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Discussion

## Optimal Gaps in Optimal Paradigms

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**Abstract:** This article develops a treatment of phonologically motivated gaps in paradigms within Optimal Paradigms Theory (McCarthy 2001). The gaps are instances of absolute ungrammaticality, i. e. situations in which there is no output for a given input. In the approach developed here, gaps arise when phonological markedness constraints outrank constraints requiring the expression of a particular morphological category. In this way, incomplete paradigms can be selected as optimal, since the incomplete paradigm will incur fewer markedness violations. The optimal gaps approach is illustrated with Norwegian imperatives and Hungarian CCik verbs. The analysis is compared with earlier treatments of absolute ungrammaticality, such as the null parse of Prince and Smolensky (1993).

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