

Tel Aviv University
School of Philosophy, Linguistics and Science Studies,
Department of Linguistics

THURSDAY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLOQUIUM

Thursday 06/06/2024

16:15-17:45

via Zoom

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How many strata?

A central objection against stratal models of phonology such as Lexical Phonology (Kiparsky 1982) and Stratal OT (Kiparsky 2000, Bermúdez-Otero 2012) is that analysts might posit an arbitrary number of strata for any given language, which would deprive the theory of restrictiveness and predictive value. In contrast, Bermúdez-Otero (2012) provides conceptual arguments for the assumption that languages cross-linguistically employ at most 3 strata (Stem Level, Word Level and Phrase Level), which are cognitively anchored in different types of lexical storage (or its absence). I will call this assumption the Non-Arbitrariness of Strata Hypothesis. In this talk, I will systematically review the proposals from the literature for additional lexical strata beyond this baseline, and will show that the vast majority of these claims are due to only three different patterns (i) systematic properties of compounding constructions (ii) prefix-suffix asymmetries, and (iii) morpheme- or construction-specific phonological effects.

Based on this. I will argue that the proliferation of strata can be avoided by two independently motivated assumptions: (i) and (ii) are due to specific prosodic representations for prefixes and compounds, and (iii) follows from a Generalized Nonlinear Affixation approach (Trommer 2011, 2013, 2022), where morpheme-specific phonology is triggered by underspecified phonological structure in the underlying representations of specific morphemes.

Click [here](#) to see the colloquium program.