

Tel-Aviv University
The School of Philosophy, Linguistics and Science Studies
Department of Linguistics

THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

Thursday 4.11.2021
16:15-17:45

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Patterns in affixation: narrow phonological causes and wide-ranging effects

Noting correlations between the phonological shape of suffixes and stress patterns in Yidj, a nearly extinct language spoken in Northern Australia, Dixon (1977) introduces a division between cohering affixes, which integrate into the phonological word of the stem, versus non-cohering affixes, which do not.

While sporadically cited, the idea is typically conflated with the more common but entirely idiosyncratic notion of stress-neutral versus stress-shifting affixes (Booij 1995, Kaisse 2005). The aim of this talk is to present a strictly phonologically grounded division among cohering versus non-cohering suffixes in English and to explore the consequences of this approach. It will be shown that apart from capturing pervasive generalizations concerning stress, the (non-)integration of suffixes systematically affects phonetic implementation, the potential for affixal phonemic contrast in historical perspective, productivity patterns, and morphosyntactic properties (unitary versus non-unitary output categories). Implications for modeling the relevant generalizations in Optimality Theory will be discussed, with a focus on comparing Stratal O.T. (Bermúdez-Otero 2018) with a strictly monostratal approach referring to phonological representation characterized by contrastiveness.

Bermúdez-Otero, Ricardo. 2018. Stratal Phonology. In *The Routledge handbook of phonological theory*, edited by S. J. Hannahs, and Anna R. K. Bosch, 100–134. Abingdon: Routledge.

Booij, Geert. 1995. *The Phonology of Dutch*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Dixon, Robert Malcolm Ward. 1977a. "Some phonological rules in Yidj." *Linguistic Inquiry*, 8(1): 1–34.

Kaisse, Ellen 2005. "[Word-Formation and Phonology](#)". In *Handbook of Word-Formation*, edited by Pavol Štekauer and Rochelle Lieber, 25–47. Dordrecht: Springer.

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