Towards a unified representation of the right edge of words
Nicola Lampitelli, Xiaoliang Luo

To cite this version:
Nicola Lampitelli, Xiaoliang Luo. Towards a unified representation of the right edge of words. GLOW 2015, Apr 2015, Paris, France. hal-03560633

HAL Id: hal-03560633
https://hal.science/hal-03560633
Submitted on 7 Feb 2022

HAL is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L’archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire HAL, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d’enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.
Towards a unified representation of the right edge of words

Nicola LAMPITELLI (LLL / CNRS&Université de Tours)
nicola.lampitelli@univ-tours.fr

Xiaoliang LUO (LLL / CNRS&Université d’Orléans)
xiaoliang.luo@univ-orleans.fr

The right edge of words

This contribution aims to participate to the debate on the representation of word edges, by discussing the status of the right edge of words in three unrelated languages, Italian, Bosnian and Mandarin Chinese, in the framework of Government Phonology (Kaye et al., 1985, 1990) and the CV-hypothesis (Lowenstamm, 1996). We follow a syntactic approach to word formation (Distributed Morphology, Halle & Marantz 1993; Embick 2010)

We propose, following ideas previously found in Attina (2002), Charette (2006) and Passino (2008), that minimal words in Italian, Bosnian and Chinese end in a CV unit.

Italian nouns

(1) Italian nouns

a. **Variable nouns** end in a vowel if (i) the final vowel is unstressed; (ii) the final vowel changes between the singular and the plural.

b. **Invariable nouns** end in a stressed vowel, e.g. “towns” (i) end in a consonant (= loans), e.g. “movies”, (ii) in a consonant (= loans), e.g. “motor(s)”, (iii) are truncated forms of variable nouns, e.g. “motor(s)” (moto/ci/ci-ale)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Noms Gen singular</th>
<th>Noms Gen plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lap-</td>
<td>lap-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wod-see-</td>
<td>dör-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuc-</td>
<td>nuc-i</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baut-t</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The final vowel does not enforce a phonological constraint avoiding final Cs.

– some final-hiatus words exist: mare-a “sea”

– consonant-final nouns exist, e.g. “movie”,

This shows that the final vowel is not a phonological object but a morpho-syntactic one: it is the exponent of gender and number.

(2) Consonant-final nouns: film

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Film</th>
<th>Film</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Film</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(3) Consonant-final nouns: fl-im-ino

Roots like **film** have floating consonant (in other words, they need a template); roots like **THAL** have a fully formed template.

(4) Root “wolf”

(5) Root “rose”

(6) Root “movie”

Roots like **wolf** and **rose** have floating consonants; roots like **film** have a fully formed template.

(7) We assume that loans such as **film** are associated to a fully syllabified CV-sequence because they are the spell-out of the functional head (cf. light verbs like go, do, etc.; see Embick 2010).

(8) Complex head of more F. pl.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Num</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Root</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>num</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>toppino</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(9) Phonological linearization of more F. sg.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Root</th>
<th>Template</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>num</td>
<td>toppino</td>
<td>toppino</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(10) top-pino “mouse” vs. top-top “top (bea of a bikini)”

a. Number ASto

b. Number ASto

c. The underlined V position is not the site of inflection.

(11) toppino “small mouse” vs. toppino “small top (bea of a bikini)” (see Passino 2008:100-ff)

a. Number ASto

b. Number ASto

c. The underlined V position is not the site of inflection.

(12) a. According to Passino (2008), an extra CV is inserted to host final consonant gemination in derivation (cf. toppino)

b. In our terms, the extra CV is inserted at the right edge: this CV is the site of inflection.

c. The [CV] syllable appears in toppino but not in topo because of the diminutive suffix -ino (see also: mar-e “boat-F.sg” vs. mar-a “boat-F.pl”, mar-a-e “boat-F.sg”, mar-a-en-e “boat-F.pl”)


We thank Nima Roshandel for the data in Turko-Croat-Bosnian

(14) noun singular pl. with template.

Bosnian nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender singular</th>
<th>Gender plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>two</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neu</td>
<td>three</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(15) lucre F.pl. Nom

Mandarin Chinese (MC)

(17) a. Goh (1997) argues that the minimal phonological word in MC has a template CV CV.


c. Liao (2013) suggests that the template of a minimal phonological word CV CV must be re-analyzed as CV [CV], [CV] being an external final phonological unit.


(19) Following Luo (2013), we assume that the four tones are represented as follows:


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tone</th>
<th>T1</th>
<th>T2</th>
<th>T3</th>
<th>T4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[CV]</td>
<td>C V</td>
<td>C V</td>
<td>C V</td>
<td>C V</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The dotted lines represent the optimal realization of the tone.

We focus on T3 [21-4]: the complete realization of T3, on long syllables, is [L,H]; the incomplete realization of T3, on short syllables, is [L] [21].

(20) a. In monosyllabic words, both complete and incomplete realizations are correct:

(i) *ma* “horse” (complete realization)

(ii) *ma* “horse” (incomplete realization)

b. In non-final positions of multisyllabic words, only the complete realization is possible:

(ii) *ma* “horse-road” “highway”

(iii) The floating H-tone of *ma* can not be pronounced since it lacks a free V position to attach to.

(21) MC has a limited number of suffixes (cf. Li & Thompson 1989): we argue that the final CV unit is the realization site of these suffixes.

a. possessive de0

b. progressive de0

c. to go” go-PFT “went”

d. nowness de0

e. to show” show-PFT “shoed”

(22) b. A compound: *jin1-shu3* “metal” vs. *jin1-sha3* “metallic”

a. *jin1-sha3* “metallic”

b. *jin1-shu3* “metal”

(23) Structure of Chinese bisyllabic compound:

(24) Complex heads

(25) Spell-outs of n and a (non-exhaustive list):

a. n a complex spell-out

b. a a complex spell-out

(26) a. In MC a well-formed word requires a final CV unit.

b. It is the site of optional (segmental and tonal) spreading when there are no suffixes.

c. It hosts the suffix when there is one.

Conclusions

The right edge of words in three unrelated languages: Italian, Bosnian and Mandarin Chinese can be encoded as a final CV unit.

This is a phonological object spelling out a morphological property of words:

– in MC, it is a property of all major categories (n. v. a), cf. the initial CV as in Lowenstamm (1999).

– in Bosnian and Italian, its distribution is restricted:

– to nouns (Bosnian)

– to nouns displaying overt inflection (Italian)