

The Flowering of Optimality Theory: Ponapean Nasal Substitution and the Problem of Intermediate Forms*

Stuart Davis
(Indiana University)

Davis, Stuart. 2000. The Flowering of Optimality Theory: Ponapean Nasal Substitution and the Problem of Intermediate Forms. *Studies in Phonetics, Phonology and Morphology* 6.2. 249-305. One of the challenges that has confronted Optimality Theory resides in Phenomena that seem to require reference to an intermediate form that is neither the underlying input nor some actual occurring output. Typically, in rule-based phonology, such phenomena reflect opaque rule interaction involving counterfeeding or counterbleeding relationships. In order to account for such phenomena in Optimality Theory, McCarthy(1997) Proposes that an Optimality-theoretic grammar can permit candidate-to-candidate faithfulness. In this paper I show that the incorporation of candidate-to-candidate faithfulness allows for an insightful analysis of the different patterns of nasal substitution found in reduplication and suffixation in Ponapean. The analysis offered here avoids the shortcomings of previous analyses, accurately captures the generalization as to when nasal substitution occurs, and offers striking evidence for the nature of opacity in Optimality Theory independent of rule-based notions like counterfeeding and counterbleeding. (Indiana University)

Keyword: Intermediate form, opacity, nasal substitution, Sympathetic faithfulness.

1. Introduction

One

