Templatic restrictions in Berber derivational morphology

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In the theory of templatic morphology as developed in Guerssel & Lowenstamm 1990, and Lowenstamm 2003, the template is viewed as a morphologically complex object, internally structured so that not all of its skeletal positions have the same status. In their analysis of Classical Arabic verb conjugation, the authors proposed that the various forms the verb displays are derived by means of a unique template composed of CV units, some of which play a grammatical role. The template is given in (1):
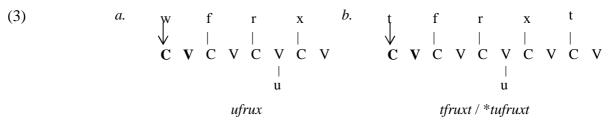
(1)   **C   V** | C   V | **C   V** | C   V   C   V |

The syllables in bold are derivational head positions. The boxed syllables constitute the complement of the head. The identification of one of the head positions by some lexical material amounts to derivation. Thus for instance, the medial head position is filled by means of C-spreading in form II *kattaba* 'he made write' and V-spreading in form III *kaataba* 'he corresponded', whereas the initial head position accommodates the reflexive prefix *n-* in form VII *nkasara* 'it broke'.

The aim of this paper is to show that the structure of the template in (1) not only offers the tools needed to accounts for a range of non-concatenative morphological operations but also captures the distributional restrictions that some of these operations obey. Specifically, it is argued that the co-occurrence restrictions that certain nominal and verbal morphemes obey in Tashlhiyt Berber are the result of the identification of templatic sites:

- The initial CV in the template is shown to be responsible for the non-occurrence of the gender marker with the construct state marker: for example, *afrux* (free state) / *ufrux* (construct state) "boy"; *tafruxt* (free state) / *tfruxt* (construct state) "girl", not *tufruxt*. Further examples are given in (2):

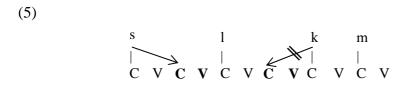| (2)		Free state		Construct state		
		Masculine	*Feminine*	*Masculine*	*Feminine*	
"ox / cow"		afunas	tafunast	ufunas	tfunast	*tufunast
"manure / country"		amazir	tamazirt	umazir	tmazirt	*tumazirt
"mouse"		aʁrda	taʁrdat	uʁrda	tʁrdat	*tuʁrdat

The representation in (3) shows the construct state w- (→ [u])[1] and the gender t- competing for the same position in the template. Gender t- takes precedence over construct state w-. Such restrictions are traditionally explained in syntactic configurations (see among others, Bendjaballah & Haiden 2008; Ennaji 2001; Guerssel 1992b; Ouhalla 1996).

(3)   *a.*

ufrux   *tfruxt* / *tufruxt*

- Prohibited multi-headedness explains why verbs that geminate one root consonant in the imperfective resist gemination when causativized (see examples in (4)). The association of the causative prefix to the initial CV and spreading of the medial consonant into the medial CV at the same time leads to multi-headedness (see the representation in (5)).

(4)

		Verb		Causative		
		Aorist	*Imperfective*	*Aorist*	*Imperfective*	
a.	'set'	gawr	ttgawar	sgawr	sgawar	*ttsgawar
	'arrive'	lkm	lkkm	sslkm	sslkam	*sslkkm
b.	'be disgusted'	mmuktu	ttmuktu	smuktu	smuktu	*ttsmuktu
	'spoil'	llugmu	ttlugmu	slugmu	slugmu	*ttslugmu

(5)

Apparently unrelated phenomena thus fall under the same analysis: the absence of the construct state marker u- in the feminine form of the noun and the non-gemination of the medial consonant in the causative verbs are analysed as the result of templatic constraints.

References

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