

## *Today's topic:*

- **Practice with phonological analysis in OT**

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### *Background preparation:*

- McCarthy (2008), sec 2.3–2.7

# 0. Today's objectives

After today's class, you should be able to:

- Identify informative losing candidates and make valid ranking arguments in an OT analysis (review)
- Define formally explicit constraints
- Identify relevant constraints in an analysis
- Apply course and reading concepts to propose insightful responses to some of the exercises in McCarthy (2008: §2.1–2.7)

# 1. Informative losers / valid ranking arguments

Exercises in McCarthy (2008), sec 2.1–2.7

- Ex 19 (pp 71–72) | *Valid constraint rankings*
  - Why can no ranking be proven in these tableaux?
- Ex 20 (p 72)
  - Can we add an informative loser to each of the tableaux?

# 1. Informative losers / valid ranking arguments

- Follow-up to spot-check questions (Cairene Arabic)

/ʔul-t-l-ha/ → [ʔultiliha] 'I said to her'

- What prevents [ʔultiliha] from winning in OT?
- What prevents this form from being generated in a rule-based approach to syllable structure?

## 2. Making constraint definitions explicit

- McCarthy's recommendation:  
"Assign one violation for every..."
- Assess the constraint definitions given in Zec (2007)
  - Are there any we might like to revise?

## 2. Making constraint definitions explicit

- Faithfulness constraints depend on identifying the **“same” segment** in input/output...we'll look at this in more depth soon

### 3. OT skills and concepts

Exercises in McCarthy (2008), sec 2.1–2.7

- Ex 14 (p 52) | *More practice with valid rankings*
  - Which rankings (if any) are proven here?
  - Draw Hasse diagrams, or explain why we can't
- Related questions to consider:
  - Ex 15 is a little abstract — but it might be good practice on your own  
(This exercise doesn't resemble anything we would do in actual phonological analysis, but it's good for testing our understanding of OT tableaux and ranking arguments.)

### 3. OT skills and concepts

Exercises in McCarthy (2008), sec 2.1–2.7

- Ex 24 (p 83) | *Harmonic bounding*
  - Invent candidates as specified
  - Note that the verb used in this technical term is **to bound**, not **to bind** — *to bound* means ‘to impose a boundary or limit on’
- Related questions to consider:
  - Can you find the relationship between *harmonic bounding* and constraints in a *stringency relation*?
    - Consider IDENT([voice]), IDENT<sub>Onset</sub>([voice]) (§2.4)

### 3. OT skills and concepts

Exercises in McCarthy (2008), sec 2.1–2.7

- Ex 21 (p 80) | *Identifying informative losers*
  - Try it: Can we systematically identify losers?
- Ex 25 (p 87) | *Identifying relevant constraints*
  - Can a discussion of  $M_{AXstem-final}$  be omitted?
- Related questions to consider:
  - What kind of constraint is  $M_{AXstem-final}$ ? What is a little different about this? Does this raise any questions about possible constraints?

## 3. OT skills and concepts

Exercises in McCarthy (2008), sec 2.1–2.7

- Ex 6 (p 40), parts (a), (c) | *Generalization to analysis*
  - Express these “process” descriptions as interactions between two or more constraints (define new constraints as needed)
- Related questions to consider:
  - Why are these descriptions not very good as single markedness constraints?
  - What is good practice in defining a new (markedness) constraint?