

**Exploring the trigger of a morphophonological innovation.
Identity effects in Uruguayan Spanish**

It is cross-linguistically common to find identity effects (i.e. phonological similarity relations) among morphologically related forms. This is true not only for derivational morphology but also for inflectional morphology. Traditionally, the specific way in which certain forms influence others has been assumed to diverge in derivation and inflection. However, recent research has questioned this. Whereas derived forms have usually been assumed to have clear "bases of affixation", there is much debate on whether inflected forms are constructed from a single base (Kenstowicz 1996, Benua 1997, Albright 2008, Nevins & Bachrach 2008), or if they exhibit a more egalitarian structure with all forms in the paradigm affecting each other in a more symmetrical way (Burzio 1996, Steriade 2000 and McCarthy 2005). Additionally, it is still an open question whether a morphological base must correspond to a single surface form or, in contrast, it is an abstract underlying representation from which the rest of the paradigm can be derived without necessarily having a surface correspondent.

With the aim of contributing to the ongoing debate on identity effects in inflectional paradigms, this paper presents new dialectal data from Spanish verbal morphophonology. More specifically, it focuses on a variety of Spanish spoken in Uruguay, which has not been previously described. This dialect is especially interesting because it presents a case of paradigm leveling in the present subjunctive. In standard varieties of Spanish (1a, 1b), there is a contrast between stressed and unstressed roots (stressed roots appear in shaded cells). However, some speakers of Uruguay exhibit an innovation: the 1st person of the plural has undergone leveling, and all the forms in the present subjunctive exhibit stress in the same position - namely, on the root (1c, 2c). Crucially, this change has affected the present subjunctive but not the present indicative; and this type of innovation is attested not only in regular verbs (1), but also in irregular verbs (2), where both stress and segmental alternations seem to be leveled in the subjunctive:

(1) **Regular verb: com-ér. Present Subjunctive**

	a. Standard Spanish A (E.g. Northern Peninsular Spanish)		b. Standard Spanish B (E.g. American Spanish)		c. Non standard Uruguayan Spanish	
	Indicative	Subjunctive	Indicative	Subjunctive	Indicative	Subjunctive
1sg.	cóm-o	cóm-a	cóm -o	cóm-a	cóm -o	cóm -a
2sg.	cóm -es	cóm -as	cóm-es /com-és	cóm -as	cóm-es /com-és	cóm -as
3sg.	cóm -e	cóm -a	cóm-e	cóm -a	cóm-e	cóm -a
1pl.	com -émos	com -ámos	com-émos	com -ámos	com-émos	cóm-amos
2pl.	com -éis	com -áis	cóm -an	com -áis	cóm -an	cóm-an
3pl.	cóm -en	cóm -an	cóm -an	cóm -an	cóm -an	cóm-an

(2) **Irregular verb: pod-ér**

	a. Standard Spanish A		b. Standard Spanish B		c. Uruguayan Spanish	
	Indicative	Subjunctive	Indicative	Subjunctive	Indicative	Subjunctive
1sg.	puéd-o	puéd-a	puéd -a	puéd-a	puéd -a	puéd -a
2sg.	puéd-es	puéd -as	puéd -as/pod-és	puéd -as	puéd -as/pod-és	puéd -as
3sg.	puéd -e	puéd -a	puéd -a	puéd -a	puéd -a	puéd -a
1pl.	pod-émos	pod-ámos	pod-ámos	pod-ámos	pod-ámos	puéd -amos
2pl.	pod-éis	pod-áis	puéd -an	puéd -an	puéd -an	puéd -an
3pl.	puéd -en	puéd -an	puéd -an	puéd -an	puéd -an	puéd -an

This paper shows that, counter to appearances, this type of leveling is not an output-output effect, i.e. leveling cannot be only driven by paradigmatic considerations enforcing identity among related forms, as

proposed in the Optimal Paradigms model (OP, McCarthy 2005). Within the OP model, entire paradigms are evaluated and, thus, the most frequent forms are always preferred over the least common ones. While OP can satisfactorily account for the directionality of the Uruguayan Spanish subjunctive change in the sense that the most frequent root-form is extended (note that all the persons have the root *puéd-* except for the 1st plural, which is the one that undergoes leveling), OP has difficulty explaining why the present indicative does not also change.

In addition, these data also pose problems for certain accounts of leveling that are based on the notion of markedness. Generally, it is assumed that unmarked forms are more prone to be extended in a paradigm than marked ones. However, morphophonological domains can be subject to conflicting markedness considerations since a given form can be marked from a morphological point of view but unmarked from a phonological perspective (or vice versa). In Uruguayan Spanish, the form that has been extended (e.g. *puéd-*) seems to be more phonologically marked than the form that has disappeared (e.g. *pod-*), and thus one wonders if there is any sense in which the extended form is morphologically less marked than its competitor - as would be required by a markedness account.

Therefore, I adopt Albright's model of *privileged bases* (2002, 2005, 2007) and propose that paradigm leveling in Uruguayan Spanish is an effect of the way that speakers use their grammars to project unknown forms (i.e. an input-output effect). Under this approach, some members of the paradigms are privileged in the sense that they are used to project the remaining forms of the paradigm. Thus, the learner does not need to memorize the whole paradigm, but she can derive it by applying morphological and phonological rules (or constraints) to a privileged base. In Albright's model, the forms that are selected as bases are maximally informative: they must preserve the contrasts needed to generate the rest of the forms.

Although Albright's initial goal was to have paradigms with *single bases*, there is evidence that his model needs to be extended when dealing with large paradigms in order to allow the selection of multiple local bases. This seems to be the case for the Spanish verbal conjugation paradigm, where even though the infinitive forms are generally considered to be the privileged base in the verbal domain (i.e. they are maximally informative: they unambiguously reveal the conjugation class of the verb and they allowed to derive most of the forms of the paradigm), there is need for other local bases to capture some of the observed alternations. For instance, learners need several local bases to capture the Spanish irregular verb paradigm since it is simply not possible to generate the irregular verbs using only the infinitive form of the verb as the base. Thus, this paper suggests that the Spanish 1st person singular present indicative, not the infinitive, acts as a local base for the subjunctive. This accounts for why Uruguayan Spanish speakers have the type of leveling that they do: they have extended the stressed form of the 1st person singular indicative (e.g. *cóm-*, *puéd-*) to the whole subjunctive paradigm.

Further support for the special status of the 1st person singular comes from historical linguistics. For example, the Spanish irregular verb *caber* 'to fit' has a 1sg form *quepo* [kepo] with idiosyncratic realization of both the stressed vowel and the following stop. Importantly, both of these irregularities have been extended to the entire present subjunctive (see 3a) (Albright 2002:120). Furthermore, this type of patterning in which an irregularity in the 1sg indicative is extended to the whole subjunctive paradigm is present in many irregular verbs, not just in Spanish, but also in other Romance languages (Maiden 1992, 2005) (see 3b,c):

(3)		1sg	2sg	3sg	1pl	2pl	3pl
a.	Pres. Ind.	quepo	cabes	cabe	cabemos	cabéis	caben
	Pres. Subj.	quepa	quepas	quepa	quepamos	quepáis	quepan
b.	Pres. Ind.	oigo	oyes	oye	oímos	oís	oyen
	Pres. Subj.	oiga	oigas	oiga	oigamos	oigáis	oigan
c.	Pres. Ind.	conozco	conoces	conoce	conocemos	conocéis	conocen
	Pres. Subj.	conozca	conozcas	conozca	conozcamos	conozcáis	conozcan

Finally, this paper concludes by complementing the morphophonological account with a compatible syntactic account, and it presents additional data from Cuban, Mexican and Uruguayan Spanish varieties that have leveling in the 1st person plural imperative.