

The Duke-of-York Gambit and Other Opaque Derivations in English:
Evidence for Harmonic Serialism

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In the history of Generative Phonology, the rule-based serial framework, i.e., derivational theory (DT), was replaced by a constraint-based parallel framework, i.e., Optimality Theory (OT), because the latter turned out to be more desirable than the former to account for typology, acquisition, diachronic change, synchronic variation, or any other grammatical aspect in language but one: opacity. Opacity posed a crucial problem with OT, which did not posit any intermediate stages in the mapping from an input to an output and whose parallelism was an Achilles' tendon creating a remarkable driving force and a fatal weakness at the same time. Thus, the history of OT was partially that of repeated trial and revision in order to overcome opacity.

The goals of this article are two-fold. First, we introduce and solve an opacity problem in Japanese verbal morphology by using a non-classic OT framework called Harmonic Serialism (HS), while answering to some criticism against HS. Second, we uncover opacity in English, and specifically the authentic Duke of York Gambit (DYG) cases, which have not been known in the phonological system of English. We show that these cases also constitute valid evidence for HS. Thus, the implications of our findings are that HS is a promising candidate for overcoming the opacity and DYG cases and that the authentic DYG occupies a vital position and role in typology unlike the claim of McCarthy(2003) who remarks that it does not exist in any language.