

Theorien der Morphologie 6

Modul 006-1006: Grammatiktheorie, SoSe 2019

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Basic Instantiated Paradigms

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1. Background

In Distributed Morphology, paradigms do not exist as genuine objects that, e.g., grammatical constraints can refer to. Rather, paradigms are epiphenomena – essentially, empirical generalizations that need to be derived in some way. Arguably, the same goes for Paradigm Function Morphology (notwithstanding claims to the contrary).

This view is incompatible with a more traditional view according to which paradigms exist as genuine entities in the grammar.

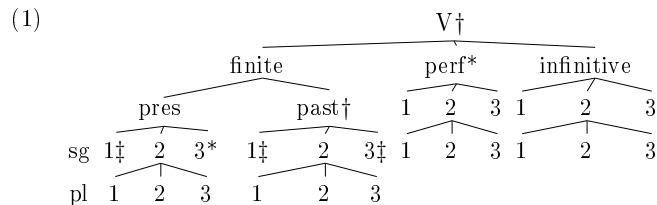
Constraints on paradigms:

- *The Paradigm Economy Principle* (Carstairs (1987))
- *The No Blur Principle* (Carstairs-McCarthy (1994))
- *The Basic Instantiated Paradigm Principle* (Williams (1994) vs. Bobaljik (2002))
- *Optimal Paradigms* (McCarthy (2005))

2. Basic Instantiated Paradigms

Assumption (Williams (1994)):

Paradigms are real objects, but they are considerably more abstract than is traditionally assumed.



Entry points (points to which actual forms are assigned):

- † = modals
- †* = regular; go-went
- †† = be
- have, says, does – irregular in 3.sg.: *haves

(2) *The Basic Instantiated Paradigm Principle* (Williams (1994, 27)):

When there are multiple related paradigms, there will be one instantiated paradigm, and all others will have its syncretic structure, and perhaps some more. But no other related paradigm will have a contrary syncretic structure, making distinctions where that one does not. We will call that one paradigm the basic paradigm.

Note:

In English verb inflection, the paradigm of *be* is the basic instantiated paradigm.

3. Problem

A Problem (Bobaljik (2002)):

There are inflectional systems where there simply is no basic instantiated paradigm that makes all the distinctions that other paradigms make, with no other paradigm instantiating contrary syncretic structure.

Example: Russian noun declension.

(3) Singular

	I _m	II _{f,m}	III _f	IV _n
nom/sg	∅	a	∅	o
acc/sg	∅/a	u	∅	o
dat/sg	u	e	i	u
gen/sg	a	i	i	a
inst/sg	om	oj	ju	om
loc/sg	e	e	i	e

Plural

	I _m	II _{f,m}	III _f	IV _n
nom/pl	y	y	i	a
acc/pl	y/ov	y/∅	i/ej	a/∅
dat/pl	am	am	jam	am
gen/pl	ov	∅	ej	∅
inst/pl	ami	ami	jami	ami
loc/pl	ax	ax	jax	ax

The paradigm for the feminine /a/-declension (class 2) comes closest, but its dative/locative syncretism – /e/ – is resolved in the masculine/neuter declension.

References

- Bobaljik, Jonathan (2002): Syncretism without Paradigms: Remarks on Williams 1981, 1994. In: G. Booij & J. van Marle, eds., *Yearbook of Morphology 2001*. Kluwer, Dordrecht, pp. 53–85.
- Carstairs, Andrew (1987): *Allomorphy in Inflexion*. Croom Helm, London.
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- McCarthy, John (2005): Optimal Paradigms. In: L. Downing, T. Hall & R. Raffelsiefen, eds., *Paradigms in Phonological Theory*. Oxford University Press, Oxford, pp. 170–210.
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