Title: The Phonology of Gemination in Garo

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Topic/sub-discipline: Phonology

Keywords: gemination, Garo, marked syllable structure, emergence of the unmarked

Presentation Format: Poster or talk.

Note: I am currently in India and not in Calgary. So, the time difference of $11^1/_2$ hours between Calgary and India might have to be considered in my case. I would prefer a format that would allow for an asynchronous presentation.

ABSTRACT

Even though gemination is one of the most attested phonological processes cross-linguistically, the amount of literature on it is very modest (Mubarak & Jebur, 2018). This also stands true for Garo (understudied Sino-Tibetan language of India and Bangladesh), where Burling (2003), the sole descriptive work of the language does not describe the process. This stands in the way of answering whether *assimilated geminates* (McCarthy, 1986) are prevalent in languages, and if so, what universal principles motivate it. This paper examines the gemination process in Garo and explains it in the *autosegmental phonology framework* (Kenstowicz, 1994; Goldsmith, 1976). This paper finds that gemination is a predictable process triggered by morpheme concatenation. Whenever a morpheme with a coda combines with another that lacks an onset, the coda of the preceding morpheme spreads to the onset of the following morpheme *e.g.* [t͡sʰat] *"thick"* + [-a] *"neutral tense"* = [t͡sʰat.ta] *"be thick"*. These types of geminates are preserved by the *geminate integrity constraint* (Crystal, 2008) and are immune to the *aspiration rule* of Garo. There are of course exceptions to this process. These exceptions are however easily explained by *onset constraints* that apply in the language without exceptions or in other cases by an appeal to an *identity rule* (Kenstowicz, 1994; Kiparsky, 1982). Considering the process within the broader typology, it appears that the gemination is motivated by the need for onsets in syllables, and that languages can achieve this *unmarked structure* (Rice, 2007) through phonological processes even though underlying marked syllable configurations exists.

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