

## Lecture 6

### Baseline and Elaboration

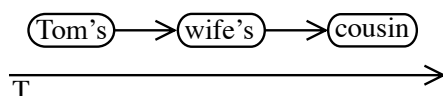
A. General Characterization    B. Control Cycle    C. Strata    D. Zero as Baseline

#### A. General Characterization

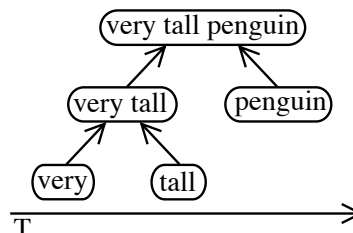
- (1)(a) The notions **baseline** and **elaboration** pertain to *asymmetries* observable in any facet of language structure or its conceptual and phonological basis.
- (b) The **baseline** (B) is already established, in place, or under control. Its **elaboration** (E)—by augmentation, adaptation, or further processing—produces a structure that may itself function as B at another stage or level of organization.
- (c) **B/E organization** thus has a *temporal* aspect, B in some sense being *prior* to E.
- (d) However, this happens on very different time scales and may just be a matter of inherent organization (or “logical necessity”).
  
- (2)(a) One kind of baseline is a **norm**, departures from it constituting elaborations.
- (b) The **conventional units** of a language define the norm for linguistic activity in the relevant speech community. New expressions (e.g. *tall penguin*) depart from this baseline, especially when they conflict with established units (*\*penguin tall*).
- (c) Language change constitutes elaboration of the baseline defined by a prior historical stage.
- (d) **Scalar adjectives**—like *tall* or *short*—invoke a norm as the baseline for the property they specify. *Tall penguin* elaborates the presumably normal height of *penguin*.
  
- (3)(a) The **informational focus** departs from the norm established by the immediate context.
- (b) *HELEN was WASHING her CAT. It SCRATCHED her.* [*scratch* = focus in second clause]
- (c) Phonologically, the focus departs from the baseline defined by surrounding words.
- (d) Semantically, it departs from the baseline content established in the prior clause.
- (e) In each case it is **salient** precisely because it stands out against the baseline. This is **iconic**, as phonological salience (accent) symbolizes semantic salience (informativeness).
  
- (4) In a **series** of elements each provides the basis for accessing or assessing the next:  $a > b > c$ .
- (a) Each clause or sentence in a **discourse** functions as baseline for assessing the next.
- (b) In a **process**, each component situation morphs into the next and provides the basis for its apprehension, usually involving the detection of change.
- (c) In **possessives** (*Tom's wife's cousin*), each nominal referent is a *reference point* allowing mental access to the next. The baseline conception is elaborated to include the *target*.
  
- (5)(a) In **composition**, e.g. ( *tall* ) ( *penguin* ), the **component structures** that are grouped to form the **composite structure** thereby have a certain priority with respect to it. The components are a *complex baseline* that the composite whole elaborates.
- (b) This can occur at multiple levels of organization, giving rise to **hierarchy**, including grammatical *constituency*: ( ( *(very)(tall)* ) ( *penguin* ) ).
- (c) In a hierarchy, the component structures function as *multiple origins* of a complex **compositional path** with the highest-level composite structure as its *endpoint*.
- (d) This path does not correlate in any simple way with processing time. The **priority** inherent in B/E organization is not always manifested in strict temporal sequencing.

(6)

(a) Seriality

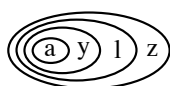
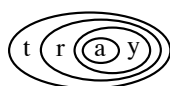


(b) Hierarchy

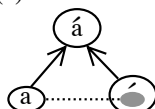


- (7)(a) In **A/D organization**, A is **autonomous**—with the potential to be manifested independently—and D is **dependent** on A, which it requires for its full manifestation.
- (b) Conceptually, a **thing** tends to be autonomous, whereas a **relationship**—consisting in connections—is dependent on its participants (the entities connected).
- (c) Phonologically, **vowels** are autonomous and **consonants** dependent on them, consisting in modulation of the sonority they provide.
- (d) Likewise, the manifestation of **prosodic features**—like accent or tone—depends on segmental (primarily vocalic) content, with which they temporally coincide.
- (8)(a) A/D organization is to some extent **hierarchical**, as elaboration of A by D produces a higher-level autonomous structure which can in turn be elaborated:  $((((A) D)_A D)_A D)_A$ .
- (b) This elaborative path need not coincide with temporal order: *aisles* vs. *try*.
- (c) The more dependent an element is (the less capable it is of being apprehended independently), the less appropriate it is to view it as one origin of a compositional path.
- (d) A highly dependent structure is better seen as consisting in the **elaborative relationship** itself (the *discrepancy* between two autonomous structures).

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(a) *aisles*(b) *try*

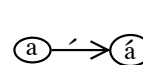
(c)



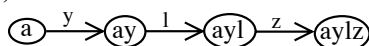
(d)



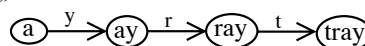
(e)



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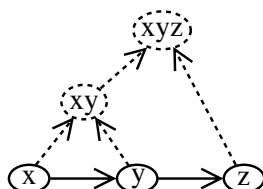
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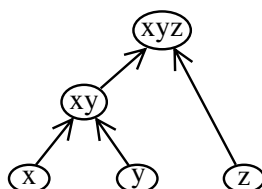
- (10)(a) The differences among seriality, hierarchy, and A/D organization are matters of degree.
- (b) Serial access induces the transient grouping of the elements already encountered.
- (c) A/D organization amounts to hierarchy to the extent that D is apprehended independently.
- (d) In each case x is a baseline for an elaborative path creating more complex structures.

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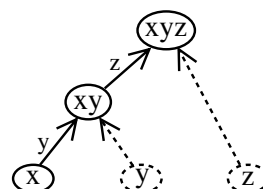
(a) Seriality



(b) Hierarchy



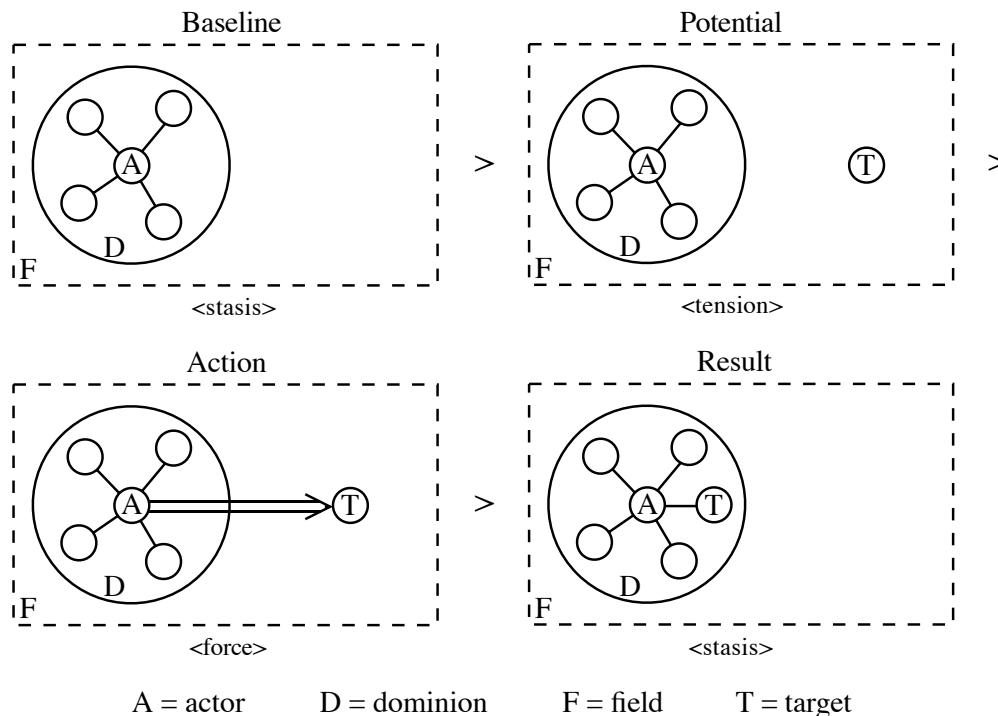
(c) A/D Organization



- (12)(a) In **categorization**, the categorizing unit is a baseline used to apprehend the target, which departs from it in terms of greater specificity or a conflict in specifications.
- (b) Within a complex category, the **prototype** is the baseline from which other variants develop by extension, specialization, or schematization.
- (c) A **core system** is a baseline with respect to an **elaborated system**:  
 [[i e a o u] aw ay ew ey oy]      [[*may can will shall must*] *might could would should*]
- (d) Asymmetries like **concrete/abstract**, **physical/mental**, and **real/imagined** are instances of B/E organization, the first element providing the basis for apprehending the second:
- (i) Metaphorical projection from concrete to abstract domains (*family tree*).
  - (ii) Mental entities conceived metaphorically as physical ones (IDEAS ARE OBJECTS).
  - (iii) What we imagine is based on what is real: *simulation* (visual imagery); *blends* (cartoon animals with human traits); *schematization/generalization* (*cat* as a type with multiple instances); *projection* (predicting the future from the past and present).
- (e) The passage of time imposes B/E organization on **reality**, defined as everything which has ever occurred. New developments depend on this history. So reality, at a given moment, is a baseline for its further evolution, each new occurrence elaborating it.

## B. Control Cycle

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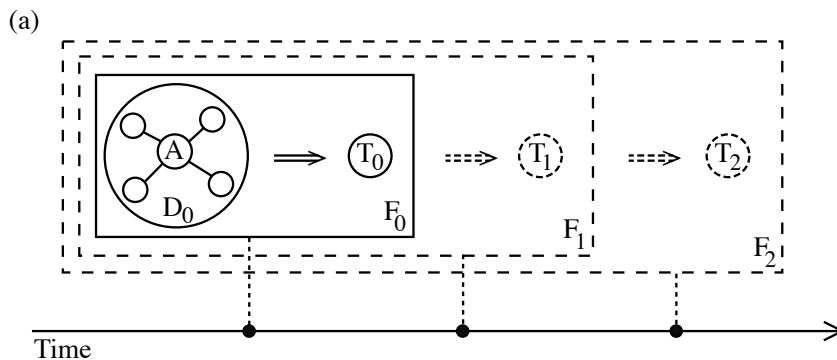


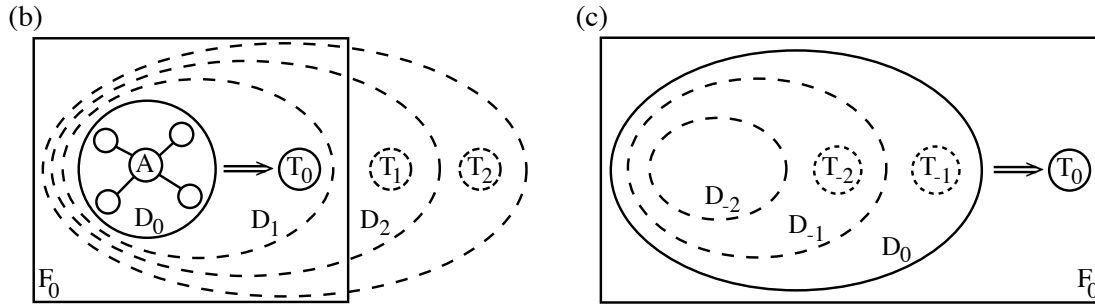
(14) Examples of the control cycle in everyday experience:

- (a) **Physical capture**: picking up an object and holding it
- (b) **Perceptual capture**: perceiving something and making it the focus of attention
- (c) **Mental capture**: apprehending a proposition and accepting it as valid
- (d) **Social capture**: meeting someone and establishing a stable social relationship

- (15)(a) *Evolution of reality*: D = the established history of occurrences; F = potential new occurrences; T = an actual new occurrence, which augments D.
- (b) *Categorization*: A = the conceptualizer; D = available categorizing units; F = scope of awareness; T = target, captured when a unit is activated to interpret it.
- (c) *Departure from a norm*: D = expected value or structure; T = a non-normative value or structure, involving tension or special effort; T is captured when reached or achieved.
- (d) *Discourse*: D = structure established by prior clause(s); T = current clause; capture consists in T being interpreted with respect to D and incorporated in it.
- (e) *Metaphor*: D = source domain; T = target domain; capture is understanding T AS D.
- (f) *Composition*: D = component structures; F = the potential they create; T = a composite structure realizing that potential; T is captured by being apprehended.
- (16) General characterization of the control cycle:
- (a) A is any kind of *force, agency, or potency* serving to maintain D or elaborate it.
- (b) D is any kind of *established structure*; it is under control (hence subject to elaboration).
- (c) F is the range of *potential* created by A and D.
- (d) T is *one option* in that range (an element appearing in F).
- (e) *Capture* is the *realization of potential*, whereby D expands to incorporate T.
- (17)(a) The tension created by T appearing in F can be resolved by either **capture** or **avoidance**.
- (b) E.g. the content (T) introduced by a clause can either be added to the situation already described (D) or prevented from being added to it:
- (i) [*Helen was washing her cat.*] *Naturally it scratched her.* [positive]
- (ii) [*Helen was washing her cat.*] *For some reason it didn't scratch her.* [negative]
- (18) Additional factors:
- (a) *Time and change*: The process is **cyclic** because capture creates a new baseline.
- (b) *Priority*: An asymmetry whereby D creates the potential for T, making it **accessible**.  
Cyclicality and priority define an **elaborative path**, a sequence of access whereby each elaboration makes the next target accessible (e.g. *Tom's wife's cousin*).
- (c) *Salience*: T is salient by being accessible, a stimulus for action, and the structure being attended to. It has **onstage prominence**. Once captured, it has **offstage prominence**: influence in processing further content. More recent targets have stronger influence.
- (d) *Substance*: D “grows” through the incorporation of successive targets. More **substantial** structures — those with considerable inherent content — tend to function as **baseline**, the point of departure for structure building through the addition of less substantial ones.

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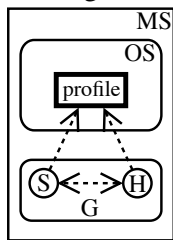


(20) Phases of the control cycle figure in lexical and grammatical meanings:

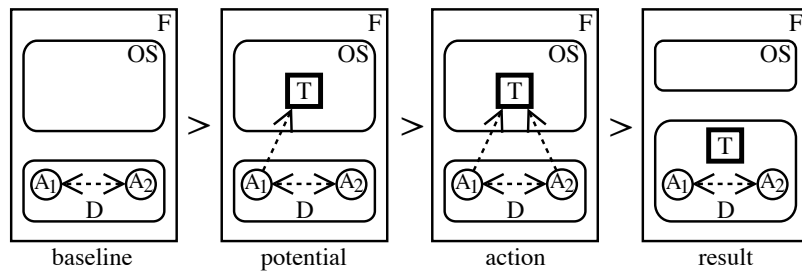
- (a) *want* (potential), *get* (action), *have* (result)
- (b) *suspect* (potential), *learn* (action), *know* (result)
- (c) *look, see* (= 'catch sight of'), *see* (= 'have in view')
- (d) *will V* (modal/future), *is Ving* (present/progressive), *has Ved* (past/perfect)

(21)

(a) Basic viewing arrangement

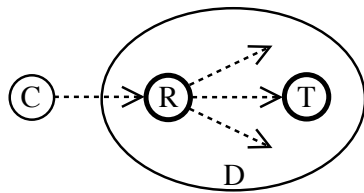


(b) Speech event as mental capture

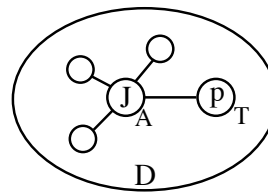


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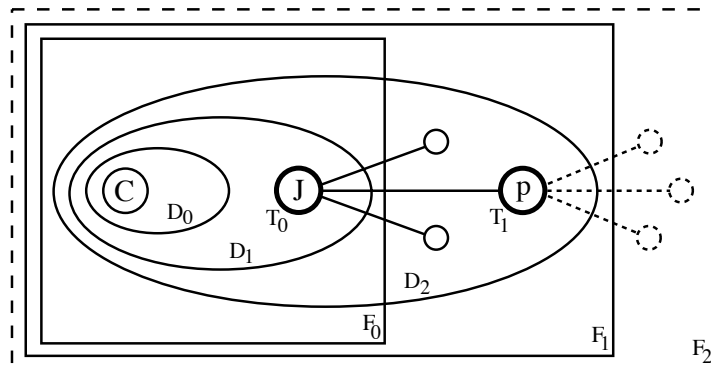
(a) Reference point model



(b) Result of acquisition (Jill has a piano)



(c) Possessive expression: *Jill's piano*

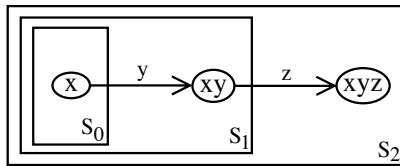


## C. Strata

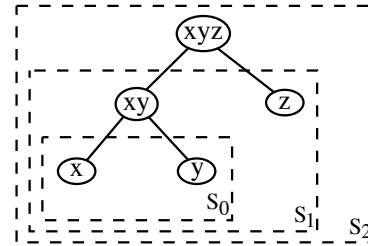
- (23)(a) The terms **baseline** and **elaboration** indicate both *priority* and a difference in *complexity*.  
 (b) Canonically there are three structures exhibiting definite **asymmetries**: B is *prior* to E (hence to BE); B is more *substantive* than E; BE is more *complex* than B (or E).  
 (c) **Hierarchy** and **seriality** depart from this canonical form,  $((x)y)$ , by lacking certain asymmetries. Hierarchy eliminates the substance asymmetry:  $((x)(y))$ . Seriality abstracts away from complexity by accessing structures individually:  $(x) > (y)$ .  
 (d) These are matters of degree. A hierarchical structure shows B/E organization to the extent that certain components cannot be accessed independently. A serial structure does so to the extent that the groupings effected by summation are exploited in some fashion.

(24)

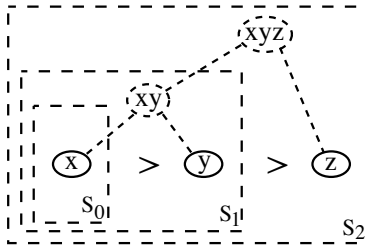
(a) B/E Organization



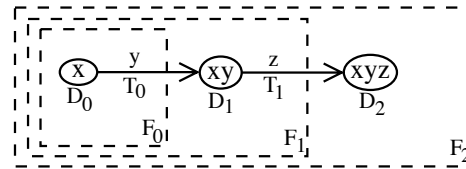
(b) Hierarchy



(c) Seriality



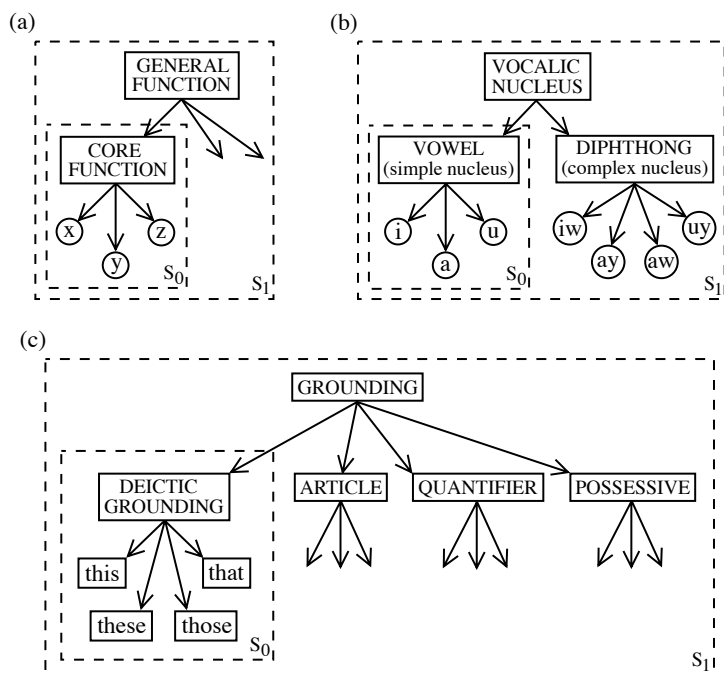
(d) Control Cycle



- (25)(a) B/E organization represents a kind of *layering* (arrangement in terms of *core* and *periphery*). The layers are referred to as **strata** (S).  
 (b) Each stratum ( $S_i$ ) is a **substrate** for the next ( $S_{i+1}$ ), providing the basis for its emergence. These strata correspond to successive *cycles* in the striving for *control*.  
 (c) At a given stratum ( $S_i$ ), the dominion ( $D_i$ ) is the structure already assembled;  $D_i$  creates the potential for elaboration ( $F_i$ ); the elaborating element is the target ( $T_i$ ); this produces a structure of greater complexity ( $D_{i+1}$ ) with its own potential for elaboration.  
 (26)(a) A **system** comprises the elements available to fulfill a certain function, a set of *opposing alternatives* for doing so. These elements—the system's **exponents**—form a *category* whose members are *grouped* on the basis of their common function.  
 (b) Systemic organization is often **hierarchical**, with functions dividing into subfunctions at multiple levels. But *systemic hierarchies* are not the same as *compositional hierarchies*.  
 (c) In systemic hierarchies, exponents represent **alternative subfunctions**, i.e. they are mutually exclusive, standing in opposition to one another. [x OR y]  
 (d) In compositional hierarchies, elements represent **component subfunctions**, i.e. they occur together and jointly fulfill the function. [x AND y]

- (27)(a) Systemic hierarchies exhibit B/E organization in the form of **core** vs. **periphery**.  
 (b) Within a system, there is often a tightly integrated **core system**, whose exponents are more basic and serve a more narrowly specified function.  
 (c) With respect to this, the overall system constitutes an **elaboration**. It incorporates more peripheral (less basic) elements, is more loosely integrated, and serves a broader function.

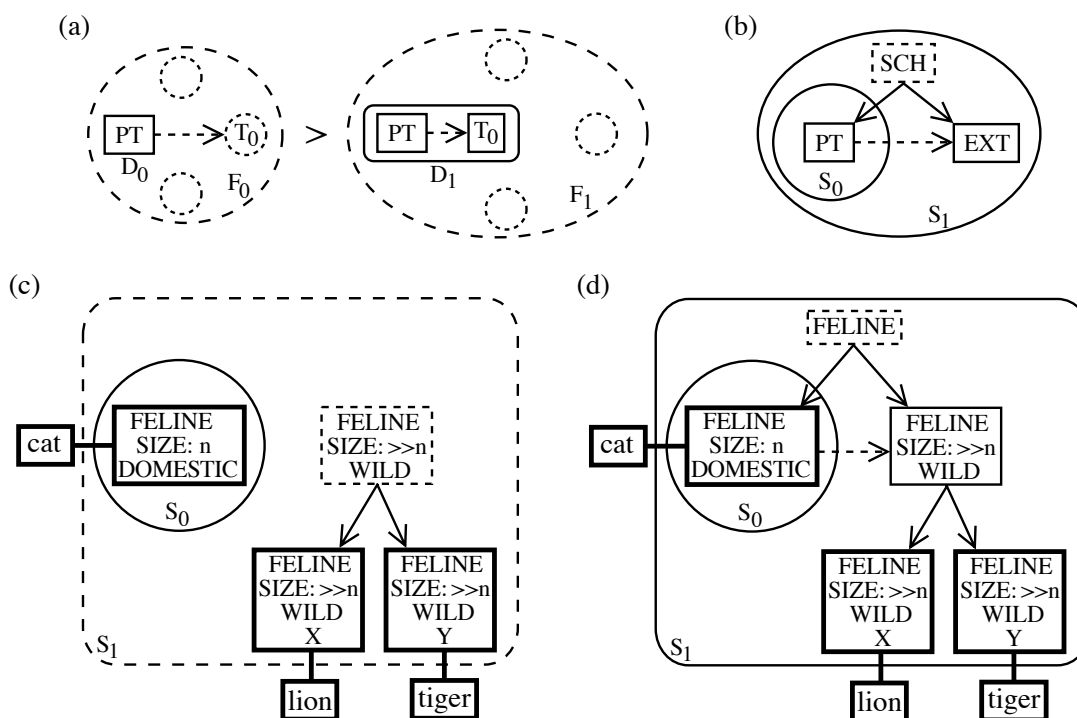
(28)



- (29) Core elements have various kinds of **priority** with respect to peripheral ones:  
 (a) They tend to be prior in terms of *acquisition*, *change*, and *universality*.  
 (b) They depend on fewer conceptual or phonological *resources*, which are available at an earlier developmental stage. E.g. demonstratives depend on pointing; articles and quantifiers are conceptually more abstract and more complex.  
 (c) Peripheral elements often *incorporate* core elements or are *based on* them. Diphthongs incorporate vowels. The English peripheral modals (*might*, *could*, *would*, *should*) are based on core modals (*may*, *can*, *will*, *shall*).  
 (d) In such cases the core elements are *autonomous*, the elaborating content being *dependent* on them. [core element = A; peripheral element = ((A)D)]
- (30)(a) As is usual in A/D organization, A tends to be more **substantive** than D:  
 (i) A vowel consists in stable sonority (phonological substance), a glide in its modification.  
 (ii) Peripheral modals inherit most of their conceptual content from the core. E.g. *might* merely weakens the potentiality conveyed by *may*.  
 (b) The extent of D's dependence determines whether A and D participate in a **compositional** relationship or a purely **elaborative** one: ((A)(D)) vs. ((A)D).  
 (i) Glides are quasi-segmental, so diphthongs can be viewed either way: ((a)(w)) or ((a)w).  
 (ii) With oral and nasal vowels, [[i a u] ĩ ã ü], the elaborating element has much less autonomy: not \*((a)(~)), but only ((a)~), where [a] and [~] are realized simultaneously.

- (31)(a) In **polysemy**, the alternate *senses* of a lexical item constitute a system of alternatives for the function of *symbolized structure*. They form a category centered on a *prototype*.
- (b) The prototype is the **baseline** member from which other senses develop by “outward”, “upward”, and “downward” elaboration: *extension*, *schematization*, and *differentiation*.
- (c) **Extension** involves some *inconsistency* between baseline and target. Recognition is based on their *overlap*, whose emergence and exploitation as a unit constitutes **schematization**.

(32)



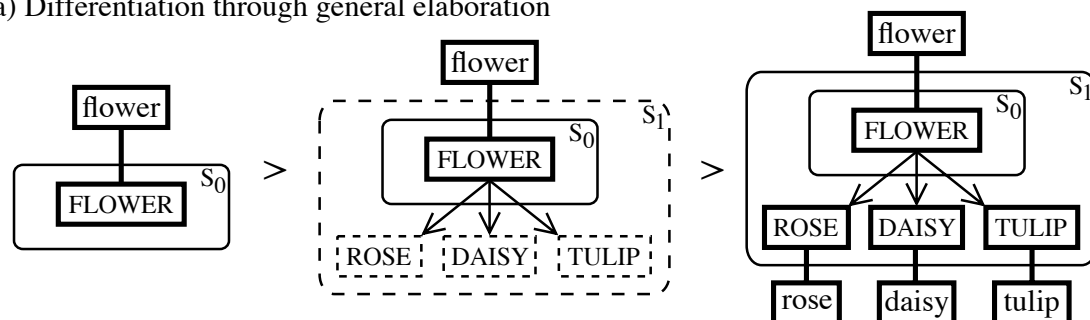
- (33)(a) *Look at that big cat!* [in a zoo, pointing to a lion]
- (b) *I have three cats, plus my lion.* [cat = prototype]
- (c) *I have three cats, including my lion.* [cat = schema; lion recognized as subtype]
- (d) *The big cats are threatened with extinction in the wild.* [big cat labels extension]

- (34)(a) A structure belonging to multiple strata can be interpreted with respect to any of them, with slightly different values depending on the array of opposing alternatives.
- (b) Specifications taken for granted in the baseline are more salient in a higher stratum just by virtue of being construed in relation to other options.
- (i) At  $S_0$ , cat = [feline, size: n, domestic] ( $PT_0$ ).
- (ii) At  $S_1$ , cat = [feline, **size: n, domestic**] ( $PT_1$ ) OR [feline, **size: >>n, wild**].
- (c) **A:** *I have a cat* ( $PT_0$ ). **B:** *Is your cat (SCH) a lion?* **A:** *No, it's just a cat* ( $PT_1$ ).  
**B:** *Oh, its a cat cat.* [cat =  $PT_1$ ; cat = SCH]
- (d) **A:** *This is hot* ( $PT_0$ ). **B:** *Spicy hot (SCH) or hot hot* ( $PT_1$  SCH)?

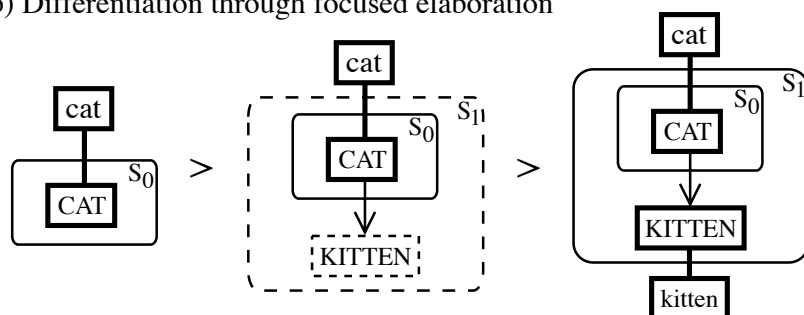


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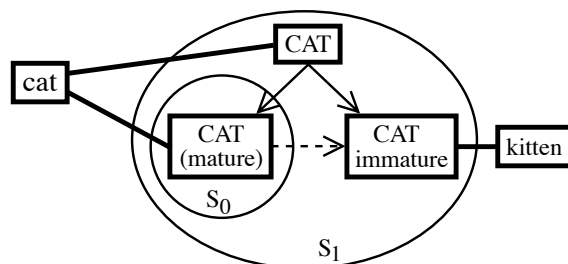
(a) Differentiation through general elaboration



(b) Differentiation through focused elaboration

(36)(a) *That's a nice {rose / ?flower}.* [both interlocutors know the different types](b) *That's a nice flower. It's called a rose.* [the hearer does not know them](c) *Get those flowers out of here—I'm allergic to them!* [the type doesn't matter](d) *She bought a dozen flowers—daisies, roses, and tulips.* [multiple types](37)(a) *It's a kitten, not a cat.*(b) *\*It's a rose, not a flower.*(c) *She was holding a flower. Specifically, a rose.*(d) *She was holding a cat. Specifically, a kitten.*(e) *?\*She saw a cat. Specifically, a lion.*

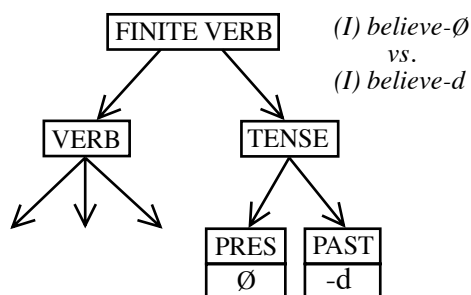
(38)

(39)(a) *I have three cats (PT<sub>0</sub>). Three cats (PT<sub>1</sub>) plus a kitten.*(b) *I have three cats (SCH), including a kitten.*(c) *I have a cat (SCH), but it's just a kitten.*(d) *It's just a cat (PT<sub>1</sub>), not a kitten.*

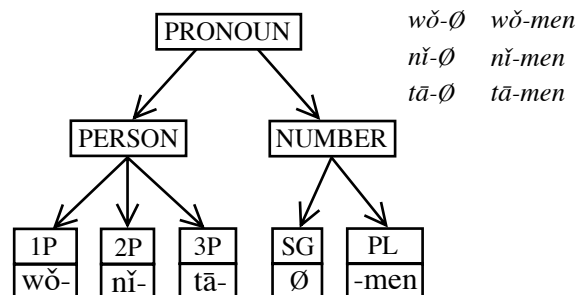
## D. Zero as Baseline

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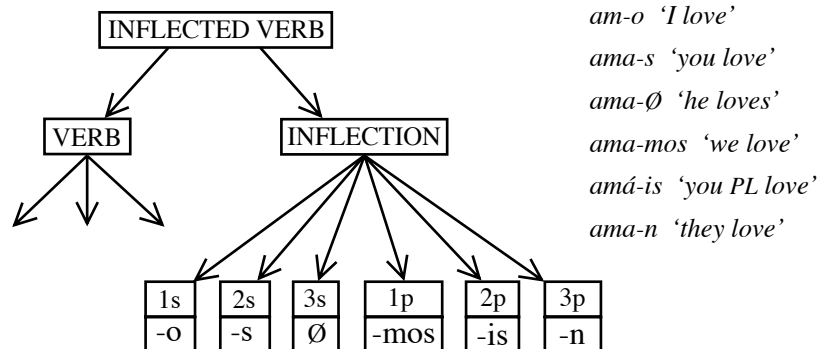
(a) English tense



(b) Mandarin pronominal number



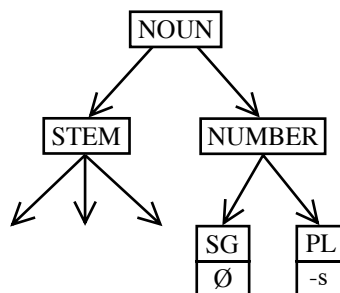
(c) Spanish verb agreement



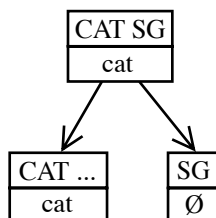
- (41)(a) In a small, tightly integrated system of semantic options, it is common for one option to be indicated by “zero” ( $\emptyset$ ), i.e. the absence of symbolization by overt phonological content. This option is said to be **unmarked**, **zero-marked**, or the **zero member**.
- (b) Zero elements are inherently suspicious. If it looks like nothing is there, the most likely explanation is that nothing is there—not that it’s invisible.
- (c) Positing a zero plural morpheme fails to reflect the *asymmetry* between singular and plural: the former is conceptually simpler and is unmarked in language after language.
- (d) It is implausible to claim that a lexeme like *cat* is really neutral between one feline (an object) and multiple felines (a kind of mass). A dictionary entry describes just one.

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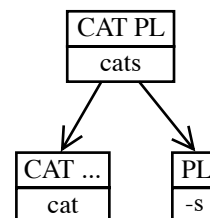
(a) Systemic view



(b) Singular construction

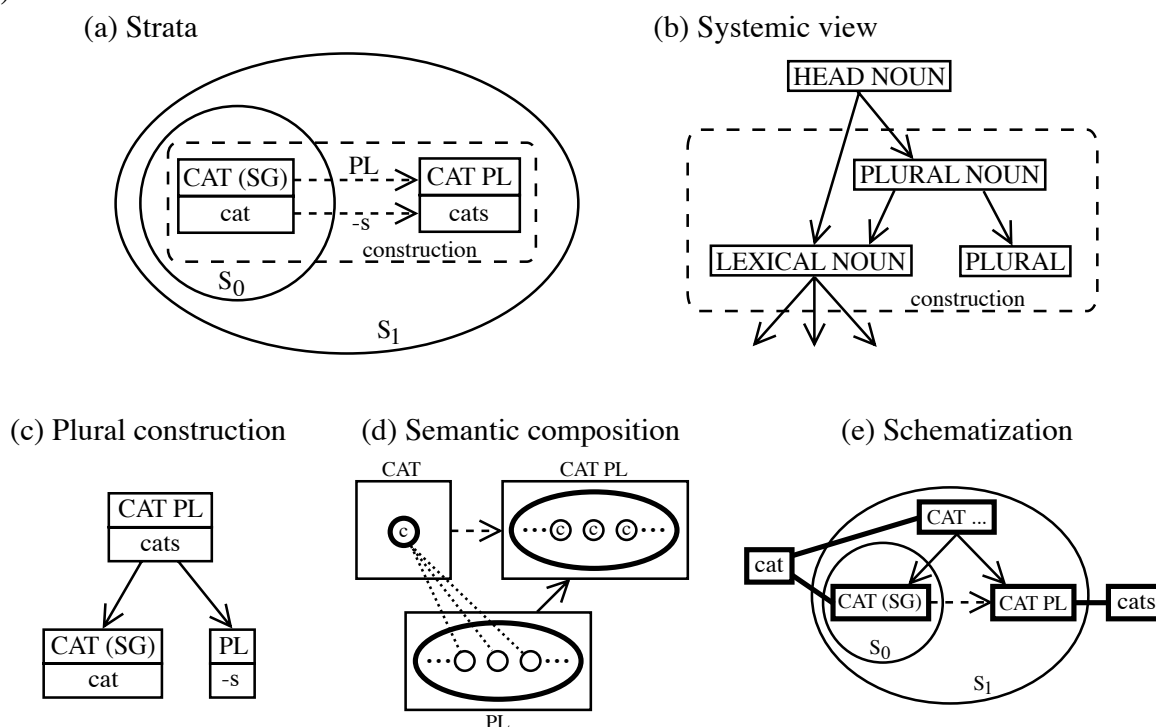


(c) Plural construction



- (43)(a) Asymmetries of this sort are better regarded as cases of B/E organization. When *cat* and *cats* are analyzed in terms of strata, there is no zero morpheme or singular construction.
- (b) The lexeme *cat* represents the **baseline**, at  $S_0$ . Only one object is invoked, but as the default, this is hardly noticed—number is not yet an issue at this stratum.
- (c) Plurals represent a higher stratum,  $S_1$ , characterized by *additional conceptual resources*: the notion of multiplicity, that of types having multiple instances, and the capacity for conceiving multiple objects as a mass.
- (d) The **plural construction** consists in conceptual elaboration of the baseline, symbolized by morphological elaboration of the lexical stem.

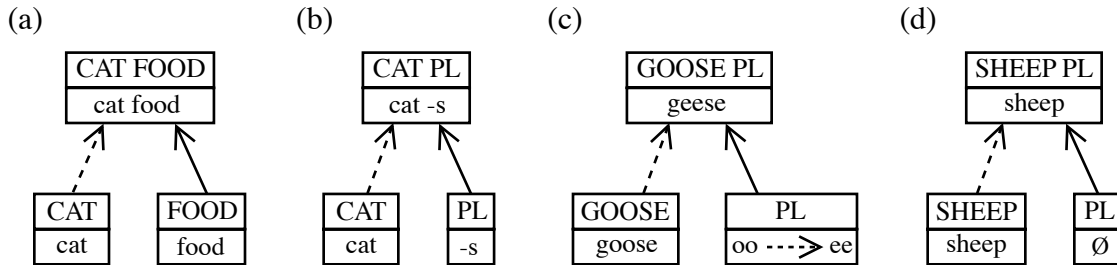
(44)



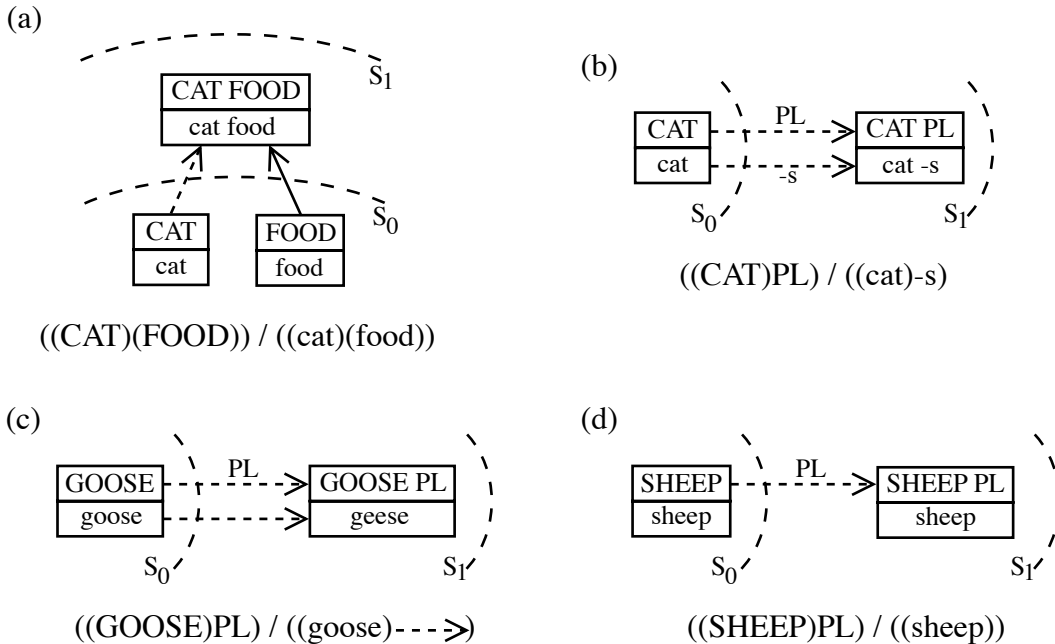
- (45)(a) *My cat (SG<sub>0</sub>) has fleas.*
- (b) **A:** *Do you have cats (PL)?*    **B:** *No, I have a cat (SG<sub>1</sub>).*
- (c) **A:** *How many cats (PL) can you feed with this cat (T) food?*    **B:** *It is enough for all those living in this cat (T) shelter.*
- (46)(a) Core and elaborated systems are best analyzed in terms of strata. Starting from the baseline, higher strata invoke *additional resources* providing a *wider array of options*.
- (b) Zero elements are posited when peripheral exponents derive from core elements by phonological augmentation; core and peripheral elements are thus viewed as being analogous at an abstract level of description (e.g. *cat* +  $\emptyset$  and *cat* + *s*).
- (c) This seems much less plausible in purely phonological systems, e.g. simple vowel vs. diphthong as syllabic nucleus. It would require that simple vowels be analyzed as diphthongs with zero glides: [a] = [a $\emptyset$ ], parallel to [ay] and [aw].
- (d) Making everything parallel at an abstract level of description conflicts with the overt facts and fails to recognize evident levels of complexity.

- (47)(a) Certain nouns, like *sheep*, function as either singular or plural without any difference in form: *the sheep {is / are}*; *{that / those} sheep*; *{one / two} sheep*.
- (b) With other nouns pluralization is indicated, not by the addition of phonological content, but rather through modification of the stem, e.g. *goose* (SG) vs. *geese* (PL).
- (c) Describing such plurals in terms of standard hierarchical constructions amounts to forcing them into the mold of affixation (the addition of segmental content).
- (d) B/E organization offers a more natural, unified account. Affixes, “process” morphemes, and “zero” morphemes represent different ways of elaborating a segmental stem.

(48)



(49)



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