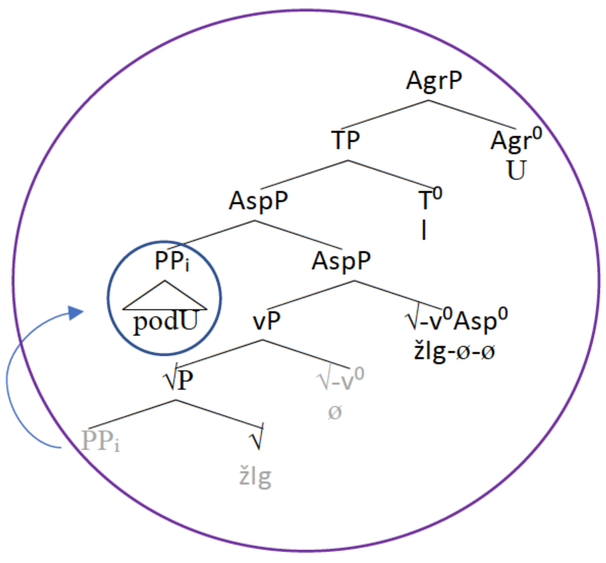
Allomorphy: *Baroque flautist*

Phase 1b will undergo *Domain Suspension. S*pell-out of Phase 1b will occur at Phase 2. Adjunction does not interact with *DS.* Adjunction adds no new category to n_1 so no phase is triggered.

Particle Verb Paradoxes

(Yer realization, non-resolution of hiatus etc…)

(2) The derivation of Particle Verbs. Ex. [[pod]žëg] 'set on fire': Russian



Phase 1: [podO]

C	V	C	V
p	o	d	ø

Phase 2: a. [žlglU] → žëg b. [podU][žëgU]

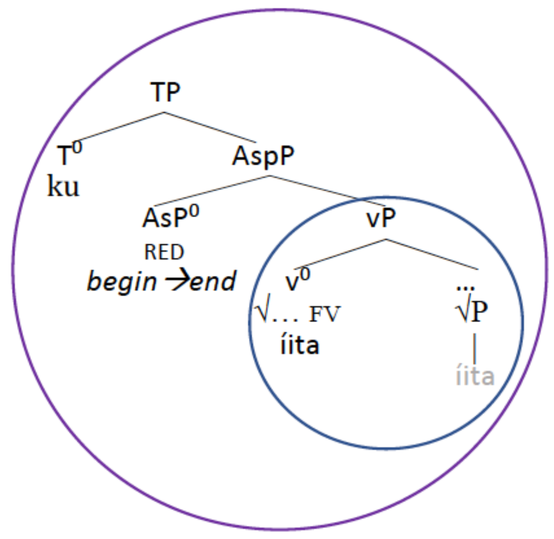
C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V
p	o	d	ø	ž	ë	g	ø

The paradox is that Yer-lowering generally applies from Left to Right (dIn-Ik-Ik-U DAY-DIM-DIM-NOM → denëček), but in particle verbs the vowels are not realized as expected (podožëg). Solution: Final Yers are parametrically governed. Rus., allowing RT clusters, has no initial CV, so the particles' Yer is visible to government after linearization.

Reduplication Paradoxes

(glide formation involves resyllabification = liaison/merger of PF domains)

(3) The derivation of kwiita-kwiita 'pour a bit' vs. ku-tova-tova 'beat a bit' : Kihehe



Phase 1: [íita]

#	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	%
ø	ø	ø	i		t	a			

Phase 2:

#	C	V	C	V	C	V	C	V	%
k	ø	w	i		t	a			

c.f. ku-CVtova-CVtova (*kutova-kutova)

Reduplication is an operation on linearized phonological domains. It cannot target morphological domains like 'stem' in a modular system. Syllabification of *ku* with the following stem inserts *ku* into the domain of reduplication. *ku* does not enter the domain of reduplication without this resyllabification.

Conclusions

- If your theory throws something like Bracketing Paradoxes at you, your theory might be wrong.
- The problem of Bracketing Paradoxes is directly linked to the Pros. Hierarchy and LPM.
- Restricting PF operations to applying to linearized phonological strings (the size of which are determined by cyclic spell-out) and allowing for strictly PF restrictions on PF operations leads to the non-emergence of Bracketing Paradoxes.