

Linguistic and non-linguistic identity effects: same or different?

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The OCP, and its approximate inverse REPEAT or COPY, are grammatical statements about identity. As such they may hold sway over different entities, and in one or more areas of the grammar, such as phonology, morphology, syntax or semantics, and their effects may be more or less visible in any given language (an effect modelled in OT by how highly ranked they are).

But identity or an avoidance of identity also plays a role in areas that are less obviously grammatical, such as syntactic processing, onomatopoeia, and the aesthetics of language. And if we range further afield it may even play a role in the communications of non-human primates. This talk will offer a brief survey of the range of such effects, and ask whether there is a common thread and /or origin, and whether a unified account is either possible or desirable.