From variation to the emergence of linguistic regularities
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Introduction:
- In languages, two rules may be in competition. Regularization occurs when one of them emerges as an optimal solution and completely overrides the other one.
- Regularization is often seen as a change in individuals’ grammar.
- Evidences from cultural evolution (Derex, 2015, 2016) or complex systems (Becker & al., 2009) studies suggests that changes at a macro level doesn’t necessarily reflect changes at a micro level.
- In linguistic terms, this suggests that regularization at a community-level does not reflect a change in individuals’ grammar.
- In this study, I explore how community-level factors may explain the regularization of certain derivational processes (Compound Abbreviated Loanwords) in Japanese.

What is a Compound Abbreviated Loanword (CAL)?

- CALs are abbreviations:
  - Based on two constituents of foreign origin
  - Frequent and employed in various situations (not only in informal speech)
  - Phonologically constrained derivation process: Conservation of the 2 initial morae of each constituent to form a four morae abbreviation (see pokémon below).
  - Sometimes irregular: Majority of exceptions include three morae, maintaining only the first mora of the second constituent (see potetâ).
  - Individuals show different patterns of irregularity, reflecting competition between rules.

Examples:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Japanese</th>
<th>Abbrev.</th>
<th>Katakana</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pocket monster</td>
<td>po.ke.t.o mo.N su.ta.a</td>
<td>po.te.tâ pu.su</td>
<td>ポケモン</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>potato chips</td>
<td>po.te.tâ Q.pu.su</td>
<td></td>
<td>ポテチ</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Community- vs. individual-level regularization:

- Corpus surveys of attested forms (Labrune, 2007; Lammarque, 2015) show that three morae CALs are often created when the second mora of the second constituent is either the lengthening of a vowel (/R/) or the first part of a geminate consonant (/Q/), as in potetâ. Moreover, the deletion of these morae has become more systematic with time:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% deletion of /R/</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% deletion of /Q/</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- This suggests that the deletion of /R/ and /Q/ when they appear in final position of a CAL has regularized.
- However, an experimental study (Lamarque, 2016) showed that individuals still have a highly variable treatment of /R/ and /Q/ in the creation of new CALs.
- /R/ and /Q/ were deleted in less than 30% of cases (see fig.1).

Next steps:
- Complete the creation of the game (select items, design the creatures, run tests, …).
- Create multiple versions with different parameter manipulations.
- Collect the data.
- Analyze the data: what factors significantly influenced the players’ attitudes and scores? In what way?
- Conduct agent-based modeling simulations (Netlogo) and compare to empirical results. (Wilensky, 1999)

References:

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