SPANISH DEFINITE ARTICLE ALLOMORPHY: A CORRESPONDENCE APPROACH

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1 Stress-sensitive Allomorphy of the Spanish Definite Article (Harris 1989)

- Spanish definite articles

1. Spanish definite articles

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>plural</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>el</td>
<td>los</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>la</td>
<td>las</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

1. el perro 'the dog' los perros 'the dogs'
   la mesa 'the table' las mesas 'the tables'

- The feminine singular definite article has two allomorphs:

1. a. la alméja 'the clam'
   la anguíla 'the eel'
   la aréna 'the arena'
   la amíga 'the friend'

1. b. el álma 'the soul' *la álma
   el águila 'the eagle'
   el área 'the area'
   el áma 'the mistress'

1. c. el agua 'the water' la aguáda 'the water supply' *el aguáda
   el árma 'the weapon' la armadúra 'the weaponry' *el armadúra

1. d. la misma agua 'the same water' *el misma agua
(4) a. el amigo 'the friend'
    el ánimo 'the spirit'

b. los amigos 'the friends'
    los ánimos 'the spirits'

c. las amigas 'the friends'
    las ámas 'the mistress'

[Observations]
- The fem. sg. definite article is *la* (3a). However, when it precedes a noun beginning with a stressed *á*, *el* occurs instead (3b).
- The occurrence of *el* is not morpheme-specific: if the stress is shifted from the initial syllable, *la* occurs (3c). If the definite article is not adjacent to the noun, *la* occurs (3d).
- The definite articles other than the fem. sg. do not show allomorphy (4).

*El*opaquely occurs in diminutives and compounds.

(5) a. Diminutives
    el amíta 'the mistress (dim.)' el áma cf. la amíga
    el almíta 'the soul (dim.)' el álma cf. la alméja

b. Compounds
    el aguafuérte 'etching' el agua
    el aguamála 'jellyfish' el agua

[Observations]
- In diminutives and compounds which are derived from the noun with an initial stressed *á*, *el* occurs even though the following noun-initial vowel is not stressed.

The aim of this paper is to provide the answers to the following questions:

(6) a. Why does *la* change to *el* before the noun beginning with a stressed *á*?
    b. Why does only the fem. sg. article show allomorphy?
    c. Why does *el* opaquely occur in diminutives and compounds?
2 Allomorphy and Resyllabification in Spanish

2.1 Spanish resyllabification (Hutchinson 1974, Harris 1983, Roca 1991)

(7) a. color azul co.lo.ra.zul 'blue color'
    tan alto ta.nal.to 'so tall'
    b. mi (h)ijo mi.jo 'my son'
    lo odio lo.dio 'I hate it'

[Observations]

- The word-final consonant is resyllabified as the onset of the following word-initial onsetless syllable (7a).
- Across the word boundary, a sequence of two identical vowels is merged into a single vowel (7b).

2.2 Allomorphy as the coalescence avoidance in stressed syllable

(8) Definite article allomorphy and resyllabification

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>la₁ a₂míga</td>
<td>la₁₂.mi.ga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>el áma</td>
<td>e.lá.ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>*la₁ á₂ma</td>
<td>*lå₁₂.ma</td>
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<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>el ánimo</td>
<td>e.lá.ni.mo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>los ánimos</td>
<td>lo.sá.ni.mos</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>las ámas</td>
<td>la.sá.mas</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[Descriptions]

- (8a): Across the word boundary, a sequence of two identical vowels is coalesced to avoid an onsetless syllable.
- (8b): Vowel coalescence is not allowed in the stressed syllable. In the case where one of the two adjacent vowels is stressed, the allomorph el occurs. This is an instance of the Positional Faithfulness effect (Beckman 1998).
- (8c): Since the articles other than the fem. sg. are consonant-final, they do not show allomorphy.
3 A Correspondence Analysis of Spanish Definite Article Allomorphy

3.1 Allomorphy

- Positional faithfulness constraint against coalescence in stressed syllable

(9) \textit{UNIFORMITY}_{10} - \checkmark

No segment in a stressed syllable in the output has multiple correspondents in the input.

\textit{cf.} \textit{UNIFORMITY}_{10}

No segment in the output has multiple correspondents in the input.

- Other relevant constraints

(10) a. *\textit{V}_i\textit{V}_i$: Avoid sequence of two identical vowels.
    b. \textit{ONSET}: Avoid onsetless syllable.
    c. \textit{DEP}_{10}-C: Output consonants must have input correspondents.
    d. *\textit{Resyllabification (= ANCHOR}_{10}(\text{stem, } \sigma, \text{ initial})):

The initial segment of the stem in the input must be in correspondence with a syllable-initial segment in the output.

- Tentative assumptions

(11) Lexical items that show allomorphic alternations contain more than one underlying representations. The allomorphic choice is determined by constraint evaluation (Kager 1996, Mascaró 1996).

(12) Underlying representation of the fem. sg. definite article

\textit{DEF} = /la, el/

- The constraint ranking for Spanish definite article allomorphy (first approximation)

(13) \textit{UNIFORMITY}_{10} - \checkmark, \textit{DEP}_{10}-C, *\textit{V}_i\textit{V}_i \Rightarrow \textit{ONSET} \Rightarrow \textit{UNIFORMITY}_{10}, *\textit{Resyllabification}
• Evaluations

(14) *la occurs before an unstressed a: [DEF [amiga]] $\Rightarrow$ la.mí.ga

Candidates:

- a. /la1 [a2miga/] $\Rightarrow$ la1,a2.mí.ga Faithful (no resyllabification)
- b. /la1 [a2miga/] $\Rightarrow$ l[a12.mí.ga] Coalescence
- c. /la1 [a2miga/] $\Rightarrow$ la1,t[a2.mí.ga] Epenthesis
- d. /el [a2mí.gga] $\Rightarrow$ e.l[a.mí.ga] el occurs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNIFORM-σ</th>
<th>DEP-C</th>
<th>*VVi</th>
<th>ONSET</th>
<th>UNIFORM</th>
<th>*Resyl</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. la1,a2.mí.ga</td>
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<td>b. l[a12.mí.ga]</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. la1,t[a2.mí.ga]</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. e.l[a.mí.ga]</td>
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</table>

[Crucial rankings]

**ONSET » *Resyl:** Resyllabification

**VVi, DEP-C » ONSET » UNIFORM:** A sequence of the identical vowels across the word boundary is coalesced into a single vowel.

(15) *el occurs before a stressed á: [DEF [agua]] $\Rightarrow$ e.lá.gua

Candidates:

- a. /la1 [a2gua/] $\Rightarrow$ la1,[á2.gua] Faithful (no resyllabification)
- b. /la1 [a2gua/] $\Rightarrow$ l[á12.gua] Coalescence
- c. /la1 [a2gua/] $\Rightarrow$ la1,t[á2.gua] Epenthesis
- d. /el [agua/] $\Rightarrow$ e.l[á.gua] el occurs.

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<th>*Resyl</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. la1,[á2.gua]</td>
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<td>b. l[á12.gua]</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. la1,t[á2.gua]</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. e.l[á.gua]</td>
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</table>

[Crucial ranking]

**UNIFORM-σ » ONSET:** Vowel coalescence is not allowed in the stressed syllable.

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1 "[ ]" indicates morpheme boundaries.
(16) *la occurs when the suffixation removes the stress from the noun-initial vowel:

\[
[\text{DEF }[\text{agua} \ da]] \Rightarrow \text{la.guá.da}
\]

Candidates:

a. /la₁ [a₂-guá/ \Rightarrow la₁,[a₂-guá.da] Faithful (No resyllabification)

b. /la₁ [a₂-guá/ \Rightarrow l[a₁₂,gua.da] Coalescence

c. /la₁ [a₂-guá/ \Rightarrow la₁,t[a₂-guá.da] Epenthesis

d. /el [aguada/ \Rightarrow e.l[a.guá.da] el occurs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNIFORM-σ</th>
<th>DEP-C</th>
<th>*V₁V₁</th>
<th>ONSET</th>
<th>UNIFORM</th>
<th>*Resyl</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. la₁.[a₂:guá.da]</td>
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<td>*!</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. l[a₁₂:guá.da]</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. la₁.t[a₂:guá.da]</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>d. e.l[a.guá.da]</td>
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3.2 On the phonological shape of *el*

- Why does *la* alternate with *el* but not with other forms?
  - The multiple UR assumption (12-13) gives no explanation for this question, because *el* is merely stipulated as an alternate form of *la*.

**Proposal**

(17) In order to account for the phonological shape of the allomorph *el*, I assume a single underlying representation /la/ for the Spanish feminine singular definite article, and propose a constraint on the minimum size of functional words in (18).

(18) Minimum Size Requirement on functional words (MSR)

An input functional word must have an output exponent that can form a syllable by itself. That is, the output exponents of the articles must be V, CV, VC, or CVC.

(19) Other relevant constraints

a. \text{MAX}_{IO}: Input segments must have output correspondents.

b. \text{DEP}_{IO}-V: Output vowels must have input correspondents.

20) The constraint ranking for Spanish definite article allomorphy (revised)\(^2\)

\[
\text{MSR, UNIFORM}_{IO-σ}, \text{DEP}_{IO-C}, \text{*V₁V₁} \gg \text{MAX}_{IO}, \text{DEP}_{IO}-V \gg \text{ONSET} \gg \text{UNIFORM}_{IO}, \text{*Resyl}
\]

\(^2\) The ranking \text{MAX}_{IO} \gg \text{ONSET} is supported by the fact that the vowel deletion is never attested in Spanish. The ranking between \text{DEP}_{IO}-V and \text{ONSET} cannot be decided because hiatus never be resolved by vowel epenthesis.
• Evaluations

(21) * el occurs before a stressed á: [la [ama]]  $\Rightarrow$  e.lá.ma

Candidates:

a. /la₁ [a₂ma]/  $\Rightarrow$  la₁.[Á₂.ma]  Faithful (no resyllabification)
b. /la₁ [a₂ma]/  $\Rightarrow$  la₁.[á₂.ma]  Coalescence
c. /la₁ [a₂ma]/  $\Rightarrow$  la₁.[á₂.ma]  Deletion
d. /la₁ [a₂ma]/  $\Rightarrow$  e.[Í₂.e]  Deletion and epenthesis (result in the occurrence of e.l)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSR</th>
<th>UNIFORM-σ</th>
<th>*V₁,V₁</th>
<th>MAX</th>
<th>DEP-V</th>
<th>ONSET</th>
<th>UNIFORM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. la₁.[á₂.ma]</td>
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<td>*!</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. la₁.[á₂.ma]</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. la₁.[á₂.ma]</td>
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<td>*!</td>
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<td>d. e.[Í₂.e]</td>
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[Crucial rankings]

UNIFORM-σ, *V₁,V₁ $\Rightarrow$ MAX₁₀: The article-final vowel is deleted to resolve the sequence of identical vowels, when the following noun-initial vowel is stressed.

MSR $\Rightarrow$ DEP₁₀-V: e is epenthised before l.

(22) * la occurs before an unstressed a: [la [amiga]]  $\Rightarrow$  la.mi.ga

Candidates:

a. /la₁ [a₂miga]/  $\Rightarrow$  la₁.[a₂.mi.ga]  Faithful (no resyllabification)
b. /la₁ [a₂miga]/  $\Rightarrow$  la₁.[á₂.mi.ga]  Coalescence
c. /la₁ [a₂miga]/  $\Rightarrow$  la₁.[á₂.mi.ga]  Deletion
d. /la₁ [a₂.mi.ga]/  $\Rightarrow$  e.[Í₂.e]  Deletion and Epenthesis (result in el)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MSR</th>
<th>UNIFORM-σ</th>
<th>*V₁,V₁</th>
<th>MAX</th>
<th>DEP-V</th>
<th>ONSET</th>
<th>UNIFORM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. la₁.[a₂.mi.ga]</td>
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<td>b. la₁.[Í₂.mi.ga]</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. la₁.[á₂.mi.ga]</td>
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<td>d. e.[Í₂.e]</td>
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3 The exponent of the article is underscored.
Maximality and Uniformity

3.3 Opacity in diminutives and compounds

(23) a. Diminutives
   el amíta 'the mistress (diminutive)' el áma
   cf. el água la aguáda

b. Compounds
   el aguamála 'the jellyfish'

[Observations]

- In diminutives and compounds which are derived from the noun with an initial stressed á, el opacity occurs even though the following noun-initial vowel is not stressed.

- The ranking in (20) fails to account for the opacity in (23).

(24) la wrongly occurs in diminutives: [lah[am]ita] ⇒ *la.mi.ta

Candidates:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UNIFORM-σ</th>
<th>*V_iV_i</th>
<th>MAX</th>
<th>DEP-V</th>
<th>Onset</th>
<th>Uniform</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a. la[a2.mi.ta]</td>
<td></td>
<td>*!</td>
<td></td>
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<td>② wrong winner</td>
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<tr>
<td>b. l[a12.mi.ta]</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<tr>
<td>desired winner</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. e.l[a2.mi.ta]</td>
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Solution

(25) The diminutive suffix and the compound-trigger morpheme are sympathetic morphemes: they have a lexical specification ∈-selector = ANCHORio(stem, prosodic word, final). That is, the word headed by these affixes must be faithful to the ∈-ed candidate selected by ANCHORio(stem, prosodic word, final).
(26) The $\mathcal{\Phi}$-selector for the Spanish diminutives and compounds

$$\mathcal{\Phi}$-ANCHOR$\sigma_{iO}$(stem, prosodic word, final):

The final segment of the stem in the input must be in correspondence with a final segment of the prosodic word in the output.

(27) Sympathetic faithfulness constraint

$\text{MAX}^{\Phi}: \text{Every segment in the } \Phi\text{-ed candidate has a correspondent in the output.}$

(28) The constraint ranking for Spanish definite article allomorphy$^4$

$$\text{MAX}^{\Phi}, \text{MSR} \gg \text{UNIFORMITY}_{iO}^{\sigma}, {\ast}V, V, \text{DEPI}^{iO} \gg \text{MAX}^{iO}, \text{DEPI}^{iO} \gg \text{ONSET} \gg \text{UNIFORMITY}_{iO}^{\sigma}, \ast\text{Resyl}$$

- Evaluations

(29) $\text{el}$ opaquely occurs before an unstressed $a$ in diminutives: $\text{[la [[am] ita]]} \Rightarrow \text{e.la.mi.ta}$

Candidates$^5$:

- The stem-final boundary does not correspond to a prosodic word boundary

  a. $/\text{la}_1 [a_2m] \text{ita}/ \Rightarrow \{\text{[la}_1[a_2.m]i.ta}\}$  No resyllabification

  b. $/\text{la}_1 [a_2m] \text{ita}/ \Rightarrow \{[a_12.m]i.ta\}$  Coalescence

  c. $/\text{la}_1 [a_2m] \text{ita}/ \Rightarrow \{[e.l[a_2m].i.ta}\}$  $\text{el}$ occurs (deletion and epenthesis)

- The stem-final boundary corresponds to a prosodic word boundary

  d. $/\text{la}_1 [a_2m] \text{ita}/ \Rightarrow \{[a.l[a.m].i.ta}\}$  Faithful (No resyllabification)

  e. $/\text{la}_1 [a_2m] \text{ita}/ \Rightarrow \{[a.l[a.m].i.ta}\}$  Coalescence

  f. $/\text{la}_1 [a_2m] \text{ita}/ \Rightarrow \{[e.l[a_2m].i.ta}\}$  $\text{el}$ occurs (deletion and epenthesis)

$^4$ The relative ranking of the $\mathcal{\Phi}$-selector $\mathcal{\Phi}$-ANCHOR$\sigma_{iO}$(stem, prosodic word, final) cannot be determined by the data. However, in order to avoid prosodic word recursion on the surface, it must be outranked by Gr$\text{WD}=\text{Pr}\text{WD}$, which requires a grammatical word to correspond to a prosodic word.

$^5$ $\{ \}$ = morpheme boundary, "[ ]" = prosodic word boundary
ANCHORIO UNIFORMONSDEPIOMAXICOViViUNIFORM-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MAXO</th>
<th>UNIFORM-.uri</th>
<th>*V_i</th>
<th>MAXO</th>
<th>DEPIO</th>
<th>ONS</th>
<th>UNIFORM</th>
<th>ANCHORO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a.</td>
<td>la_1{[a_2.m]{t.a}}</td>
<td>*!</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b.</td>
<td>la_1{[a_12.m]{t.a}}</td>
<td>*!</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c.</td>
<td>e.l[a_2.m]{t.a}</td>
<td>*!</td>
<td>*</td>
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<td>*</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>d.</td>
<td>la_1{[a_2.m]} i.ta</td>
<td>*!</td>
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<tr>
<td>e.</td>
<td>la_1{[a_12.m]} i.ta</td>
<td>*!</td>
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<tr>
<td>f.</td>
<td>e.l[a_2.m] i.ta</td>
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</table>

[Crucial constraint and ranking]

MAXO \( \rightarrow \) DEPIO-\( V \): The optimal candidate has an epenthetic \( e \) because the \( \bullet \)-ed candidate, in which the article immediately precedes the noun-initial stressed \( \acute{a} \), has \( e \) in the phrase-initial position.

ONSET: The \( \bullet \)-ed candidate itself is ruled out by ONSET, because it has an onsetless syllable in the word-internal position in addition to the phrase-initial one.

3.4 Previous analyses

- Allomorphy

(30) The allomorphy rules proposed in the previous analyses

a. \( la \rightarrow el / \_NP[\_ N[\acute{a}] \quad (Halle and Vergnaud 1987, Harris 1989) \)
b. \( V \rightarrow \_Ø / \_ N[\_ N[\acute{a}] \quad (Harris 1987, Halle, Harris and Vergnaud 1991) \)

Harris 1987 assumes /ello/ as the underlying representation of the definite articles and the depalatalisation rule (\( ll \) is palatal in the Spanish orthography). Therefore, the derivation goes like this:

\( ello \rightarrow ell \rightarrow el \). Halle, Harris and Vergnaud 1991 assume that /la/ as the UR of the fem. sg. definite article and the general epenthesis rule: \( la \rightarrow l \rightarrow el \).

Although the rules in (30) can derive el from la, they do not explain the reason why the allomorphy occurs when the article precedes the noun beginning with a stressed \( \acute{a} \). The analysis proposed in this paper, by contrast, accounts for the occurrence of el as the result of the coalescence avoidance in stressed position: el occurs before a stressed \( \acute{a} \) because the avoidance of onsetless syllable by coalescence is not allowed when the following noun-initial vowel is stressed.
Opacity in diminutives and compounds

In order to account for the opaque occurrence of \textit{el} in diminutives and compounds, the rule-based derivational analyses, such as Halle, Harris and Vergnaud 1991, assume that the stress rule is assigned cyclically, and propose the restructuring rule which makes the article to be a sister of the stem but not of the entire noun: $[\text{DP} \text{[NP} \text{[a} \text{m}] \text{stem} \text{ita}]]) \rightarrow [\text{[la} \text{[am]} \text{ita}]$. This restructuring rule is crucial to the derivational approaches (including Output-Output correspondence approach within OT), because, as shown in (31), the phonologically-motivated structure does not coincide with the morphologically-motivated structure.

(31) Bracketing mismatching in diminutives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphologically (syntactically) motivated</th>
<th>Phonologically motivated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[la [am] ita]</td>
<td>[[la [am]] ita]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In contrast with the derivational approaches, the analysis proposed in this paper does not face with this problem because it does not rely on the derivational relation between \textit{el ama} and \textit{el amita}: the entire DP is evaluated in a parallel way.

4 Concluding Remarks

Here are my answers to the questions in (6):

- Why does \textit{la} change to \textit{el} before the noun beginning with a stressed \textit{a}?
  - The occurrence of \textit{el} results from the coalescence avoidance in the stressed syllable: if \textit{la} precedes the noun beginning with an unstressed \textit{a}, the sequence of the identical vowels is resolved by the coalescence of the two identical vowel. However, in the case where the noun-initial vowel is stressed, the coalescence is not allowed because of the higher-ranked positional faithfulness constraint to stressed syllable, \textit{Uniformity}_{\sigma\text{-}\delta}. Instead, the allomorph \textit{el} occurs in order to avoid the vowel sequence.

- Why does only the fem. sg. article show allomorphy?
  - It is because the articles other than the fem. sg. are consonant-final.

- Why does \textit{el} opaquely occur in diminutives and compounds?
  - The diminutive suffix and the compound-trigger morpheme are sympathetic morphemes which have the lexical specification \textit{\$-selector = Anchor}_{i0} \text{(stem, prosodic word, final)}$. The occurrence of \textit{el} is accounted for as a sympathetic influence from the \textit{\$-ed} candidate.
References


