

Dressler, Wolfgang U. 1985. Sur le statut de la suppléance dans la morphologie naturelle. *Langages* 78.41-56.

The article discusses the place of suppletion within the Natural Morphology framework. Suppletion represents the extreme case of morphological opacity, but since there is more than one parameter of naturalness, the existence of suppletion can be explained as a result of the interplay of these parameters.

Natural Morphology predicts that languages of different structural types would differ in terms of the number of instances of suppletion: the more flecive a language is, the more instances of suppletion it would allow. This hypothesis is tested on the following languages: Turkish, Georgian, Hungarian, Finnish, Tocharian, Latin, Ancient Greek, Russian, German, Estonian, Breton, Italian, French, English.

Domains typical for suppletion are established: personal pronouns, auxiliary verbs, modal verbs, verbs of position and motion, derivation of adjectives from place names and derivation of ordinals from cardinals.

Factors that determine the resistance of suppletive items to levelling are:

- frequency;
- the whole amount of irregularity (the more irregular items a language possesses, the more resistant suppletive items will be);
- belonging to a closed class (for example, pronouns or modal verbs are more resistant to levelling than items from open classes);
- semantics (fundamental concepts are more stable).

Suppletion can be treated as a natural phenomenon as it has semiotic synchronic reasons like metaphoricity, indexicality and economy.