Introduction

Allomorphy is a particular case of deviance from the simplest way to implement morpheme exponence, namely a single morph for every morpheme, and a single morpheme for every morph. We get allomorphy under two conditions: first, there is more than one morph for a single morpheme, and second, the divergence among these morphs cannot be attributed to allophony, i.e. it cannot be predicted by the phonology of the language. Thus in a language in which the negative prefix in- appears in different shapes with the form [iN], where N is a nasal with different, predictable places of articulation, these forms are not allomorphs because their phonetic shape can be predicted by a process of nasal assimilation. But the phonology of languages with the privative prefix a-/an- (as in a-symmetric, an-aerobic), and no productive process of n-deletion or n-insertion, cannot derive their segmental differences from a single underlying form, and the prefix must be assigned two underlying forms, i.e. two allomorphs. Traditionally, allomorphs that have very dissimilar phonological shapes (e.g. the verbal forms am, are, is in English) have been called suppletive. However, sometimes the terms suppletive, suppletion have been extended to all cases of true allomorphy.

The contributors to this volume have tried to solve some of the many problems that the student of allomorphy faces, as we move towards a full understanding of it; of course, we have here by no means exhausted the variety of problems that allomorphy presents. One of the central questions that the chapters address more or less directly is how to express the different degrees of regularity that different instantiations of allomorphy display. In all cases of allomorphy the form of the allomorph is unpredictable (otherwise it would be allophonic), but the context that controls the allomorphic choice appears in many different forms and shows different degrees of regularity. Choice can be controlled lexically, it can be in free variation, or it can be both at once, as in the diminutive suffixes -chen and -lein in German; in fact, pure free variation, as in the Spanish imperfect subjunctive -ra/-se.
allomorphy (cantara/cantase ‘sing-3sg.imp.subj’) is not frequent. When the choice is grammatically controlled, the control can be phonological, or it can be non-phonological, usually morphological. In both cases it can be either regular or idiosyncratic. A case of idiosyncratic morphological control is the already mentioned allomorphy in the present of the verb to be in English: 1sg chooses /æm/, 3sg chooses /ɪz/, and the unnatural class {2sg, 1pl, 2pl, 3pl} chooses /ar/. A more regular morphological conditioning is found in the bl morpheme found in various languages: bl(e) appears in underived adjectives and bil in their derivatives (Catalan varia-ble ‘variable’, varia-bil-issim ‘variable-superlative’, varia-bil-itat ‘variability’). In this book we deal basically with phonologically conditioned allomorphy. Consider two prototypical examples of regular and idiosyncratic phonological control. In Moroccan Arabic the third person masculine singular enclitic (see Chapters 4 and 9) is /-u/ after a consonant, but /-h/ after a vowel ([ktab-u] ‘his book’, [xtˈə-h] ‘his error’); the allomorphic choice avoids a complex coda in the first example and a hiatus in the second. The control is hence phonologically natural in that it yields a better, less marked output: [kta. bu] is more harmonic, on general markedness grounds, than [ktabh], and [xtˈə-h] more harmonic than [xtˈə-a.u]. The situation is however different in Jivaro where, according to the analysis in Paster (2006: 83-84), the genitive suffix has the allomorph /-na/ after consonants and the allomorph /-nu/ after vowels (Yatzúm-na, Nucú-nu). It is difficult to see why, on phonological grounds, u should be preferable after vowels and a after consonants; we would have in this case an arbitrary phonological choice. This situation raises two problems. On one hand it is difficult to determine, in many cases, to what extent we are in a situation like the regular one in Moroccan Arabic or in an idiosyncratic one like in Jivaro. In many chapters of this book there are extensive analyses that try precisely to determine how regular an allomorphic situation is. On the other hand we are faced with the problem of determining how to account for these cases. There are two opposing views. The one explicitly defended in the chapters by Bonet, Lloret, and Mascaró, Trommer, and Wolf accepts the view that allomorphic choice, in regular cases, can be determined by Eval through TETU (‘the emergence of the unmarked’). The opposing view, defended in the chapters by Paster and Bye, claims that allomorphic choice is not determined by phonological optimization, but rather, for both regular and idiosyncratic cases, by lexical selection. Some of the chapters focus on detailed case studies of one or few languages (Boyé and Plénat; Hargus, Rude, and Beavert; Booij and van der Veer; Steriade and Yanovich), while others cover a wide range of languages.

In their chapter, Bonet, Lloret, and Mascaró (‘The prenominal allomorphy syndrome’) examine several cases in which allomorph selection is governed
Introduction

by phonological, morphological, and syntactic factors; in particular prenominal versus postnominal position within the DP can determine selection. The authors base their analysis on an Agree constraint and a constraint favouring lexically unmarked allomorphs. Booij and van der Veer (‘Allomorphy in OT: The Italian mobile diphthongs’) provide evidence for the selection of Italian ‘mobile diphthongs’ (as in s[je]do ‘sit-1sg.pres.ind’– s[e]diamo ‘sit-1pl.pres.ind’) through language-specific ranking of universal phonological markedness constraints that control the structure of syllable nuclei. They extend their analysis to diachronic analogical levelling of the alternation. Boyé and Plénat (‘L’allomorphie radicale dans les lexèmes adjectivaux en français. Le cas des verbes en –ment’) examine in great detail a case of ‘inwards looking’ allomorphy. The French adverbial suffix -ment attaches idiosyncratically to a specific base allomorph, usually coincidental with the feminine form of the adjective. But in some cases another allomorph is chosen because a nasal in the base activates a dissimilatory effect. Bye (‘The nature of allomorphy and exceptionality: Evidence from Burushaski plurals’) examines a complex case of allomorph selection in Burushaski. This language has several plural allomorphs whose selection is determined by semantic/pragmatic, phonological, and lexical factors. He argues for a non-optimizing theory of allomorph selection based on the constraint family Select, which takes two arguments, i.e. the context of selection and a specific allomorph. In the last sections he shows how patterned exceptionality can be derived through different kinds of ‘attractors’. Paster (‘Phonologically conditioned suppletive allomorphy: Cross-linguistic results and theoretical consequences’) also contrasts the optimizing and non-optimizing models. She examines different languages located in different points in the optimizing–non-optimizing continuum and argues for an approach based on subcategorization frames that have to be met by specific allomorphs at the underlying level. The model predicts that allomorphy can be non-optimizing, must be determined at the underlying level, is always ‘outward-looking’, and takes place under adjacency. Hargus, Rude, and Beavert (‘Obviative prefix allomorphy in Sahaptin and Nez Perce’) study the distribution of the obviative prefix in Sahaptin and Nez Perce and consider the viability of an approach based on optimization. Furthermore, they reconstruct the Pre-Proto-Sahaptin situation and discuss the consequences for theories of language change. Steriade and Yanovich (‘Accentual allomorphs in East Slavic: An argument for inflectional dependence’) show that in Ukrainian and Russian the stress pattern of derivatives is dependent on the stress pattern of the allomorphs found in the inflectional paradigm of their bases. This is accounted for in a modified version of base-derivative correspondence: inflective forms are
generated independently, while the derivatives must be generated in a way that maintains similarity to them. Trommer (‘Syllable-counting allomorphy by prosodic templates’) discusses the set of cases of syllable-counting allomorphy that have been claimed to be non-optimizing by Paster (2005) and proposes that they can be successfully analysed as optimizing by using indexed constraints in a Stratal OT model. The indexed constraint favours a specific allomorph, while the competing allomorph is favoured by a conflicting markedness constraint that requires unmarked syllable count. Wolf (‘Lexical insertion occurs in the phonological component’) presents a theory in which morpheme realization takes place in the phonology and is controlled by constraints that are interleaved with phonological constraints (‘Optimal Interleaving’). Using a serial approach, he applies this model to cases of allomorphy that have phonological control and at the same time show the influence of arbitrary and non-phonological preferences.

This book has a long history. Initially, the editor was Bernard Tranel, and the first versions of ten chapters were ready in 2006; after review, several revised versions were completed in 2007. After a period of inactivity, in 2011 the editors of the Equinox series Advances in Optimality Theory asked us to take over the editorship. Two of the intended authors could no longer contribute to the volume, but we managed to get an additional chapter (Chapter 7) by a new author. All authors have endeavoured to bring their respective chapters up to date, and after completion of the peer-review process, we believe we have compiled a volume which, in spite of the time elapsed since most of the first versions were written, represents a substantial contribution to our present understanding of allomorphy.

References