Phonology in multilingual grammars: Representational complexity and linguistic interfaces

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#### "Be not afeard. [this talk] is full of noises, Sounds, and sweet airs, that give delight, and hurt not."

--William Shakespeare, The Tempest



## PHONOLOGY

- Generative
- Learned (not noticed)
- Hierarchical (not shallow); recursive
- It's not just *output* phonetics (VOT and formant structure)
- Phonetics is the *input* to the learner









# POVERTY OF THE STIMULUS

- Features
- Onsets
- Coda
- Moras
- Feet



• Just like things like *noun* or *verb*, these don't come labelled in the input

## Lx LEARNABILITY

Plato's Problem



Orwell's Problem

Escher's Problem





Challenges for input-driven models.



- Plato: selecting structures in the absence of evidence
  - moras
- Orwell: not learning in the face of abundant evidence
  /y/, /θ/
- Escher: producing and hearing things that aren't in the input
  - Illusory vowels; hearing/saying *street* as [istrit]



# PHONOLOGY = COGNITION

- Not physics
- Not noticing

But, of course, interfacing with input and output systems

#### Features absent from the L1 can be acquired

L1 Spanish; L2 Yucatec Mayan ejectives





- Onsets: k'/p' > t'/tf' > ts'
- Codas: tf' > ts' > k' >' p' > t'
- Such paths are phonetically and typologically grounded



- Onsets: k'/p' > t'/tf' > ts'
- Codas:  $t_{j'} > t_{s'} > k' > p' > t'$
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- Onsets: k'/p' > t'/tf' > ts'
  Codas: tf' > ts' > k' >' p' > t'
- Such paths are phonetically and typologically grounded





# CUE ROBUSTNESS

- Intake frequency
- Identifying the subset of input that becomes intake

Predicts the path of phonologization of [constricted glottis]



#### **Features are hierarchical**



Dresher (2009); Hall (2017); Purnell, Raimy & Salmons (2019); Natvig (2020)







Figure 1. Two possible contrastive hierarchies for a 3-vowel inventory.

Dresher (2009); Hall (2017); Purnell, Raimy & Salmons (2019); Natvig (2020)



# **INVENTORY EFFECTS**



Figure 15. The contrastive hierarchy of Mandarin vowels.

L1 Mandarin difficulty with L2 English lax vowels but not /e/ and /o/

#### Not just local comparisons (contra SLM-r)

Wu (2021)





# L3 I-PROXIMITY EXPLAINED

Table 2. Vocalic features.

Arabic	[low] > [back]
French (Hall 2017)	[nasal] > [long] > [low] > [high] > [back] > [round]
English (Oxford 2012)	[long] > [low] > [front] > [high] > [round]





Archibald (2021, 2022)

## **SYLLABLES**



• Cardoso (2007) has shown that markedness facts can outweigh frequency patterns in acquisition/production

Syllables are hierarchical

• E.g most marked and most frequent [st] cluster acquired after the less marked and less frequent [sn] and [sl]







## SYLLABLES: SAUDI ARABIC



Archibald, Yousefi & Alhemaid, (2022)



# ENGLISH s+C SEQUENCE



Goad (2016)



# SYLLABIC REPAIR

- Adding vowels in production (epenthetic vowels)
  - E.g. borrowings
    - [e]smoking
    - besubaru
- Adding vowels in perception (*illusory* vowels)

L1	sC Onsets	Branching Onsets	Appendices	% Errors
Japanese	No	No	No	72
Thai	No	No	No	60
Brazilian Portuguese	No	Yes	No	50
Persian	No	No	Yes	14
Hijazi Arabic	No	No	Yes	10
Najdi Arabic	No	Yes	Yes	7



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- L1 right-edge appendices facilitate acquisition of L2 left-edge appendices
  - redeployment
- And we don't *hear* appendices

# METRICAL FEET

#### Metrical feet are hierarchical



## METRICAL FEET

From Archibald to Özçelik (alpha to ömega)

	Spanish	Polish	Hungarian	English
P1 (word tree)	right	right	left	right
P2 (foot type)	binary	binary	binary	binary
P3 (strong on)	right	right	left	right
P4 (built from)	left	left	left	left
P5 (Quantity-sensitive)	yes	no	yes	no
P6 (sensitive to)	rhyme	NA	nucleus	rhyme
P8 (extrametrical)	yes	no	no	yes
P8A (extrametrical on)	right	NA	NA	right

Archiald (1993); Özcelik (2022)

# METRICAL FEET

- Stress is not a single thing to acquire
- Learners can reset their L1 parameters
- Directionality of difficulty effects

   Hungarian CVV to English CVV + CVC = easy

versus

- $\circ$  English CVV + CVC to Khalkha Mongolian = difficult
- Positive evidence versus negative evidence



## TONE SANDHI


## TONE SANDHI

- Comprehensibility of Mandarin and Cantonese heritage learners of Mandarin plus L2 and L3 learners
- L1 footedness predicted better comprehensibility scores (p<.05)
- No HL phonological advantage
  - MandarinHLs = L2ers on sandhi & non-sandhi words
- CantoneseHLs < L2ers on sandhi words but not on non-sandhi words
  - Implicates foot structure (as Cantonese lacks metrical feet (Chen, 2000)

## HERITAGE LEARNERS

- Purported 'phonological' advantages (Polinksy, 2015) are mainly phonetic (VOT, etc.)
- Actual *phonology* is patterning with morphosyntax



## INTERFACES





## PHONOLOGY/MORPHOLOGY

• L2 German plural allomorphy shows the explanatory power of universal phonological representational constraints to explain learner behaviour



## WUNDERLICH'S DILEMMA

- Variable umlauting:
  - Thron → Thron[ə] (throne)
  - Sohn → Söhn[ə] (son)
- Variable suffixing:
  - Mund → Münd[v] (mouth)
  - Bund → Bünd[ə] (federation)
- Plural -n cannot co-occur with umlaut
  - Pat[ə] → Pate-n/\*Päte-n (godparents)
- But non-plural -n can:
  - But Laden (store) → Läden (stores)





## GERMAN PLURAL ALLOMORPHS

• There is only a single [+pl] affix  $\leftrightarrow$ 

[COR]

•  $[+pl + fem] \leftrightarrow [NASAL]$ 



Coronal Consonant	Coronal Vowel
CPlace   [COR]   [n]	CPlace   VPlace   [COR]   [i]

## L2 LEARNERS

- Will they produce umlaut]<sub>Root</sub> + -n?
- If so, they might be violating phonological universals (see also Özçelik & Sprouse, 2016)



Archibald (in press)





	T1	T2	Totals
Subjects	87	67	154
Test Items	522	469 (	991
Correct	292	239	593
Type A Error	225 (43%)	71 (15%) <mark>159</mark> (33%)	296 159(16%) (30%)
Type B Error	5	2	(7)

Written production

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Гуре А	296	151.5	144.5
Гуре В	7	151.5	-144.5
lotal	303		



Archibald (in press)



- It is not the case that 'they don't produce things they don't hear, and they never hear umlaut+n'. They hear it, just not in plurals.
- Rather 'they don't produce illegal structures that they don't hear but they produce legal structures that they don't hear'



## NO IMPOSSIBLE GERMAN GRAMMARS

- Poverty of the stimulus
- Not induction
  - Acoustic cues of umlaut and [n] are very different
  - 'Sometimes I hear umlaut' (e.g., *Würste*)
  - Sometimes I hear -[n] (e.g. *Suppen*)
  - I never hear umlaut AND plural -[n] but I hear umlaut + [n] in Roots
- Certainly not taught in class
- Representational constraints on possible grammars

- English has infixing?
- Well, yes it does
- Get ready for some profanity (trigger warning)



- fan-fucking-tastic
- \*fantas-fucking-tic
- Well-formedness based on foot structure





- Feet are part of grammars
- And therefore part of what is acquired in LxA
- These infixes are low-frequency (SUBTLEX<sub>US</sub> and COCA), and not taught in class





Mandarin: 19 Quebec French: 16 Spanish: 13 Japanese: 49 Controls: 12

Which of the following forms do you prefer (auditory LDT):

fan-fucking-tastic fantas-fucking-tic

1. Abbotsford 2. Adventure 3. Amalgamated 4. Basketball 5. Burnaby 6. Celebrate 7. Coquitlam 8. Everybody 9. Fantastic 10. Garibaldi 11. Hypocrite 12. Identical 13. Information 14. Irresponsible 15. Kindergarten 16. Mississauga 17. Nanaimo 18. Pollution 19. Saskatoon 20. Scarborough 21. Texas 22. Unbelievable 23. Vancouver 24. Watermelon 25. Winnipeg

Spanish	Quantity-sensitive trochees for stress
Mandarin	Weight-sensitive trochees for tone sandhi and stress
Japanese	Weight-sensitive trochees for loan word pitch accent
French	No feet











Bayesian logistic mixed models; 95% high density credible interval for each estimate



Accuracy rates consistent with recursive structures.

## PHONOLOGY/SYNTAX



## PHONOLOGICAL CONTIGUITY

• L2 learners of Japanese grammars are constrained by universal principles such as *contiguity* (Richards, 2016) and *Match Theory* (Elfner, 2015).



- Languages have two strategies for forming WH questions:
- English (Movement):
- Japanese (in situ):
- Whom should Bob call?Mito ga nani okatta no?Mito-Nom what-Accbought +Q'What did Mito buy?'



- Richards (2010, 2016) argues that these are two strategies to achieve *contiguity*;
- (a) **English**: linear contiguity of C (+Q) and WH
- (b) Japanese: (i) phonetic boost on the WH element, and

(ii) lack of prosodic boundaries between WH and +Q in sentences

i.e. Phonological contiguity



• Do advanced L2 speakers have a phonological grammar with:

(1) no prosodic boundaries between the WH word and the Question complementizer [(+Q]) to properly license WH *in situ*?

(2) a pitch boost on WH phrases?



1) Naoya wa nani o nomiya de nonda no?
ナオヤは、何を飲み屋で飲んだの?
What did Naoya drink at the bar?

2) Naoya ga nanika o nomiya de nonda.
ナオヤが、何かを飲み屋で飲んだ。
Naoya drank something at the bar.

## PITCH BOOST

• A range of statistical tests (Paired t-tests (p=0.475), GLMM, all showed that there was *no* significant difference between the pitch on WH words and the pitch on DPs.

+++	Table 1.	WH	l vs DP	pitch	levels (	in s	semitones)	) by	sentence	pair	

Sentence Pair	Object	Average pitch (sd)	Average difference pitch (95% CI)	in	Significance paired t-test	from
1	DP	12.98 (6.79)	-0.80 (-2.57, 0.97)		p=0.349	
1	WH	12.18 (7.65)				
2	DP	13.59 (6.55)	-0.04 (-1.17, 1.08)		p=0.935	
2	WH	13.54 (7.10)				
2	DP	11.16 (6.65)	-0.90 (-2.36, 0.56)	8	p=0.207	
3	WH	10.26 (6.44)		8		



Archibald & Croteau (2021)



## PHONOLOGICAL CONTIGUITY

## **Table 4.** Sentential pitch patterns.

Sentence	WordI	Word2	Word3	Word4
I	nani-o	nomiya-de	nonda	no
2	nani-o	mottekita	ndesu	ka
3	dare-ga	nani-o	kaimasita	ka
4	kino	nani-o	kaimasita	ka

**Table 3.** Pitch levels (in semitones) between WH and [+Q].

Participant number	nani-o WH	nomiya-de	nonda	no [+Q]
SI SI 5	5.94 20.5	0.511 15.3	1.33 15.3	5.82 17.83
			Archibald &	Cloteau (2021)

## Pitch Compression

Full Model	Estimate	Standard Error	t	р
(Intercept)	17.37	0.667	26.06	<0.001
Word2 vs. Word1	-1.65	0.685	-2.41	(0.016)
Proficiency (Advanced vs. Intermediate)	-0.13	0.916	14	0.888
Word2:Proficiency Advanced	0.21	0.941	0.22	0.823
Reduced Model	Estimate	Standard Error	t	р
(Intercept)	17.31	0.457	37.83	< 0.001
Word2 vs. Word1	-1.54	0.469	-3.28	0.001

Table 5. Results of linear mixed models for the comparison of Word1 and Word2.

• The same was true of Words 2 & 3, and Words 1 & 3

Archibald & Croteau (2021)



(1) the L2ers have *not* acquired nativelike phonetic implementation of the documented pitch boost on WH words compared to non-WH DPs,

(2) the subjects *have* acquired the pitch compression patterns indicative of having no prosodic phrases intervening between the WH word and the question particle.

Interlanguage grammars are constrained by universal grammatical properties such as the prosodic contiguity of WH-phrase licensing.



- Argues against exemplar theory
  - If it was just about noticing and storing pitch patterns then the pitch boost and pitch compression should have behaved the same

## L3 PHONOLOGY

- Much of the literature has been primarily on *phonetics* 
  - Chen & Han (2019); Chen & Tian (2021); Llama & Cardoso (2018)
  - VOT, F1/F2
- There is a growing body of neurolinguistic literature to show that such phonetic facts stem from phonological representations (Cummings et al. 2021; Hestvik & Durvasula, 2016; Rhodes et al. 2022; Schluter et al. 2017)

## L3 PHONOLOGICAL ARCHITECTURE

- Typological Primacy Model (Rothman)
  - Lexicon  $\rightarrow$  Phonology  $\rightarrow$  Morphosyntax
- Linguistic Proximity Model (Westergaard)
  - Parsing success
- We need representational models of comparision for phonology too
## L3A

- L1A and L2A are not 'fundamentally different'
  - Full Transfer/Full Access
- L1A = L2A = L3A
  - But no Wholesale transfer into L3
- Why is this not a contradiction?
  - Full Transfer, Full Access to a common L1/L2 repository will suffice

## L3A

- López (2020) argues against a *separationist* framework of multilingual competence
- "a single linguistic competence grows out of the faculty of language on the basis of whatever ingredients the environment supplies. There are no two lexicons or two PFs."
- Multilingual competence is an 'integrated I-language'
  - MEG support in Phillips & Pylkkänen (2021)



## L3A



- In L2A everything in the previous I-grammar is available for transfer
- •In L3A as well, everything from the previous (integrated) I-grammar is available for transfer.
- •Seen in this light, there is no fundamental difference between L2A and L3A





#### **BROADER PERSPECTIVES**

#### WIDENING CIRCLES



Channeling Kevin Gregg.

## INTELLIGIBILITY

- Intelligibility of L2 speech traditionally has a functional definition in Applied Linguistics of *recovering the intended message*
- It can be viewed in the same way as monolingual processing research though
  - Word recognition
  - Ambiguous phoneme resolution





#### Research Topic

#### **L2** Phonology Meets L2 Pronunciation



• Ease & Difficulty in Learning and Teaching

#### TEACHABILITY

• Cardoso et al. (2021) on markedness and teaching

• teaching the most marked phonological structure ([st]) generalizes to improved learner performance on the unmarked structures ([sn] and [sl])

#### TRAINING

- High Variability Phonetic Training
  - Talker variability
  - Input enhancement
- Helps L2 learners re-weight phonetic cues
  - E.g. spectral and duration cues
  - Why?
- Phonology



## PHONOLOGY AND VARIATION

• Phonological features have *marked* and *unmarked* values





#### PHONOLOGY AND VARIATION





## PHONOLOGY AND VARIATION

Greater variation is the learning cue to the underlying feature



## UNIFYING DEVELOPMENTAL PHONOLOGY

• L1A, L2A, L3A, Historical, Language Change

• +morphosyntax



## SOCIAL JUSTICE

- In a world where inclusivity and diversity are valued, discrimination based on language is surprisingly widespread.
- We can see instances where particular regional or social dialects are stigmatized (often the dialects of marginalized populations).
- We can tackle this important issue of equity. Lx phonologies are not 'deficient', or 'shallow'. Rather, they are rich, complex mental representations
  - Even in the domain of *accent*









• L2 phonology is about much more than foreign accent. By understanding its role in the architecture of multilingual competence, we gain insight into the cognitive machinery of most of the brains on this planet.





#### FACULTY OF LANGUAGE NARROW

"it has been suggested that only syntactic recursion is part of the narrow faculty of language ... and that phonology is outside FLN. However, the contrastive hierarchy has a recursive digital character, like other aspects of FLN. Like syntax, phonology takes substance from outside FLN and converts it to objects that can be manipulated by the linguistic computational system."



#### Multilingual phonological grammars are: Complex Hierarchical Recursive UG-Constrained Learned (not noticed)



The interfaces show us that phonology is *central* (not peripheral) to the multilingual cognitive architecture of the human language faculty

Morphology

Phonology



Semantics



#### Thank you



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#### WHY IS L2 PHONOLOGY UNDERREPRESENTED?

• 30 years after key works in language learnability, L2 phonology remains (unlike morphology, syntax, and semantics) somewhat of an outlier in the GenSLA academic community.



### MINIMALIST ARCHITECTURE



## COMPUTATIONAL PHONOLOGY





The siren call of third factors, and neo-empiricism.





### HVPT & PHONOLOGY



Hayter & Archibald (submitted); Yuan & Archibald (2022)



#### PHONOLOGY & THE LEXICON



#### **Interlingual Homophones**

e.g. English/Dutch [lif] 'leaf'/ 'dear'

-slower (inhibited) activation

-don't share a semantic root -same spell out **Interlingual Homographs** 

e.g. English/Dutch "glad" [glæd]/[xlat]

-faster activation

-don't share a semantic root-different spell out (matched by letters, predictability, etc.)



#### Polysemes

e.g. The *paper* was A4. The *paper* was owned by Rupert Murdoch. The *paper* was written by Jason.

-faster activation

-share semantic root -same spell out

#### Homophones

e.g. He fell off the *bank* of the river. She opened a savings account at the *bank*.

-slower activation

-don't share semantic root -same spell out



# **Interlingual Allomorphs**

#### e.g. $\sqrt{dog}$ and $\sqrt{chien}$

-share semantic root
-different spell-out
-polysemy in bilingual speech context

Accuracy Rate	Lexical Items			
<u>&gt;90%</u>	hypocrite, Garribaldi, Winnipeg, celebrate,			
	information, basketball, watermelon,			
	everybody, kindergarten, Mississauga			
<u>&gt;80%</u>	Abbotsford, Scarborough, adventure,			
	irresponsible, Vancouver, Saskatoon, fantastic			
<u>&gt;70%</u>	identical, pollution, Burnaby			
<u>50%-70%</u>	Coquitlam, Nanaimo, unbelievable			
<u>&lt;50%</u>	amalgamated, Texas			
Table 5. Accuracy rates for groups of lexical items.				
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	Trial Number	Option 1	Option 2	Correct
	<u>1</u>	Abbots-fucking-ford	Abb-fucking-otsford	<u>1</u>
	<u>2</u>	Adven-fucking-ture	Ad-fucking-venture	<u>2</u>
	<u>3</u>	Amalga-fucking-mated	Amal-fucking-gamated	<u>1</u>
	<u>4</u>	Basket-fucking-ball	Bas-fucking-ketball	<u>1</u>
	<u>5</u>	Burna-fucking-by	Bur-fucking-naby	<u>1</u>
	<u>6</u>	Celebra-fucking-ate	Cele-fucking-brate	<u>2</u>
	<u>7</u>	Coquit-fucking-lam	Co-fucking-quitlam	<u>2</u>
	<u>8</u>	Eve-fucking-rebody	Every-fucking-body	<u>2</u>
	<u>9</u>	Fantas-fucking-tic	Fan-fucking-tastic	<u>2</u>
	<u>10</u>	Gari-fucking-baldi	Garibal-fucking-di	<u>1</u>
	<u>11</u>	Hypo-fucking-crite	Hy-fucking-pocrite	<u>1</u>
	<u>12</u>	Iden-fucking-tical	I-fucking-dentical	<u>2</u>
	<u>13</u>	Informa-fucking-tion	Infor-fucking-mation	<u>2</u>
	<u>14</u>	Irrespons-fucking-ible	Irre-fucking-sponsible	<u>2</u>
	<u>15</u>	Kindergar-fucking-ten	Kinder-fucking-garten	<u>2</u>
	<u>16</u>	Missi-fucking-ssauga	Missisau-fucking-ga	<u>1</u>
	<u>17</u>	Na-fucking-naimo	Nanai-fucking-mo	<u>1</u>
	<u>18</u>	Po-fucking-llution	Pollu-fucking-tion	<u>1</u>
	<u>19</u>	Saska-fucking-toon	Sa-fucking-skatoon	<u>1</u>
	20	Scar-fucking-borough	Scarbo-fucking-row	<u>1</u>
	<u>21</u>	Tex-fucking-as	Te-fucking-exas	<u>2</u>
	22	Unbelieve-fucking-able	Unbe-fucking-lievable	<u>2</u>
	<u>23</u>	Vancou-fucking-ver	Van-fucking-couver	<u>2</u>
	<u>24</u>	Waterme-fucking-lon	Water-fucking-melon	<u>2</u>
	<u>25</u>	Winni-fucking-peg	Wi-fucking-nnipeg	<u>1</u>