Infrasegmental Government or OCP?

The aim of this paper is to argue that the Infrasegmental Government (IG) proposed by Scheer (1996) to account for branching onsets (TR) could be an effect of OCP. I base the following analysis on the CVCV framework introduced in Lowenstamm (1996).

Following Scheer (1996), two adjacent consonants can form a branching onset *iff* the second contains a resonance element that is lacking in the first (1a). In this case, an IG can apply between the two consonants. This relation is a kind of government in that a non empty position follows an empty position on the same tier (compare with Proper Government in 1b).

In [anonymous], I proposed that Proper Government is an effect of OCP: a V position can remain empty *iff* it is not adjacent to another empty V on the same tier (2a). I also showed that the specificity of the word-final position (that allows complex codas) is due to the fact that Final Empty Nuclei can be deleted (hatched in 2b) without triggering an adjacency of two C positions that would violate OCP[1].

Now, I propose to spread this analysis to IG. First, remark that following Scheer and Szigetvári (2005) the V positions of CVCV are equivalents of weight units. Accordingly, the representation in (3a) should predict that branching onsets are moraic. In other words, the analysis with IG accounts for the fact that we can find CTR sequences, but it does not directly account for the fact that TR is not moraic. For this, it additionally needs to be stated that a nucleus embedded in a IG domain is invisible for phonology.

In the frame of the V = μ equation, the null hypothesis is that (non moraic) branching onsets do not show any embedded empty nucleus. Such an analysis was proposed for example in Lowenstamm (2003), which assumes that branching onsets TR are singletons T^R (3b). However, this analysis does not account for the fact that *T^T is unattested (e.g. *tp, *bd, etc.).

After having proposed that V positions can be deleted in final position, I now propose that branching onsets are sequences of two C positions that came to be adjacent after the deletion (hatches) of an empty V position (4). This accounts for the fact that TR onsets are non moraic.

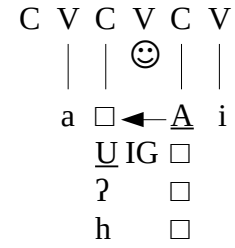
However, an internal V position normally should not be deleted, because its deletion triggers a violation of OCP when two C positions come to be adjacent. Thus, the issue is: what conditions the possible loss of the V position in TR clusters?

I argue that the basic explanatory principle of branching onsets is that two consonants can form an onset only if they do not belong to the same class. This dissimilarity requirement is accounted for by Scheer's IG in that the second consonant contains an element that is lacking in the first. Thus, in a TT cluster, the two consonants are not distinct enough to allow the deletion of V: their adjacency would violate OCP (5a). But in a TR cluster, the embedded V can be deleted, because the two C positions that come to be adjacent are linked to segments that are distinct enough (5b).

In conclusion, I propose an analysis that accounts for the non moraicity of branching onsets **i.** without assuming an extra distinction between *visible empty V*, *invisible empty V* and *no V*; and **ii.** by preserving the idea that branching onsets are clusters. This analysis is based on a previous proposal arguing that the CVCV structure of the skeleton is an effect of OCP. Nevertheless, this first clue is not sufficient. Indeed, if we assume that a V position can be deleted between two consonants that show enough contrast, then why RT clusters cannot form branching onsets? It seems that this phenomenon implies a directionality that cannot be accounted for by OCP only. Consequently, I assume that sonorants need to be followed by a V position. This assumption is based on the observation, made in Pöchtrager (2001), that this class of consonants can spread to a V position on its right. Accordingly, in the RT cluster in (5c), the embedded empty V position cannot be deleted, even if this is allowed by OCP.

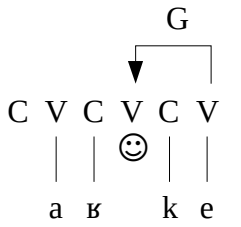
1 In other words, I proposed that CV units do not exist as primitives: they are derived from an OCP constraint.

(1) a. Infrasegmental Government (IG)



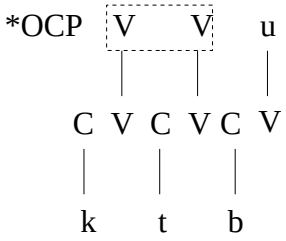
french abʁi 'shelter'

b. Proper Government (PG)

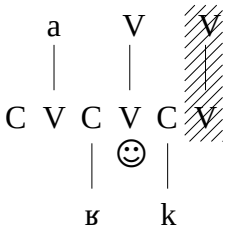


french aʁke 'arched'

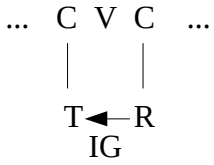
(2) a. moroccan arabic k**[ɨ]**tbu 'we write'



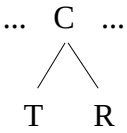
b. french aʁke 'arched'



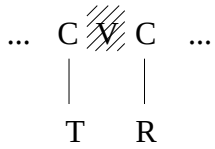
(3) a. Scheer (1996)



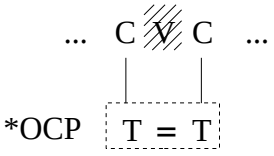
b. Lowenstamm (2003)



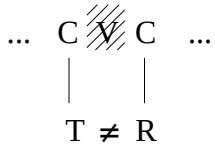
(4) My proposal



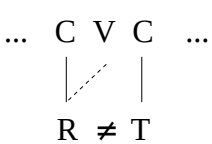
(5) a.



b.



c.



Lowenstamm, J. (1996) 'CV as the Only Syllable Type', in Durand, J. and Laks, B. (eds) *Current Trends in Phonology Models and Methods*. University of Salford: European Studies Research Institute, pp. 419–442. **Lowenstamm**, J. (2003) 'Remarks on Mutae cum Liquida and Branching Onsets', in *Living on the Edge, 28 Papers in Honor of Jonathan Kaye*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter (Studies in Generative Grammar, 62), pp. 339–363. **Pöchtrager**, M. (2001) *Finnish Consonant Gradation*. MA dissertation. Vienna. **Scheer**, T. (1996) *Une théorie de l'interaction directe entre consonnes.* PhD dissertation [ms]. University Paris 7. **Scheer**, T. and **Szigetvári**, P. (2005) 'Unified Representations for Stress and the Syllable', *Phonology*, 22(1), pp. 37–75.