Pre-Classical Prevarication in Latin Feet: Stratal synchronic structure and discretionary diachronic development

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The insights of both *stratal* and *optimality-theoretic* aspects of Stratal OT (e.g. Bermúdez-Otero 2006) make significant progress towards illuminating the nearly 150-year-old problem of 'iambic shortening' in Latin (light-heavy = LH → light-light = LL, where H is heavy by either vowel length or closure). The philological tradition (e.g. Müller 1869, Lindsay 1894, Drexler 1969, Questa 2007, Fortson 2008) focuses upon the likelihood of this optional early Latin phenomenon occurring in different locations within the verse line – considering rhythmical, morphosyntactic, and pragmatic factors with impressive results – but the precise synchronic metrical conditions of the process are not a concern. Conversely, the phonological tradition has identified necessary structural conditions, but a metrical structure sufficient to account for all sub-types of the phenomenon remains elusive, e.g. Mester (1994) and Prince & Smolensky ((1993)2004) do not attempt to cover the phrasal data, and Jacobs (2003), despite recognising required constraints, contains inaccuracies (e.g. the conflation of chronologically disparate phenomena) and ensuing analytical difficulties. A major problem remains that the same single-level phonology cannot account for both iambic shortening and the correct assignment of the well-known (ante)penultimate Latin word stress.

A solution emerges from the observations that (1) iambic shortening (e.g. *légo:* → *légo* 'I choose') may occur across certain word boundaries (e.g. *se.d ŏs.ten.de.re* 'but to show') and is sensitive to sentence stress (occurring only in unstressed elements, commonly function words; Fortson 2008: 177), and that (2) cretic shortening (e.g. *dícito:* → *dí:cito* 'let him say') and word-initial iambic shortening (e.g. *voluptá:tem* → *volŭptá:tem* 'desire (acc.)' only *before a stressed syllable*) must, we demonstrate for Latin (*contra* Prince & Smolensky 1993: 69-71), be triggered after lexical stress has been assigned. They are *post-lexical* developments which (i) are sensitive to stress clashes at the word level (CLASH » WSP), (ii) retain word-level metrical structure assigning primary stress at the phrase level (MAX-FOOTHEAD, FTBIN » PARSE-σ, WSP), and (iii) place greater emphasis on parsing syllables into feet and avoiding non-head heavy syllables at the phrase level, repairing by lightening (PARSE-σ, WSP » NONF » MAX-μ). We present new Optimality-Theoretic analyses, crucially different from earlier attempts to ensure correct stress assignment and the restriction of shortening to accurate contexts, where the interaction of the same constraints differs at word-level (NONF » FTBIN, CLASH, MAX-μ » WSP » PARSE-σ) and phrase-level (MAX-FTHD, FTBIN, » PARSE-σ, WSP » NONF, CLASH, MAX-μ).

Furthermore, we demonstrate that the shortenings are sensitive not only to stratal computational procedure, but also prosodic representational structure (a distinction discussed by Bermúdez-Otero & Luís 2009). Iambic shortening occurs in words *within a*

phonological phrase which do not bear sentence stress, e.g. *(quo.d ăc).(ce:).(pis).(ti:)* 'that you received' (Plautus *Trinummus* 964), and never when followed by a 'full word boundary', as at the end of a clause, where the phrase conceivably bore main stress (Fortson 2008: 187). The influence of morphosyntax on phonological phrase formation – such as focus-marking, MATCH/ALIGN (XP, φ) (e.g. Truckenbrodt 2007, Selkirk 2011) – explains the philologists' observations on the sensitivity of iambic shortening to syntax/discourse-structure, e.g. focused elements do not undergo shortening as they bear sentence stress.

Finally, in the later period of classical Latin, productive iambic shortening is mostly restricted to single disyllabic words, becoming lexicalised in a handful of items (e.g. *bene: > bene* 'well'). The shrinking of the relevant domain (phrase → word) is precisely the prediction of Stratal OT's model of the life-cycle of phonological processes, where low-level phonetic effects may become phonologised at the phrase-level, then word-level and stem-level, and ultimately lexicalised (e.g. Bermúdez-Otero 2006).

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