

Doing Analyses

Reading: Odden Chapter 7

Steps: (please review the General Problem Solving Procedures/Criteria, p. 3, posted on my website)

Morphology

Find affixes (and their variants); separated them from the roots (and their variants)

When there are variations in the surface form of a morpheme, then we need to go on to the next step. When there are no variations, we can assume that the surface form reflects the underlying form faithfully.

Phonology

List the variants for each form.

Make two hypotheses (at least), starting with each surface variant as reflecting the UR and writing phonological rules to change the UR into the surface forms. That is, each hypothesis includes a set of URs and rules; the opposite hypothesis will begin from different URs and need different rules. Insofar as possible, make your hypotheses plausible.

Evaluate your hypotheses (see below)

Check the interaction of the rules (is ordering necessary?) and check that they work on all the data (if not, revise them)

Evaluating hypotheses: (see also the General Problem Solving Criteria/Procedures handout on my web-site; review the Selection Principles p. 4)

Note the different kinds of arguments Odden gives when doing these analyses:

e.g., for Yawelmani

vowel harmony:

for shortening/lengthening

epenthesis vs. syncope

Do the same as you read the other analyses in Chapter 7. As you read, think about the criteria he uses for deciding between hypotheses (predictability, naturalness, simplicity...).