



Structure versus prominence: stress in Munster Irish

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Key points

- ▶ Prosodic headship has to do with structure building, not stress assignment
- ▶ “Stress” is in principle separate from headship, possibly something like a feature
- ▶ Recursion and the X’ schema are useful inside the pword
- ▶ Prosodic constraints are only sensitive to immediate daughter, not parsing at any level
- ▶ Constraints on head vs. dependent complexity (Dresher & van der Hulst, 1998) are useful
- ▶ Consider adding maximum depth of embedding as a measure of complexity

Munster Irish stress

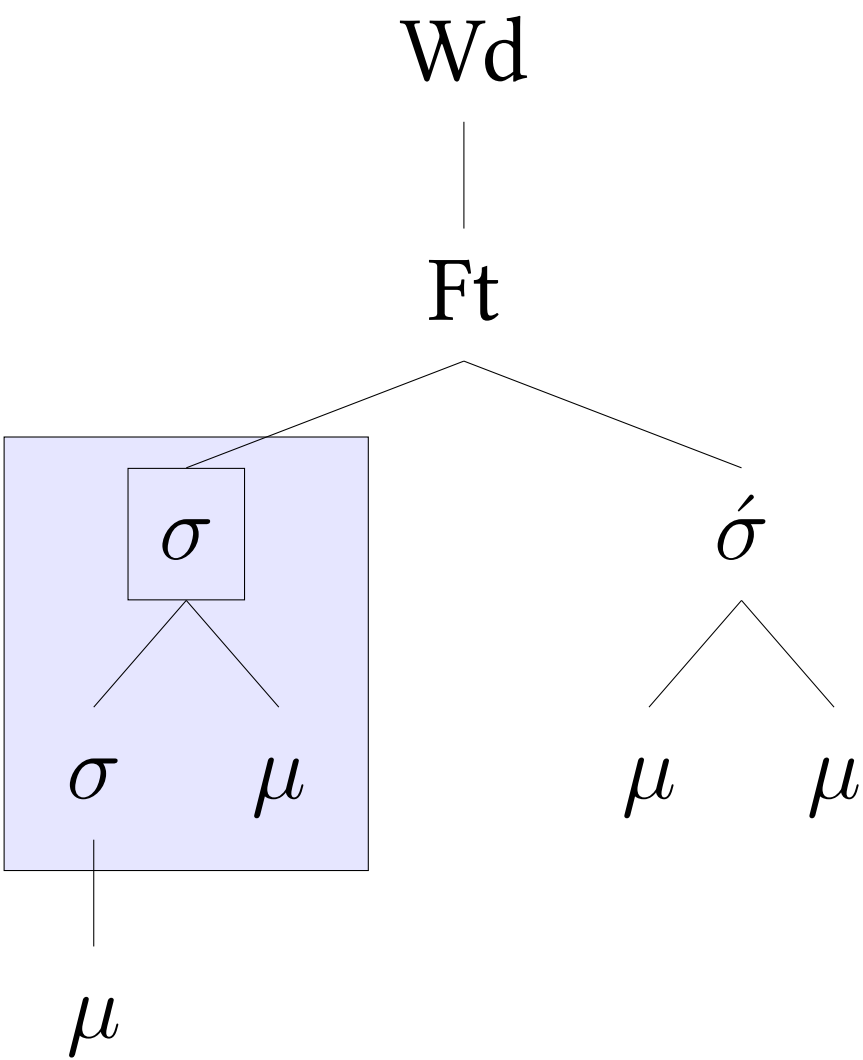
- ▶ Dialect of Corca Dhuibhne (Dingle) (Ó Sé, 2000, 2008)
- ▶ Three-syllable window word-initially
- ▶ Leftmost within the window with weight-sensitivity
- ▶ But #HH...is #HĤ...
- ▶ But not non-initial ...HH...

Examples

ÍL	'karɪɟ	‘stone’
LĤ	ka'pʲi:nʲ	‘girl’
ĤL	'a:lɪnʲ	‘nice’
HĤ	dʲi:'vi:nʲ	‘idle’
ÍLL	'kɫagərnəx	‘clattering’
LĤL	kʲɪ'mʲa:dən	‘(s)he observes’
LĤH	bʲi'hu:nti:xt	‘villainy’
LLĤ	kʲanə'hə:rʲ	‘buyer’
ĤLL	'ku:rəməx	‘careful’
HĤL	o:'gɑ:nəx	‘young man’
HĤH	u:'rɑ:ni:	‘songs’
ĤLH	'u:dərə:s	‘authority’
ÍLLL	'arəməkəx	‘tender’
ÍLLH	'imʲɪl'əkɑ:n	‘navel’
LLĤH	əmə'dɑ:nti:xt	‘foolishness’
ĤLHH	'oumpərə:ni:xt	‘ungainliness’
ĤLHL	'u:dərə:fəx	‘authoritative’

Analysis

- ▶ Head feet are always at the left edge
- ▶ Heads of feet are always at the left edge
- ▶ Complexity constraints:
 - ▶ BRANCHING COMPLEXITY: if a constituent has a head and a dependent, the head has more immediate daughters than the dependent
 - ▶ EMBEDDING COMPLEXITY: if a constituent has a head and a dependent, the deepest embedded terminal node dominated by the head must be embedded more deeply than the deepest terminal node dominated by the dependent
- ▶ In words with initial HH, embedding complexity is satisfied by *weight-sacrificing recursion*



- ▶ Since prosody is only sensitive to immediate daughters, the highlighted syllable is *light*
- ▶ WSP is defined on heavy syllables
- ▶ Prominence generally falls on the leftmost heavy syllable, which here is peninitial and dependent

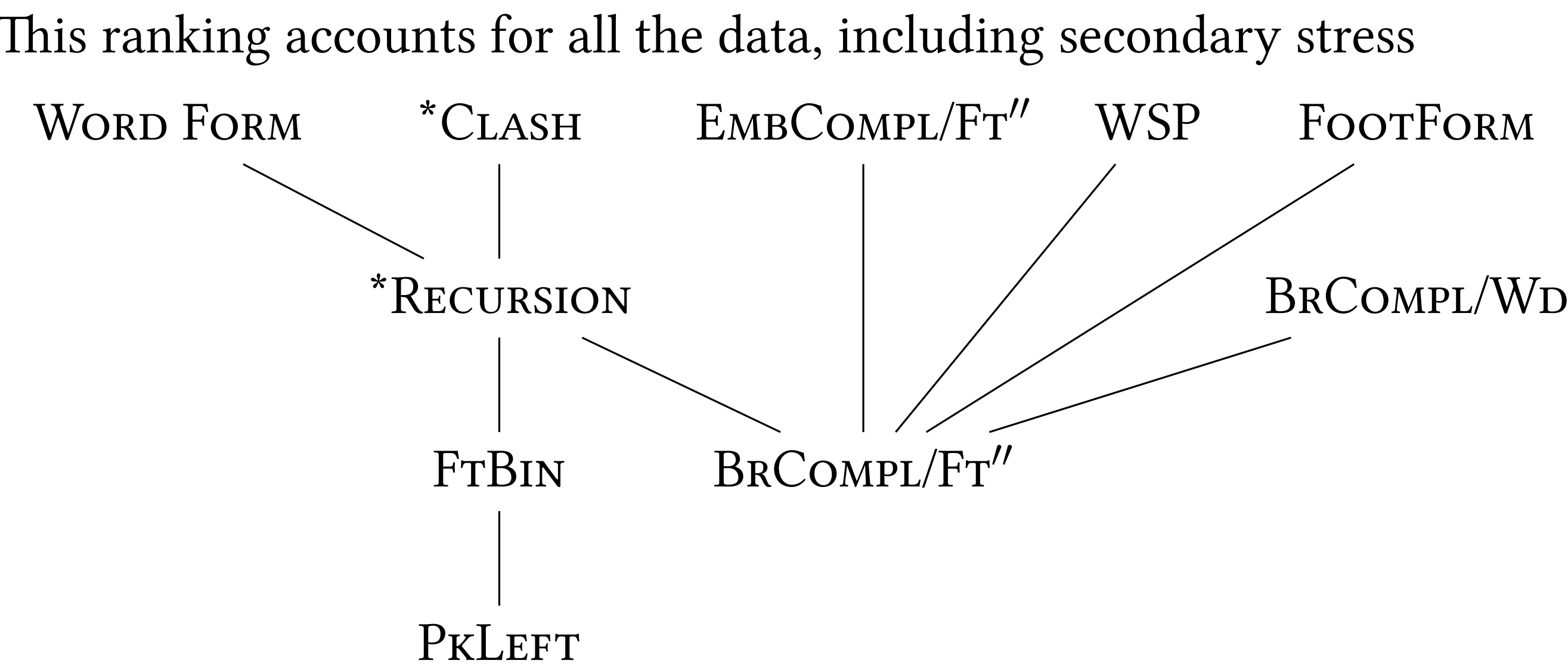
Some evaluations for HH...

	HH	FTFORM	EMBCOMPL/Ft	WSP	BRCOMPL/Ft	PKLEFT	*RECURSION
a.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*
b.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*
c.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*
d.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*

	HH	FTFORM	EMBCOMPL/Ft	WSP	BRCOMPL/Ft	PKLEFT	*RECURSION
a.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*
b.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*
c.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*
d.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*

	HHL	WDFORM	FTFORM	EMBCOMPL/Ft	WSP	BRCOMPL/Wd	*RECURSION	BRCOMPL/Ft	PKLEFT	FTBIN
a.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
b.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
c.	Wd Ft σ μ	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*

Final ranking



Implications

- ▶ For Munster Irish:
 - ▶ Everything is left-headed, contra Green (1997)
 - ▶ Further work: if headedness is about structure, is this account consistent with vowel reduction data (if they are relevant)?
- ▶ More generally:
 - ▶ I suggest that divorcing headedness and prominence is fruitful
 - ▶ If headedness and prominence are separate, there are no headless feet, just feet with heads not associated with prominence
 - ▶ If “stress” does not imply headedness, unbounded feet are not needed?
 - ▶ Stress feet versus other feet: Downing (2006); Vaysman (2008); Buckley (2009)

Ask me about...

- ▶ Stress and epenthesis in Munster Irish
- ▶ Secondary stress
- ▶ The complete paper

References

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