

PROLOGUE

Opacity (Kiparsky 1968, 1973) occurs when an otherwise regular phonological process fails to apply in some forms of the language (counter-feeding opacity) or a phonological process applies unexpectedly (counter-bleeding opacity). Recent approaches to opacity include Goldrick and Smolensky (1999), Inkelas (1999), Kiparsky (2000ab), Kirchner (1996), Łubowicz (2001), McCarthy (1999). This dissertation argues that counter-feeding opacity can be understood in terms of a theory of contrast (cf. Kisseberth 1976, Kaye 1974, 1975). The main observation is that in chain shifts and other opaque mappings, a given underlying contrast is preserved on the surface but manifested as a different surface contrast, called contrast transformation. To account for contrast transformation, this dissertation proposes a modification of Optimality Theory (Prince and Smolensky 1993), called **Contrast Preservation Theory**.

Contrast Preservation Theory, like any theory of contrast, must assume that candidates are sets of mappings, called scenarios. Scenarios are evaluated by a family of constraints on preserving contrasts, PC(P) constraints, interacting with each other and with conflicting markedness constraints. This results in preservation or neutralization of underlying oppositions in surface forms. Languages differ in constraint interaction and thus differ in the interplay of contrasts. The predictions of this proposal regarding phonological mappings will be explored and argued to be superior to previous approaches in several respects.