Allomorphy and accentuation of -ory and -ive

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Allomorphy and Accentuation of -ory and -ive

Hideki Zamma

As is well-known, the suffixes -ory and -ive exhibit seemingly 'allomorphy' phenomenon. Consider the following examples:

(1) a. dismissory (< dismiss), sensory (< sense), vomitory (< vomit)
    b. reflexive (< reflex), regressive (< regress), active (< act)
(2) a. signatory (< sign), reformatory (< reform), observatory (< observe)
    b. accusative (< accuse), conservative (< conserve), provocative (< provoke)

While the suffixes are attached directly to the stems in the a-examples, it is the forms which have the sequence -art- at the beginning that are attached in the b-examples. In this talk, I proposed the following specification for the suffixes to account for this 'allomorphy' phenomena.

(3) -ory and -ive are specified as attaching to voiceless coronal obstruents
    (i.e. /s/ or /t/).

In cases in which this specification is not satisfied, I propose, the suffix -ate is brought in between the stem and the suffix. Note that -ate ends with /t/, which satisfies the specification. I will attribute the reason why this suffix is chosen to its special status, which is observed in accentuation and -able-suffixation. The former is examined below and the latter is clarified in the comparison communicate/communicable, where -ate is deleted.

The stress pattern of words with these suffixes is illustrated in the following examples.

(4) a. auditory, vómitory, tránsitory, premónitory, depósitory
    b. olfáctory, satisfáctory, diréctory, contradéctory, introdéctory
    c. reconciliatory, áleatory, antécipatory, ádulatory
    d. condémnatory, refórmatory, obsérvatory, coñiscatory
(5)  a. prohibitive, infinitive, sécrétoire, cognitif, purpatoire
    b. pervasif, adaptatif, décisif, conclusif, intensif
    c. continuatif, significatif, imaginaire, appréciable
    d. conservatif, affirmatif, contemplatif, altératif

The primary stress falls on the preceding syllable of -ory/ive (the b-examples) and -atory-active (the d-examples) when the syllable is heavy, and on the second nearest syllable when the preceding syllable is light (a- and c-examples). This fact suggests that the sequence -at- is skipped in the calculation of stress assignment at the cyclic level. Therefore, I propose the following conditions for -ate to account for the accentuation, which would result from the suffix's peculiarity.

(6)  a. -ate Condition (i): -ate cannot be stress-bearing word-externally by constituting a foot on its own.
    b. -ate Condition (ii): -ate must be short after a heavy syllable word-externally.

These conditions account for the stress pattern of the words in (4) and (5), as we see in (7).

(7)  *  
     *  
    (*  *)  
    (*)(*<*)  
    (*<*)<*> 
    generative  →  gene rative  →  generative

The -ate Condition (ii) accounts for shortening phenomena observed in words with -ive. Note that the metrical structure constructed in my analysis satisfies the structural description of the shortening rule formulated by Halle and Vergnaud (1987).

(8)  *  
     *  
    (*  *)  
    (*)(*<*)  
    (*)<*>  
    conservative  →  conservative  →  conserva tive
    H H  H L
