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Match Theory and the Asymmetry Problem

An example from Stockholm Swedish

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The Asymmetry Problem and Match Theory

An example from Stockholm Swedish

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Extending the core idea of Match Theory, we propose the *Minimal Interface Hypothesis (MIH)*. It states that Match be the sole constraints referring to syntactic XPs. MIH raises several theoretical questions, including the *Asymmetry Problem*. This poster illustrates how the Asymmetry Problem can be solved in Stockholm Swedish.

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

In Match Theory (Selkirk 2011), the syntax–prosody mapping constraints per se never allow non-isomorphism between syntax and prosody. Non-isomorphism arises exclusively through the interaction with other constraints (**Prosodic Wellformedness Constraints, PWC**, or other interface constraints, e.g., information structure-related constraints).

Minimal Interface Hypothesis (MIH)

Match constraints are the sole constraints which refer to syntactic categories (i.e., No constraints like ALIGN-XP, WRAP-XP and STRESS-XP).

The Asymmetry Problem

Alignment Theory (McCarthy & Prince 1993, Selkirk 1996) allows separate ranking of L- and R-alignment w.r.t. relevant PWCs (e.g., ALIGN-R >> PWC >> ALIGN-L).

Such asymmetry is not possible in Match Theory.

When separate ranking of L- and R-edge mapping is called for, how can it be dealt with in Match Theory?

Asymmetry in Stockholm Swedish (SSw)

Embedded clauses (ECs) may or may not be realized as an (embedded) ι , as in (1a)/(2a) and (1b)/(2b), respectively.

Main clause material to the **right** of an EC may form an additional ι , as in (1c).

Main clause material to the **left** of an EC **does not** form an additional ι , as in (2c).

2. DATA

ι -phrasing options in SSw

(x = ι -head)

(1) [[...]_{CP} ...]_{CP}

a. { { ... x } _{ι} ... x } _{ι}

b. { x } _{ι}

c. { { ... x } _{ι} { ... x } _{ι} } _{ι}

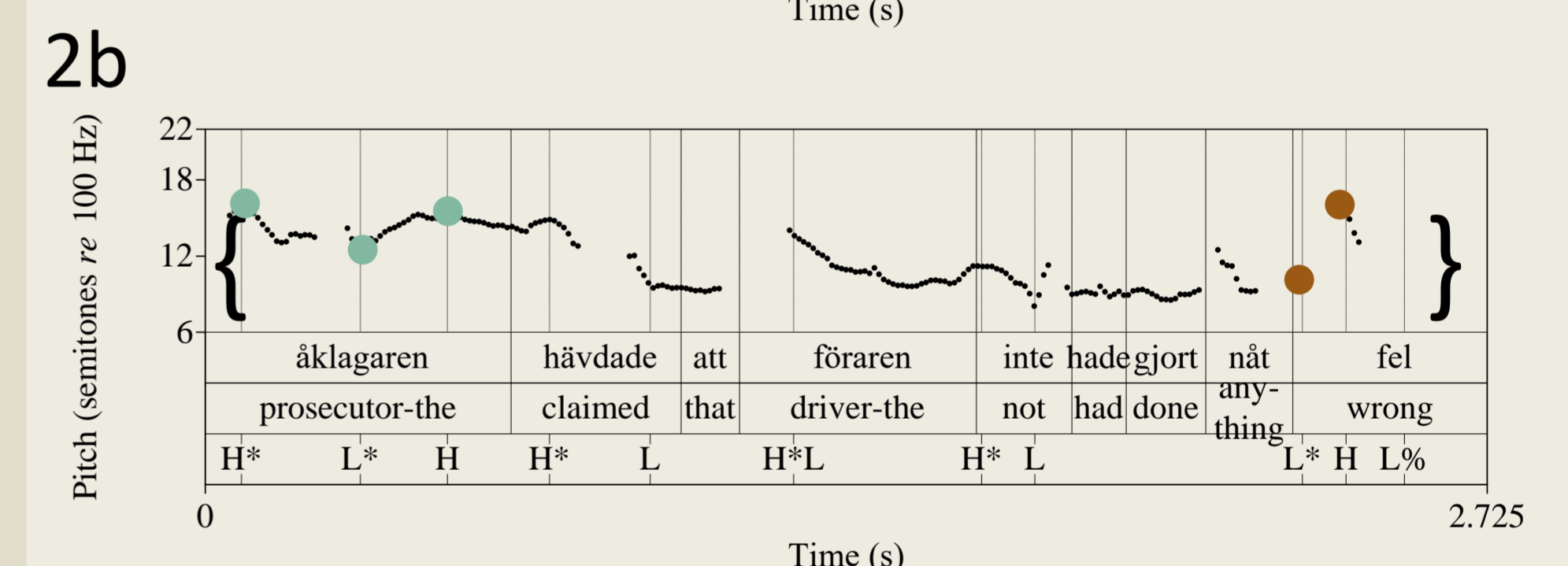
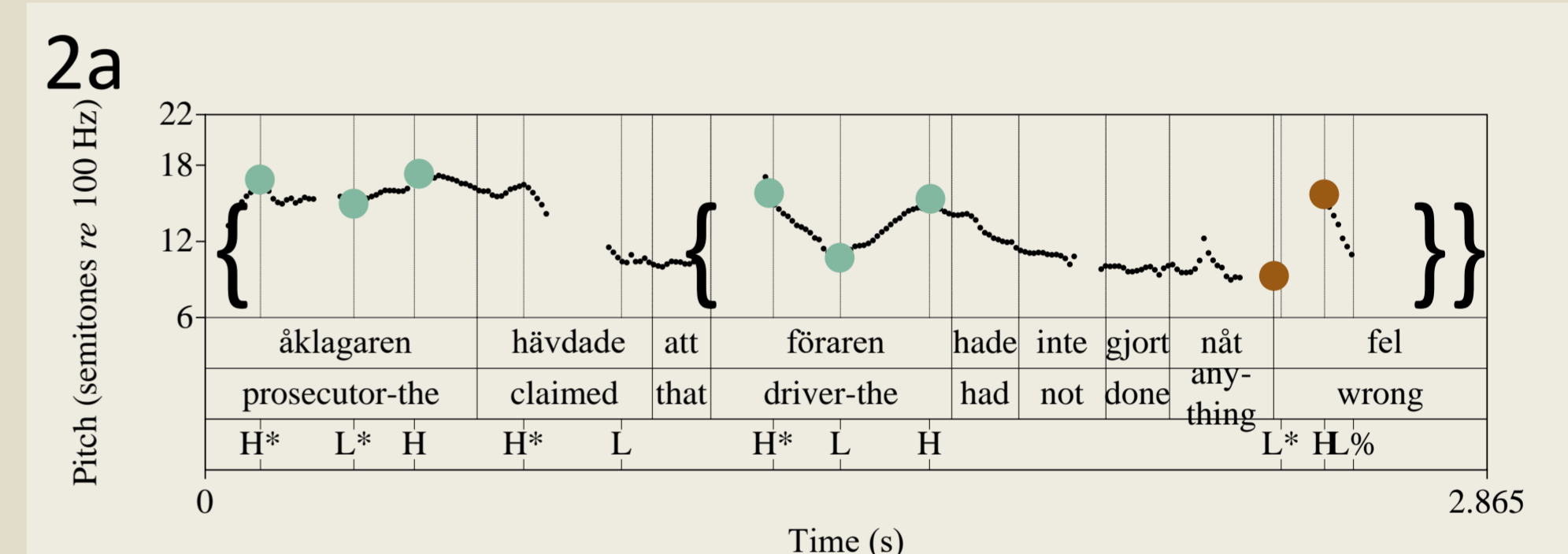
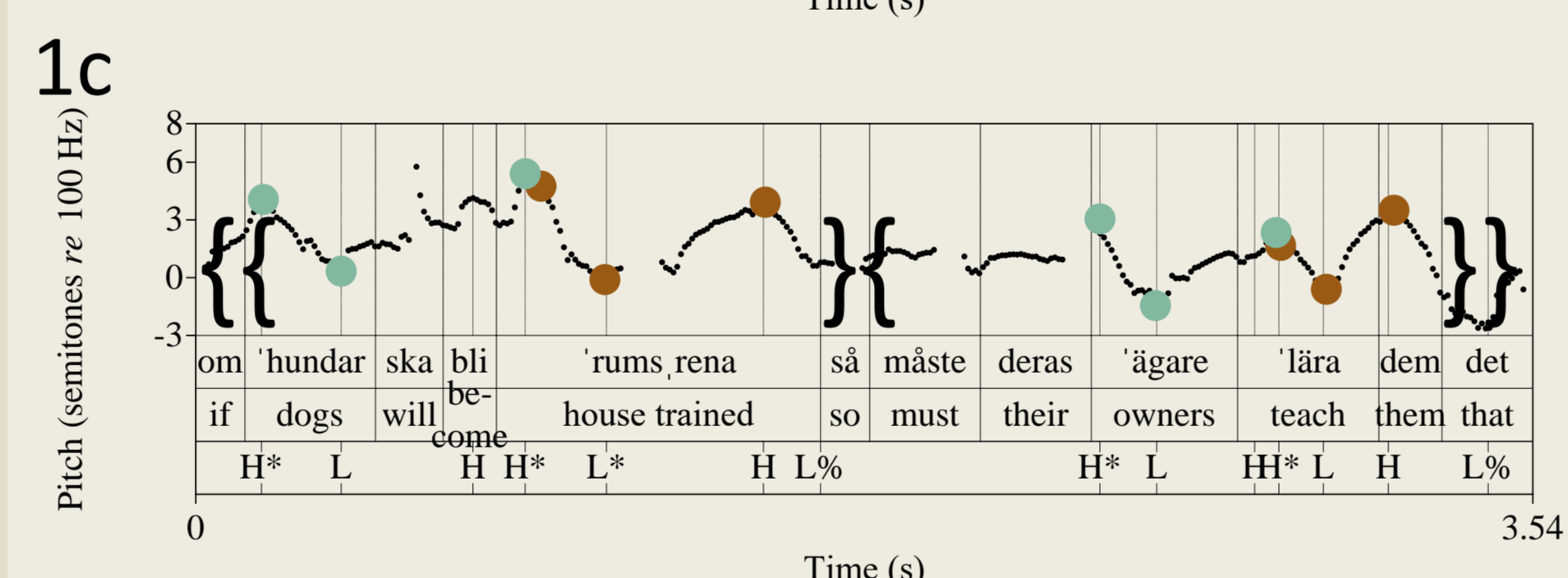
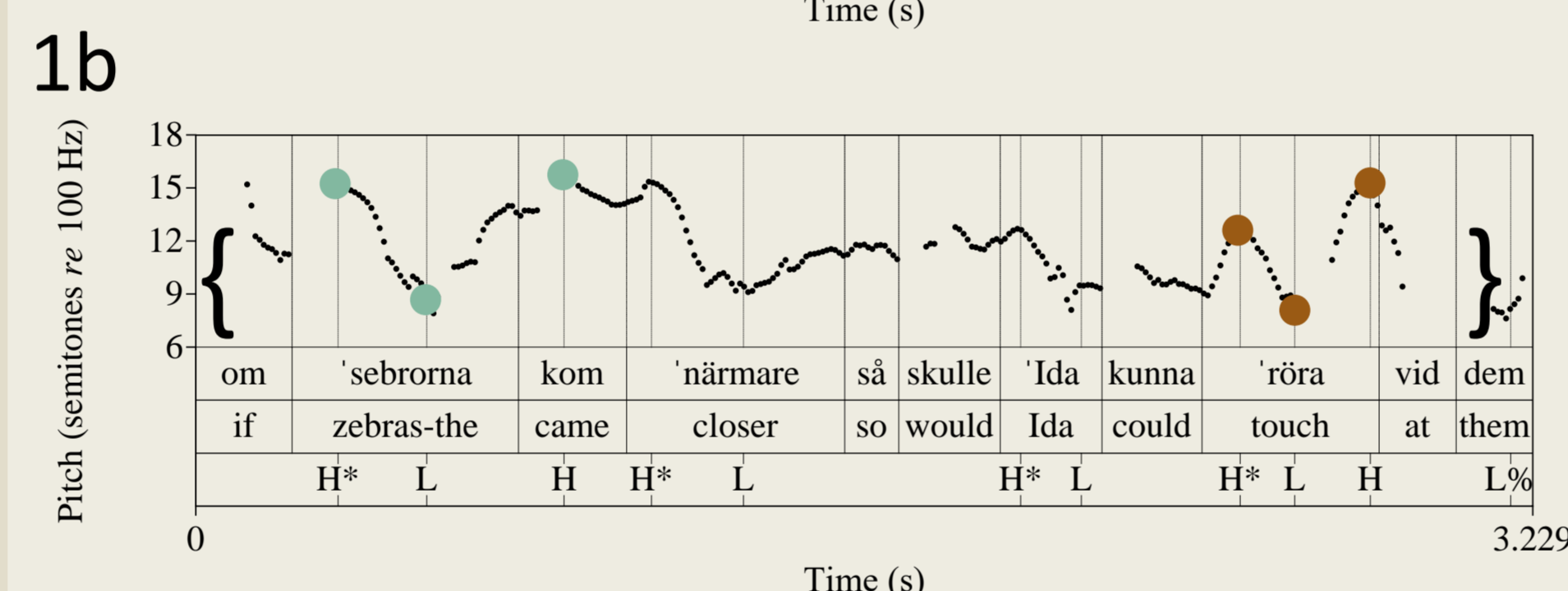
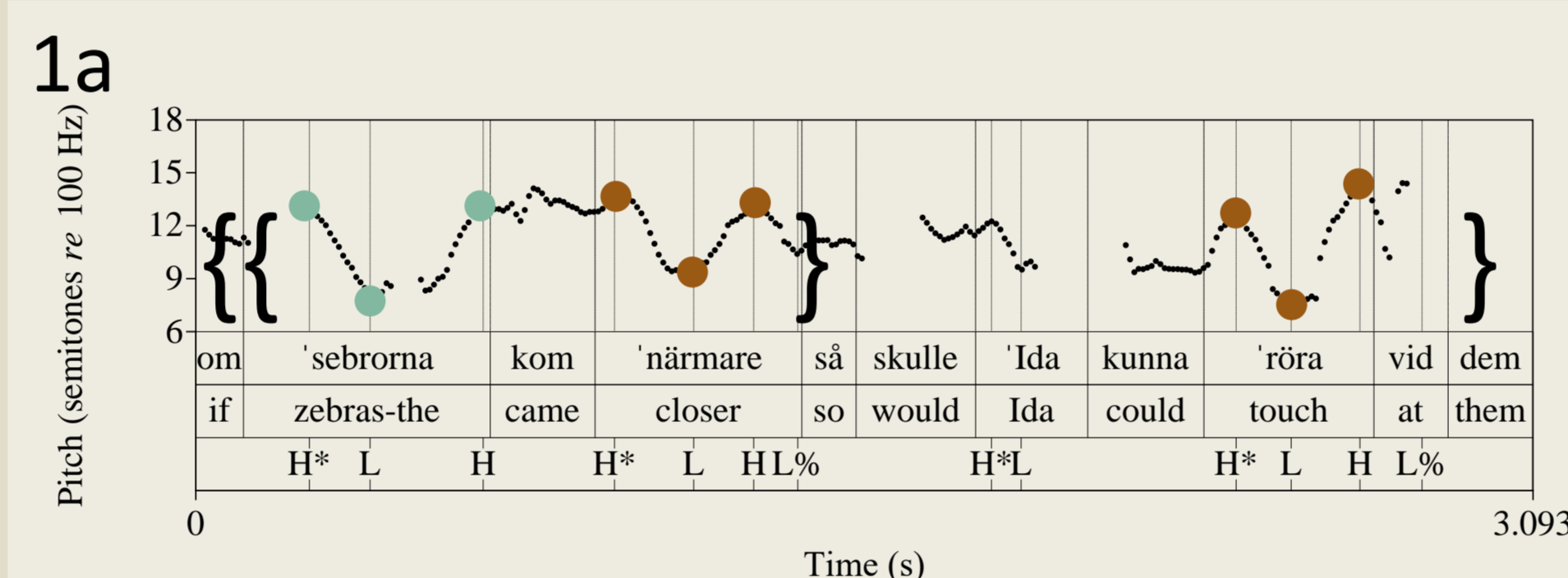
(2) [... [...]_{CP}]_{CP}

a. { ... { ... x } _{ι} } _{ι}

b. { x } _{ι}

c. * { { ... x } _{ι} { ... x } _{ι} } _{ι}

(Myrberg 2010, 2013)



● initiality accent, aligned with the left edge of ι : H*LH (tone accent 2)
● ι -head, aligned with the right edge of ι : H*LH / L*H (tone accent 2 / 1)

3. ACCOUNT

PWCs related to prosodic heads cause the asymmetry

An ι cannot be inserted if it triggers the insertion of an additional ι -head.

ι -insertion to the right of an embedded ι does not add an additional ι -head (1c), while insertion to the left does add an additional ι -head (2c).

This is because ι -heads are right aligned in SSw.

3 PWCs

ALIGN-HEAD(ι)-R

Align the right boundary of every ι with its head.

(Truckenbrodt 1995:119, Féry 2013:696)

*P-HEAD(ι)

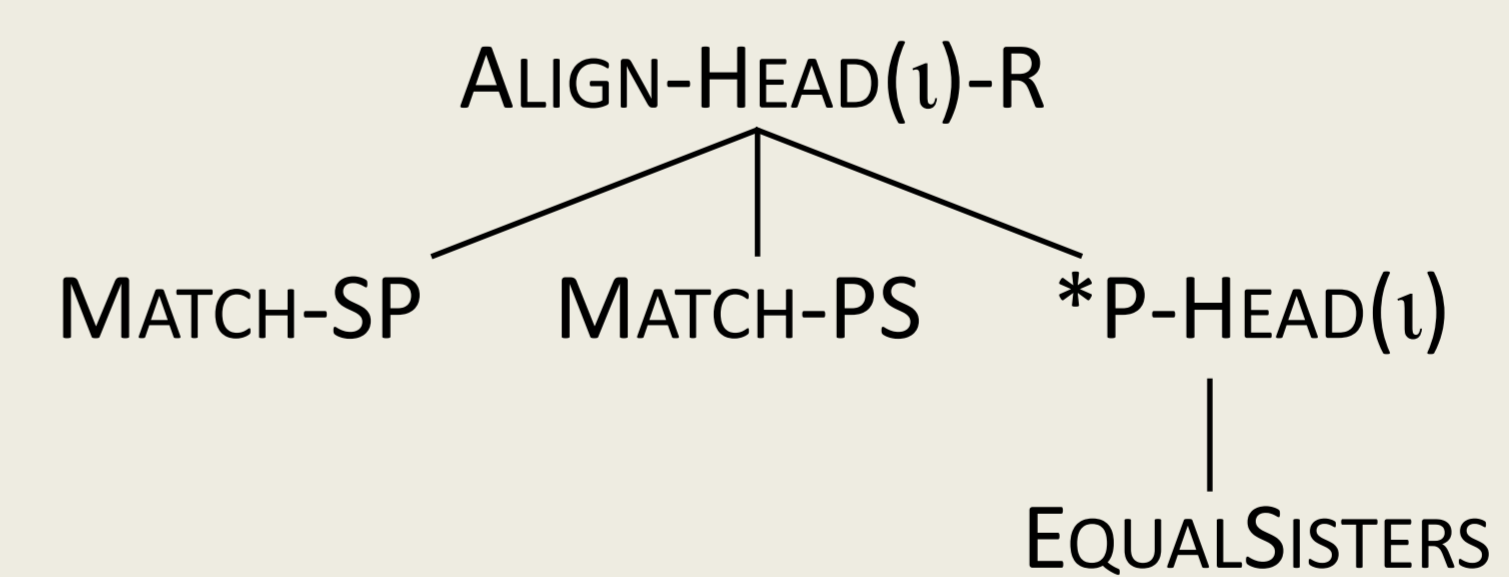
Avoid ι -heads.

EQUALSISTERS

Sister nodes in prosodic structure are instantiations of the same prosodic category.

(Myrberg 2013)

Crucial rankings



Below is the ranking where (1) and (2) render divergent results. Other rankings in the handout.

Input: (1) [[...] ...]	ALHD-R	MA-SP	*PHD	EQSIS	MA-PS
a. { { x } x }			**	*!	
b. { { x } }		*!	*		
c. { { x } { x } }			**		*
d. { { } { x } }	*!		*		*

Input: (2) [... [...]]	ALHD-R	MA-SP	*PHD	EQSIS	MA-PS
a. { { x } }			*	*	
b. { { x } }		*!	*		
c. { { x } { x } }			**!		*
d. { { } { x } }	*!		*		*

SELECTED REFERENCES: Féry, C. 2013. Focus as prosodic alignment. *NLLT* 31:683–734. McCarthy, J. & A. Prince. 1993. Generalized alignment. In G. Booij & J. van Marle (eds.) *Yearbook of Morphology*. 79–153. Myrberg, S. 2013. Sisterhood in prosodic branching. *Phonology* 30:73-124. Selkirk, E. 2011. The syntax–phonology interface. In J. Goldsmith, J. Riggle, & A. Yu (eds.) *The handbook of phonological theory*. 435-484. Selkirk, E. 1996. The prosodic structure of function words. In J. L. Morgan & K. Demuth (eds.). *Signal to syntax*. 187–214.

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