

**Dressler, Wolfgang U. 1985.** On the predictiveness of Natural Morphology. *Journal of Linguistics* 21. 321-337.

The main claim of the article is that the Natural Morphology framework allows linguists to make predictions about language morphological behaviour as long as those predictions are gradual rather than absolute.

For morphological behaviour in general it is predicted that "morphotactically more transparent derived words and word-forms should be more frequent in the languages of the world than morphotactically more opaque ones".

The article makes several predictions about suppletion and checks them in various languages. Suppletion is claimed to be the most unnatural phenomenon on the scale of morphotactic transparency therefore it should be very rare. But it still to be found in languages because some suppletive relations are pragmatically motivated:

- suppletion signals difference/otherness (example: *I~we*, where *we* is not "the real plural of *I*");
- suppletive adjectives from place-names in contrast to rule-derived variants are usually learned, i.e. sociolinguistically and stylistically marked.

The article lists the conditions that help to preserve suppletion:

1. high token frequency;
2. the forms should be pragmatically basic: articles, pronouns, verbs, lower numbers, greater towns
3. the class of suppletive items should be small and closed: analogical influence is easier within a large classes where many regular forms can exert a higher analogical pressure on exceptions than within small classes. Articles, pronouns, auxiliary and modal verbs and number names all form small classes.

There is a prediction about suppletive behaviour concerning the language type: the more agglutinating a language, the less these unnatural phenomena should occur. Agglutinating Turkish has suppletion only in personal pronouns, and in auxiliary *var~yok* ('there is' – 'there is not'). Less agglutinating Finnish and Hungarian have more suppletion, Estonian, having changed from agglutinating to an inflecting has as much suppletion as most typically inflecting languages. Tokharian, which has changed from an inflecting to a rather agglutinating language has lost most of its Indo-European suppletive inheritance.