

Some consequences of different approaches to coalescence

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In Mushunguli (Somali Chizigula, Kizigua; ISO [xma]), hiatus between prefixes and stems is normally resolved via glide formation of prevocalic high vowels (e.g. /ku-iv-a/ → kwiiva 'to hear'), coalescence of sequences of low and non-low vowels (/ka-iv-a/ → keeva '(s)he heard'), or reduction of identical vowel sequences (/si-itaaŋ-a/ → sitaaŋga 'I called'). However, some stems that begin with high vowels exceptionally block coalescence (/ka-it-a/ → kaiita, *keeta '(s)he went') even though these same stems resolve hiatus normally in glide formation and reduction contexts (/ku-it-a/ → kwiita 'to go;'; /si-it-is-a/ → sitiisa 'I went (hab.)'). We argue that this exceptionality follows an intrinsic pattern: coalescence is the only hiatus resolution strategy blocked because coalescence is the only strategy that materially affects stem vowels, and the exceptional stems all begin with high vowels because high vowels are the only stem vowels materially affected by coalescence. We propose an OT analysis of hiatus resolution in Mushunguli which explains this patterned exceptionality using lexically-indexed constraints (Pater 2010), and contrast this analysis with the abstract representational alternative proposed by Hout (2012, 2017). We also explore the consequences of our analysis for the compensatory coalescence proposal made by Zaleska (2018).