

Dialectal variation in paradigm structure in Hungarian

In Hungarian the morphological make-up of words is essentially agglutinative: morphologically complex words are typically the result of the concatenation of stems and affixes. In most of these cases the constituent morphemes do not appear in an invariant shape. The alternants that appear follow/display various morphological and phonological patterns/regularities. In the presentation we concentrate on the morphological patterns that shape the paradigms.

There are two main (potentially conflicting) *paradigmatic* patterns: (a) patterns of uniformity and (b) patterns of contrast. The requirement (constraint) of **paradigmatic uniformity** favours (i) the same function in the paradigm to be paired with partially identical forms and (ii) partially identical forms in the paradigm to contain the same stem – thereby minimising alternation (anti-allomorphy). **Paradigmatic contrast**, on the other hand, requires different functions within the paradigm to be paired with dissimilar forms – thereby disfavouring intra-paradigmatic homonymy.

As a result of the alternations in the Hungarian verbal paradigm the forms only display the agglutinative pattern to a limited extent. This is due to an intricate system of interaction between paradigmatic uniformity, paradigmatic contrast and phonological/morphophonological effects. These effects are manifest in three 'areas' of the verbal paradigm where (i) the requirement of paradigmatic contrast overrides ('dominates') that of paradigm uniformity (e.g. *vártam* INDEF/DEF, *várnánk* INDEF/DEF, *várnék*); (ii) optional variation occurs in some verbal stem alternants as a result of conflicting uniformity requirements (e.g. *fürödnék* – *fürdenék* – non-accidentally, this is limited to the paradigm of *-ik*-verbs, compare: *söpörnek* – **söprenek*); and (iii) paradigmatic uniformity and phonological constraints co-determine the shape of forms (e.g. the occurrence of linking vowels in the complex pattern of the past tense forms of *-d* and *-t*-final verbs, e.g. *sütött* – *sütöttem*, but *adott* – *adtam*).

More generally, we suggest that the forms that populate paradigms are the result of the optimisation of potentially and often (actually) conflicting requirements/constraints. This optimisation, however is not absolute in the sense that it does not necessarily result in a unique form. Variation, more specifically, morphological micro-variation within the same language variant (within the same speaker or across speakers), between regional dialects, sociolects or even different stylistic variants often manifests itself at these 'weak' points of the paradigm where uniformity, contrast and phonological constraints come into conflict. In the presentation we shall demonstrate this using the phenomena exemplified below, where uniformity and contrast are in conflict (i), two uniformity constraints on the shape of stem alternants are in conflict (ii); and uniformity constraints (two past tense patterns) and a phonological constraint are in conflict (iii):

	standard	dialectal
(i)	<i>akarnék</i> <i>akarnánk</i> (definite) <i>mondja</i> (indicative)	% <i>akarnák</i> % <i>akarnók</i> % <i>akarnajuk</i> % <i>mondi</i>
(ii)	<i>söpörnek</i> <i>fürödtem</i>	% <i>söprenek</i> % <i>fürödöttem</i>
(iii)	<i>sütöttem</i> <i>mondtam</i>	% <i>süttem</i> % <i>mondottam</i>

The main point of our argument is that morphological/paradigmatic variation (regional, social, or other) is not (completely) accidental: it is unlikely to occur with 'prototypical' elements of a paradigmatic pattern: **the locus of paradigmatic variation coincides with the locus of conflict between patterns** (and is influenced by the strength of the patterns involved).

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