

## Schemata in the analysis of morphological variation in Lovari

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Based on newly collected data, I will attempt to explain two particular instances of variation in the morphology of Lovari, a dialect of Romani belonging to the Vlax dialect group, in an analogical framework, relying only on surface forms and their relationships, employing and further improving schemata (Blevins & Blevins 2009, Goldberg 2006, Booij 2010) and finding analogical sources that can explain the variation. My analysis can contribute useful insights to the big picture, as variation and analogical thinking appear on all levels of language, and constructions or schemata can be used to characterise various aspects of syntax, phonology and morphology, as well as their correlations. This holistic approach (Kálmán 2007) is also in line with usage-based theories (e.g. Bybee 2010) and recent experimental research in phonetics, speech perception and speech production (Port 2007, Port 2010, Pisoni 1997).

The analysis is based on fresh data (both questionnaire-based and spontaneous) I collected during my recent fieldwork, as Romani, although widely researched, is not very well documented. The phenomena to be discussed appear as weak points in the nominal morphology of Lovari (cf. also Baló 2015). In order to clarify what a weak point is, we will use the idea that the regularities on a particular level of linguistic description can be expressed in terms of schemata (Booij 2010). While constructions denote a pairing of form and meaning (Goldberg 2006, Jackendoff 2008), schemata contain phonological, syntactic and semantic information.

The two weak points, where the surface forms (surface similarities and differences) and analogical effects might play a role in producing and maintaining variation are the masculine and feminine oblique bases. Let us take the masculine oblique base as an example. Here, there are two possible sets of oblique markers: *-es-/-en-* (singular/plural), so the oblique bases of a word like *šēró* ‘head’ are *šērés-* and *šērén-*, and *-os-/-on-*, so the oblique bases of the word *fōro* ‘town’ are *fōrós-* and *fōrón-*. These could be illustrated by the schema for the *-es-/-en-* form in Figure 1. (The schema for the *-os-/-on-* form would look very similar.)

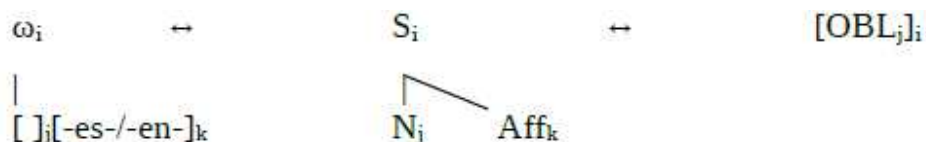


Figure 1

The three kinds of linguistic information are the phonological form  $\omega$ , the syntactic information  $S$  and the semantic information. The symbol  $\leftrightarrow$  stands for correspondence. To show the variation, I suggest a circular representation, where every kind of information is connected bidirectionally to the other two through correspondences, as there is a relationship between the semantic and the phonological information as well. Thus, variation can be represented as the combination of two schemata, as shown in Figure 2, and the notion of a weak point in morphology can be expressed in terms of schemata: it is a schema where at least one of the correspondences is not mutually unambiguous and where, therefore, variation may emerge.

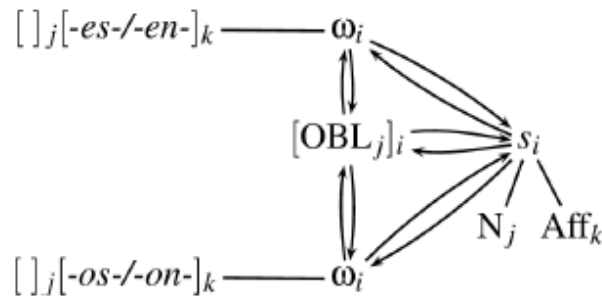


Figure 2

The two competing patterns result in variation, or, in other words, the two schemata weaken each other and this results in intra-speaker variation, where there are two possible oblique forms for the same word, like *čokanés-/čokanós* for the word *čókano* ‘hammer’.

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