

## From mono- to disyllabic clipped forms. A matter of preferred templates

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This paper aims at describing and explaining a recent change in preferences for certain minimal word templates. The data which will be discussed are two types of clipping, the older one that results in monosyllabic clipped forms and a more recent type that results in disyllabic clipped forms ending in a full vowel [-o]. The data come from English and Dutch. The theoretical approach is that of Prosodic Morphology, since traditional concatenative morphology cannot account for clipping because the phenomenon ‘does not rely on the chaining of morphemes’ (Wiese 2001:131/2).

In English and Dutch one finds widely accepted truncated forms such as:

English			Dutch			
(1) temp	<	temperature	(2) Jap	<	Japanner	‘japanese’
ad	<	advertisement	mees	<	meester	‘teacher’
vet	<	veterinarian	prof	<	professor	‘professor’

In addition to this type of examples one can find another disyllabic category such as:

(3) psycho	<	psychopath	(4) aso	<	asociaal	‘antisocial’
homo	<	homosexual	provo	<	provocateur	‘provo’
nympho	<	nymphomaniac	pedo	<	pedofiel	‘pedophile’

For Dutch examples as the ones shown in (4) have been described by Van de Vijver (1997) and Hinskens (2001). Their starting point is a disyllabic trochaic template, which is in accordance with the preferred metrical pattern for minimal Dutch words (Kooij & Van Oostendorp 2003). However, this description fails to account for the older group of Dutch clippings, as presented in (2).

Lappe (2007) is an extensive study of English truncated forms. The basic structure she starts with is monosyllabic. Therefore she has no problem in explaining the examples in (1) or when applied to Dutch in (2). However, for the examples in (2) and possibly in (4) she has to introduce a subsequent process of suffixation, which may work well for examples as presented in (5) and (6) but leads to a strange reintroduction of a vowel [-o], which was already present in the input form.

(5) journo	<	journalist	(6) alto	<	alternatief	‘alternative’
commo	<	commissary	lesbo	<	lesbisch	‘lesbian’
garbo	<	garbage	Limbo	<	Limburger	‘Limburger’

Both descriptions, Van de Vijver and Hinskens on the one hand and Lappe on the other, do not take into account the diachronic aspect and the historic origin of the -o forms.

In this paper it will be shown that both languages show a development from an initial stage with a preference for monosyllabic clippings to a later stage with an influx of -o clippings. For English this change can be explained by assuming an influence of a Hispano-American English informal language, for Dutch it is the influence of a modern American-English youth register that accounts for the change (cf. Hamans 2004 and Hamans 2012). This development, that also lead to an extension of this kind of -o suffixation to ‘full words’ (as in *sicko*, *weirdo* and Dutch *lullo* ‘dull person’), can be expressed in terms of a re-ranking of constraints, as in (7)

- (7) Old system: ANCHOR-LEFT >> TROCHEE  
New system: TROCHEE >> ANCHOR-LEFT.

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