

## Lexical-category effects in phonology: Whence and why?

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In this talk, I begin by reviewing some of the evidence that there are phonological patterns and processes that distinguish among lexical categories such as *noun*, *adjective*, *verb* directly (Bobaljik 2008; Smith 2011), not only by means of mediating factors such as bound vs. free morphemes or paradigm uniformity effects (although instances of such indirect influence do also arguably exist; e.g., Kenstowicz 1996; Shiraishi 2004; Cable 2005; McCarthy 2005).

I then discuss three striking patterns in the typology of category-specific effects, based on the typological study in Smith (2011). First, such effects have a strong tendency to follow a hierarchy of phonological privilege  $N > A > V$ , where “privilege” means the ability to resist neutralization (Steriade 1995, Beckman 1999) or to be augmented with phonologically salient properties (Smith 2005). Second, the phonological behavior of the category *adjective* often correlates with its inflectional features; for example, Japanese adjectives inflect for tense/aspect and negation, and phonologically they pattern with verbs, while Spanish adjectives inflect for gender and number, and phonologically they pattern with nouns. Third, category-sensitive phonological processes are overwhelmingly prosodic in nature; they nearly always involve stress, accent, tone, and word size/prosodic shape, not segmental or featural characteristics such as voicing or nasality.

Next, I pursue some possible implications of these typological patterns. For example, work by Jaber (2011) on Jordanian Arabic shows that proper nouns can have even greater phonological privilege than common nouns. This raises the question of whether there are any differential effects of phonological privilege within the class of verbs. In this talk, I report the findings of an empirical study that reveals a gradient, though statistically significant, effect of ergativity on phonological markedness in Tokyo Japanese intransitive verbs. Based on these results and those of Jaber (2011), supported by additional typological patterns such as a phonological process that specifically affects transitive verbs in Itzaj Maya (Hofling 2000), I propose that the hierarchy of phonological privilege parallels a hierarchy from prototypical referents (proper nouns) to prototypical predicates (ergative/transitive verbs); this hierarchy converges with certain lexical-category hierarchies proposed in the domain of morphosyntax (e.g., Ross 1972, Langacker 1987, Croft 1990).

Finally, I consider some preliminary proposals for why it is that lexical-category effects are sensitive to predicate prototypicality, why they run roughly parallel to certain morphosyntactic factors such as inflectional feature-type or bound/free (even though they do not reduce to these factors entirely), and why it is that they are typically prosodic rather than featural in nature. Building on insights about learning, phonological abstraction, pattern accessibility, and learnability from, e.g., Hayes & Steriade (2004), Albright (2008), and Moreton & Pater (2012), I suggest that these patterns may arise during the course of language acquisition.

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