

Tips on Writing Up Phonology Problems

- Don't just put in rules — use prose description, too. This means two things: a description of “what’s happening” in the data, up front; and then after each rule, some that says what it does. This produces a very clear answer and also helps you get partial credit if your rules aren't quite right.
- Give at least one example for each rule, and insert it **immediately after** the description of your rule.
- Give your rules nice, **user-friendly names**. If you don't know the terminology, make up something silly like “Stoppification,” and we will then teach you the correct term (“occlusivization”), without penalizing your work. Never name a rule something like “Rule 1”.
- **Interleave**. Derivations should come right after the rules (or later, rule orderings) that they illustrate.
- Be very suspicious when you have two or more rules that perform the same change. You can usually reduce them to one rule by make good use of features. For example:

NOT:

Front vowel gliding

$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{front} \\ +\text{syllabic} \\ -\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} -\text{syllabic} \\ +\text{high} \end{bmatrix} / \text{ ____ } [+ \text{syllabic}]$$

This rule turns [i] and [e] into [j] before a vowel.

Back vowel gliding

$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{back} \\ +\text{syllabic} \\ -\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} -\text{syllabic} \\ +\text{high} \end{bmatrix} / \text{ ____ } [+ \text{syllabic}]$$

This rule turns [u] and [o] into [w] before a vowel.

These two rules can be collapsed into one, because they implement the same phenomenon (turn non-low vowels into glides, preserving their backness and rounding):

Non-low vowel gliding

$$\begin{bmatrix} +\text{syllabic} \\ -\text{low} \end{bmatrix} \rightarrow \begin{bmatrix} -\text{syllabic} \\ +\text{high} \end{bmatrix} / \text{ ____ } [+ \text{syllabic}]$$

This rule turns [u] and [o] into [w], and turns [i] and [e] into [j], before a vowel.

- Use features in your rules, and words in your descriptions. However, in certain cases, using the symbol in the rule is ok (see section 4.9 of the text for details). For example:

Glottal stop epenthesis

$$\emptyset \rightarrow \left[\begin{array}{l} +\text{constricted glottis} \\ +\text{consonantal} \end{array} \right] / \left[\begin{array}{l} +\text{low} \\ +\text{syllabic} \end{array} \right] \text{ — } [+ \text{syllabic}]$$

($\emptyset \rightarrow [\text{ʔ}] / \left[\begin{array}{l} +\text{low} \\ +\text{syllabic} \end{array} \right] \text{ — } [+ \text{syllabic}]$ is also perfectly acceptable.)

This rule inserts a glottal stop between a low vowel and a vowel.

Word Processing for Phonology

- Feel free to submit hand-written homeworks/term papers, as long as your handwriting is legible. Or, word-process your text and write in the technical material by hand. BUT if you want to attain fluency in preparing phonological material with a word processor, you may benefit from the following hints. They assume you are using Microsoft Word.¹
- See my Fonts Page for information on using phonetic fonts (downloading, inserting symbols). <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/Fonts/>
- **Feature matrices.** You can produce nice feature matrices in Word automatically quite easily if you use a good method; I use the procedure given at <http://www.linguistics.ucla.edu/people/hayes/120a/Brackets.htm>.

¹ Sorry to be a slave of the Evil Empire...