

CONTEXTUAL ALLOMORPHY AND PARADIGMATIC PRESSURE OF THE PREPOSITIONS *a*, *en* AND *amb* IN CATALAN

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SUBJECT: Synchronic distribution, origin and tentative OT approach to the allomorphy presented by the prepositions *a* 'to/in', *en* 'in' and *amb* 'with' in the dialectal varieties of Catalan. Data obtained from corpora and surveys.

GOALS:

- (a) To study the similarities between the allomorphs of the three prepositions within each variety and between different varieties.
- (b) To explore the origin and distribution of the allomorphy of the prepositions.
- (c) To determine which contextual factors (phonology, morphology, syntax and/or semantics) condition allomorphy.

1. ALLOMORPHIC DISTRIBUTION

Allomorphs of preposition <i>a</i> — Phon. context — Dialects (subdialects)		
/a/	C(onsonant) or V(owel)	Alguerese, Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir, West, Tgn), North-Western (Lle, Pall, Rib, Tor), Northern Catalan, Valencian (North, Mer, Alac)
	C or V, mostly non-schwa	Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib)
/an/	V or C [with C: <i>calcun</i> or int(errogative) pr(onoun)]	Alguerese
	Schwa	Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib)
	V	Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir), North-Western (Pall, Rib, Tor), Northern Catalan
	V or C	Central (West, Tgn), North-Western (Lle)
/ana/	C [int. and rel(ative) pr]	Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib)
	C or V [int., rel., per(sonal) pr., and def(inite) art(icle)]	Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir)
	C [int. pr.]	Central (Tgn)
	C [per. or int. pr.]	Northern Catalan
/am(b)/	V	Balearic (Ib), Central (Bcn), North-Western (Lle, Pall)
	V or C	Central (West, Tgn)
/av/	on [pr.]	Balearic (Maj, Min), North-Western (Tor)
/au/	on [int. or rel. pr.]	Balearic (Ib), Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir, West, Tgn), North-Western (Lle, Tor)
/ag/	on [int. or rel. pr.]	North-Western (Rib, Tor)
/am(b)a/	C [int. and rel. pr.]	Central (West)

Allomorphs of preposition <i>en</i> — Phon. context — Dialects (subdialects)		
/en/	V or C	Alguerese, Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib), Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir, West, Tgn), North-Western (Lle, Pall, Rib, Tor), Northern Catalan, Valencian (North, Cen, Alac)
/am(b)/	V or C	Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib), Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir, West, Tgn), North-Western (Pall)
	V or C [prep(ositional) phrase compl(ement)]	North-Western (Lle)
	C	Northern Catalan
/am(b)a/	C [int. pr.]	Balearic (Min), Central (Bcn, West)
/an/	V or C [prep. phrase compl.]	North-Western (Lle)

Allomorphs of preposition <i>amb</i> — Phon. context — Dialects (subdialects)		
/am(b)/	V	Alguerese, Northern Catalan
	V or C	Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib), Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir, West, Tgn), North-Western (Lle, Pall)
/am(b)a/	C	Alguerese, Northern Catalan
	C [int. pr.]	Balearic (Maj, Min, Ib), Central (Bcn, Gir, North Gir, West, Tgn), North-Western (Pall)
/en/	V or C	North-Western (Rib, Tor), Valencian (North, Cen, Alac)

2. ANALYSIS

2.1 PHONOLOGICALLY CONDITIONED ALLOMORPHY

> **Preposition *a*:** /an/ or /am(b)/ allomorphs avoid vocalic contact. **OT:** Markedness constraint *VV.

> **Preposition *amb*** in the Northern and the Alguerese dialects: /am(b)a/ avoids consonant codas. **OT:** Markedness constraint *CODA.

*VV >> REALIZE-MORPHEME >> *CODA

2.2 PARADIGMATIC PRESSURE

> **Prepositions *en* and *amb*:** Their exchanged allomorphs are the result of *paradigmatic pressure*: prepositions *a*, *en* and *amb* form a paradigm due to their phonetic, semantic and etymological similarities, in which certain allomorphs exert pressure on the others. **OT:** Faithfulness constraint OO-PARADIGM (Bonet & Lloret 2002).

> **Central, Balearic and Northern Catalan:** OO-PAR (/am(b)/): Assign a violation mark for each allomorph of the preposition *en* different from /am(b)/.

OO-PAR (/am(b)/) >> *VV >> REALIZE-MORPHEME >> *CODA

> **Valencian and the two North-Western subdialects** have only the candidate /en/ for the preposition *amb*, and so no additional constraints are needed.

> **The form of the /ana/ and /am(b)a/ allomorphs of the preposition *a*** are the result of diachronic paradigmatic pressures: The very frequent context “/an/ or /am(b)/ plus the vowel of the next word” has generated these allomorphs.

> Distribution of /ana/ and /am(b)a/: They appear exclusively **before phonologically short pronouns and the definite article**: these words achieve more phonological entity with longer allomorphs of the preposition *a* (a contextual Markedness constraint is needed: MINIMAL-WORD).

> They are especially frequent **before interrogative pronouns**, which are prominent pronouns as they occupy the first position in the sentence.

> Hence, the **morphological context** is also relevant.

> **Prepositions *en* and *amb*** present the /am(b)a/ allomorph before interrogative pronouns in Central and Balearic Catalan because of the influence of the preposition *a*.

> **OT:** Lexical specifications of pronouns and the definite article preserved by the Faithfulness constraint RESPECT (Bonet & Lloret & Mascaró 2007).

Example: Varieties of Barcelona, Girona and Northern Catalan for prep. *a*:

/ana/[INT.REL.PER.PR.DEF.ART] MINIMAL-WORD >> RESPECT (/ana/[INT.REL.PER.PR.DEF.ART] - /au/[PR.OBJ]) >> *VV >> REALIZE-MORPHEME >> *CODA

> In some varieties, the /an/, /am(b)/ allomorphs of the preposition *a* are the result of paradigmatic pressure, since they appear before a C.

1) **Western varieties of Central Catalan:** /am(b)/ occurs in almost every V or C context. (Relevant constraint: OO-PAR (/am(b)/).)

2) **North-Western variety of Lleida:** /an/ appears before a short form of the very recurring context of demonstratives (/an/ *questa noia* 'to this girl'), and this context influences others, like quantifiers (e.g., /an/ *cap noia* 'to any girl'). /an/ also appears for the preposition *en* (Relevant constraint: RESPECT.)

3) **Central variety of Tarragona:** A mixture of the two aforementioned systems.

2.3 SYNTACTICALLY CONDITIONED ALLOMORPHY

> **Preposition *a*:**

—Weak semantic motivation of the preposition = less allomorphy (lexicalized expressions, verbal periphrases, manner adverbials, prepositional direct objects, prepositional phrase complements and temporal adverbials)

—Strong semantic motivation = more allomorphy (locative adverbials and indirect object).

> **Prepositions *en* and *amb*:** the other way around:

—Weak semantic motivation of the preposition = more allomorphy (lexicalized expressions, prepositional phrase complements, temporal and manner adverbials)

—Strong semantic motivation = less allomorphy (locative adverbials for *en*; adverbials expressing company for *amb*).

> **OT:** Several constraints, depending on the syntactic context, framed within the Subcategorization model (Paster 2005, 2006, 2009; Bye 2007, 2015) that interact with CT constraints by the *Direct Interaction Hypothesis* (Bye 2015).

Example: LEXICALIZED EXPRESSION, /a/: Assign a violation mark for each allomorph different from /a/ of the preposition *a* in a lexicalized expression.

2.4 ALLOMORPHY CONDITIONED BY SPECIFICITY

> In all cases, the **specific contexts prevail**: They select *a* instead of *en*, and its allomorph /a/, also in front of a vowel.

> As for prepositions, the **hierarchy of specific contexts** is: 1. Loc(ative) bare nouns like toponyms, bare nouns like anthroponyms, loc. definite NPs with a unique identifier (like *a casa* 'home') and pronoun on 'where' > 2. Loc. adverbials and loc. and temporal definite NPs. Other contexts are non-specific.

> **OT:** Framed in the Subcategorization model: SPECIFIC-NP, /a/: Assign a violation mark for each allomorph different from /a/ of the preposition *a* in specific NPs.

SPECIFIC-NP, /a/ >> syntactic constraints >> paradigmatic pressure constraints >> phonological constraints

3. CONCLUDING REMARKS

> The **allomorphy originates first in the preposition *a***, because it has a phonological basis and it is the most frequent of the three prepositions.

> The three prepositions conform a **paradigm of allomorphs** where there is **paradigmatic pressure** to achieve simplicity. The allomorphs of the preposition *a* resemble the form of *en* and *amb*, whose allomorphy is due to the influence of *a*. Finally, *en* and *amb* influence each other.

> There is a **hierarchy between the different types of contextual allomorphy**: specificity > syntax > morphology / phonology.

> **Interaction between constraints** of different OT submodels thanks to the *Direct interaction Hypothesis* (Bye 2015).

> The allomorphy of the prepositions is an **active phenomenon** and in **evolution**.

> **Open issues:** Diachronic comparison and the interference of the semantics of the selection between *a* and *en*.

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