

The role of „scope“ in affix order: verbal reflexives and affixal negation

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Affix orders are determined by a more or less complex interplay of semantic, syntactic, phonological/prosodic, and morphotactic factors. Accounts of affix orders either start from the well-attested transparent cases, in which affix orders mirror their semantic composition/syntactic derivation, or from opaque cases, in which affix orders do not match their semantic composition/syntactic derivation. The former approaches make use of general principles or constraints (e.g. *Relevance Principle*, Bybee 1985; *Mirror Principle*, Baker 1988; Scope: e.g. Muysken 1983, Rice 2000, Stiebels 2003), the latter assume templates (e.g. Nordlinger 2010, Good 2011) or specific position class information for affixes (e.g. Crysmann & Bonami 2016). Hybrid approaches (e.g. Hyman 2003) combine templatic and general constraints.

In my talk I will focus on the role of scope for affix ordering, which receives different interpretations in the literature, namely as scope proper (with scope-bearing affixes such as negation, quantificational affixes, etc.) or as the order of semantic composition/syntactic merge (an affix composed/merged first is assumed to be in the “scope” of an affix composed/merged later) or as any type of c-command relation. I will present ongoing research on the role of affix order for binding configurations of verbal reflexives (partly based on Lethgo’s 2023 typological study of verbal reflexives) and the scopal relations of affixal negation. Languages that may distinguish binding configurations of verbal reflexives by means of affix order show a more or less strong tendency for transparent ordering. I will compare these languages with languages that distinguish binding configurations by allomorphy of the verbal reflexive (Classical Nahuatl) or (unexpectedly) an alternation of verbal reflexive and pronominal affix. In contrast to verbal reflexives, affixal negation shows a considerable amount of opaque orderings, often due to the fact that its position is quite fixed and does not show a scope-dependent affix mobility.