Stress Uniformity in Albanian: Morphological Arguments for Cyclicity

In Albanian, uninflected words (e.g. nominative indefinite nouns) have final stress if the final syllable is closed (1a), or ends in a non-reduced non-mid vowel (1b,c), while stress falls on the penultimate syllable if the final syllable ends in a mid vowel (1d,e) (Bevington, 1974; Trommer, 2005). In forms with inflectional affixes (e.g. accusative definite nouns), stress is on the same syllable as in corresponding uninflected forms, even when the phonology would trigger a different stress position. Thus for *adetin*, we expect final stress, but stress is on the penultimate syllable:

(1)

	a. 'habit'	b. 'cherry'	c. 'doom'	d. 'swing'	e. 'midwife;
Nom indef.	*adét*	*qershí*	*hatá*	*hóle,*	*bábo*
Acc def.	*adét-in*	*qersh-ín*	*hatá-n*	*hóle-n*	*bábo-n*

In this paper, I argue for a cyclic analysis (Kiparsky, 2000) of the Albanian data, where stress is assigned at the stem level and retained by input-output faithfulness at later levels, and show that morphological details are crucial for the evaluation of alternative analyses.

First, verbs seem to provide evidence for an output-output analysis since according to standard analyses of many verb classes (2a,b) there is no stem which would predict the correct stress position. E.g. interpreting *thelloj* as the stem *thello* and the suffix *-j*, we expect incorrectly penultimate stress since *thello* ends in a mid vowel, while stress assignment based on the full form *thelloj* generates correct final stress which can then be enforced by output-output (OO) constraints (Benua, 1997; McCarthy, 2005) on other forms such as *thelloni*.

(2)

	a. 'deepen'	b. 'deepen'	c. 'drink'	d. 'open'	e. 'kill'	f.'deepen'
1sg	*thelló-j*	*thelló-j*	*pi-Ø*	*hap-Ø*	*vras-Ø*	*thellój-Ø*
2sg/3sg	*thello-n*	*thelló-n*	*pi-Ø*	*hap-Ø*	*vret-Ø*	*thellón-Ø*
1pl	*thelló-jm*	*thellój-m*	*pi-m*	*háp-im*	*vrás-im*	*thellój-m*
2pl	*thelló-ni*	*thelló-ni*	*pi-ni*	*háp-ni*	*vrít-ni*	*thellón-ni*
3pl	*thelló-jn*	*thellój-n*	*pi-n*	*háp-in*	*vrás-in*	*thellój-n*

However, there are morphological reasons for the alternative segmentation in (2f) where *n* and *j* are part of the stem. This allows to unify the analysis of plural markers in vowel-final stems, the status of *j* and the singular markers which are Ø in other vowel-final (2c) and all consonant-final stems (2d,e). Moreover, morphological stem change is a pervasive phenomenon in Albanian verbs (2e). Crucially, under (2f), stress assignment is fully compatible with a cyclic approach, since the stem ends in all cases in a closed syllable motivating stem-final stress. Secondly, I discuss deponent verbs (e.g. *pendó-hem*, 'I regret'), where morphology doesn't provide paradigm forms with active inflection motivating the observed stress position. I argue for a cyclic analysis based on deletion of stem-final *j* in the context of *h* (*pendoj-hem* → *pendo-hem*). The third data set crucial to the account of stress uniformity consists in a small set of irregular nouns which form the only exception to the statement that stress is immovable across paradigms:

(3)

	a. 'man'	b. 'head'	c. 'snake'	d. 'sickle'	e.'river'
sig	*njerí*	*kallí*	*gjárpər*	*drápər*	*lúm*
plu	*njérəz*	*kálləza*	*gjarpərínj*	*drapínj*	*luménj*

Under an OO-account, these data are simply exceptions. Under a cyclic approach they follow straightforwardly if we assume that they involve different singular and plural stems. Thus (3b) has the singular stem *kalli* and the plural stem *kalləz*, both receiving regular phonological stress (final schwa syllables are unstressed, cf. (3d)). *-a* is independently attested as a plural affix (e.g. sig *shpi*, plu *shpí-a*, 'hous(es)'). The plural forms in (3c,d,e) involve stem extensions ending in *n* triggering final stress and the plural suffix *j*, also found without these extensions (e.g. sig *kalamá*, plu *kalamá-j*, 'child(ren)').

References

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